



Board of Education | City of Chicago

**September 10, 2026 Agenda Review Committee Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, September 8th and Friday, September 11th
Submitted via Written Comments Form**

****ATTACHMENTS****

September 17, 2026

Dear Members of the CPS Board of Education,

I'm writing as both a parent of children attending Bell Elementary School and as a public health professional that has worked in Chicago for almost 20 years. I would like to add my voice to the growing number of CPS families asking the Board to take up a resolution considering a comprehensive, intentional technology policy for our schools. My concern about excessive screen time and technology use began early in my career when I worked with Chicago pediatricians and community-based organizations around a common goal of supporting families who needed guidance to help their children achieve a healthy weight. And then, when my oldest child started attending school within CPS, I was shocked by the number of times screens were a part of her school experience at such a young age. Families in Chicago deserve better and so do CPS educators and staff.

Excessive screen time has been linked by the American Academy of Pediatrics to concerns around attention, mood, sleep, and academic performance. Not only does excessive screen time interfere with children's ability to learn and their physical and mental health; it creates challenges for educators and administrators that are long-lasting.

Other major districts, including Los Angeles Unified, have already adopted formal screen time limits. We believe Chicago families deserve the same thoughtful approach. I support the requests outlined in the Schools Beyond Screens petition, including age-appropriate device limits, protected device-free time during the school day, greater transparency for families, and independent review of EdTech contracts for educational value and student data privacy. I respectfully ask the Board to take up a resolution to formally consider a comprehensive technology policy for CPS.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Good morning to the members of the Board. My name is Claude Holmes Jr, and I am the former Credit Recovery Coordinator of Aspira Antonia Pantoja High School.

So here we go again: Four days before the start of the school year, Aspira educators were given layoff notices and told they were being released immediately from their employment. Also, here we go again: students and families were unaware of these changes and are left scrambling to decide where to send their child to school. And, here we go again: an upcoming sale of one of Aspira's buildings will bring in a substantial amount of money, but nothing was discussed by Aspira's new CEO or their board as to where the funds will be distributed. I'm sure all of this sounds very familiar, given we were just here a few months ago fighting for Aspira Early College and Aspira Business and Finance. Though there is a new CEO in place, we're experiencing the same trend as we fight for Aspira Antonia Pantoja HS as well.

On Aug. 13th, 2026, ASPIRA called for the immediate release of **36% of our educational staff, without the union's knowledge**. We were told that these layoffs were due to low enrollment before the school year even started, instead of being notified of any reduction in force per our current CBA's date of June 1st. Therefore, we have to ask ourselves: what message does this send to current and prospective families? How can we expect enrollment to grow when families see instability, uncertainty, and the loss of so many educators who have served our students?

Staffing cuts of this magnitude don't just affect employees—they affect classroom stability, relationships, programs, and ultimately the confidence families have in our schools. In addition, with the CBA not being followed, and Union representatives

unaware or even included in the process, that deserves a clear explanation. Our educators deserve respect, and that includes respecting the agreements that protect both employees and the integrity of our district.

What is equally troubling is the **lack of communication surrounding these layoffs**. Our students and families deserve transparency. They deserve to know what is happening and why. When major decisions are made without clear communication, it creates fear and uncertainty. We are not only making difficult financial decisions; we are affecting real children and real families.

Finally, I want to address the **upcoming sale of the ABF campus and the money Aspira will make from the sale**. Our community deserves transparency about those funds. Where will that money go? Will the money return to the district? Can some of it be set aside for Antonia Pantoja's operational costs, and used to support our students, classrooms, and educational/extracurricular programming? No matter what, those funds should go towards educating students. Aspira shouldn't be given free reign to use those funds for whatever they want.

Therefore, I ask you to consider the human cost of these decisions. Please make sure that ASPIRA, as well as the district, communicate early to protect the trust of our families and educators. Because when we weaken the people who educate our children, we are not simply cutting positions—we are making a decision about the future of our students and our community.

Thank you.