

December 14, 2023 Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Tuesday, December 12th and Friday, December 15th
Submitted via Written Comments Form

1	Do not remove school choice. It is vital for children to get the education they need that neighborhood schools cannot provide. It would be detrimental and lead to mass exodus of gifted children to private and suburban schools. Invest more in school choice, not less.
2	<p>I fully support school choice, selective enrollment schools, and magnet schools in CPS.</p> <p>SEES and magnet schools are the pride of CPS. Few other metropolitan areas offer children as many learning opportunities and chances to explore students' individual strengths. Because we invested in school choice, Chicago retains an adult population that is educated, diverse, and engaged in its community. We boast some of the top elementary schools and high schools in the nation. These schools produce leaders and innovators who stay in Chicago and promote its well being.</p> <p>Without SEES and magnet opportunities, many families will leave CPS, opting for the suburbs and private schools – an effective brain drain and loss of tax revenue for the city.</p> <p>Please KEEP school choice, magnet schools, and selective enrollment schools!</p>
3	<p>Subject: Advocating for School Choice in CPS</p> <p>Dear Board Members,</p> <p>As a parent of CPS students who have greatly benefited from the selective system, and recognizing that without this option, their learning experience might not be as positive, I would like to bring to your attention the following points that underscore the benefits of school choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversity Benefits in Selective Schools: The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students. 2. Customized Learning Environments: With school choice, parents are able to select educational settings that align with their child's unique learning style, interests, and needs. 3. Diverse Educational Options: School choice provides a range of educational approaches, from specialized programs to alternative learning methods, catering to diverse student interests and aptitudes. 4. Addressing Unique Student Needs: School choice allows for the creation of specialized programs that address the unique needs of students, ensuring a tailored educational experience. 5. Innovation and Experimentation: School choice encourages innovation and experimentation in teaching methods and curriculum design, fostering a dynamic and responsive educational environment.

I appreciate the challenging decisions that CPS faces, and I believe that by embracing school choice, we can work together to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective educational system.

Sincerely,
J Welch

4 The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students.
plz do not cancel the selective school

5 Please keep the selective programs.

6 Dear CPS Leaders,
I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern and urgency regarding the recent resolution to move away from the current system of school choice, particularly as it pertains to Selective Enrollment Schools in Chicago.

As a concerned member of the community and a strong advocate for quality education, I believe it is crucial to emphasize the importance of Selective Enrollment Schools, especially for gifted students. Selective Enrollment Schools have been instrumental in providing an enriched and challenging academic environment for students with exceptional abilities. These schools offer a unique opportunity for gifted children to thrive, fostering their intellectual growth and maximizing their potential.

Gifted students often have unique learning needs that may not be fully addressed in a traditional classroom setting. Selective Enrollment Schools play a vital role in catering to these needs by offering specialized programs, advanced coursework, and an environment that encourages intellectual curiosity. The emphasis on high academic standards in Selective Enrollment Schools is essential in nurturing the talents of gifted students and preparing them for future success.

I understand the desire to prioritize fully-resourced neighborhood schools and address the historical inequities within the education system. However, it is crucial to recognize that Selective Enrollment Schools can coexist with these goals by contributing to the overall diversity and excellence of the Chicago Public Schools system. Rather than viewing them as a hindrance, they should be acknowledged as valuable assets that enhance the educational landscape for all students.

I urge you to carefully reconsider the potential impact of moving away from the current school choice system, specifically with regard to Selective Enrollment Schools. These institutions have been instrumental in providing a challenging and enriching education for gifted students, contributing to the overall academic strength of the CPS system.

I kindly request that the Board of Education takes into account the unique needs of gifted students and works towards a solution that preserves the vital role of Selective Enrollment Schools in nurturing their academic talents. I appreciate your dedication to improving the education system in Chicago and trust that you will consider the diverse needs of all students in shaping the future of CPS.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

7	<p>The idea that removing school choice will be more equitable for students is untrue. Selective enrollment schools are among the most diverse in the city. As long as there is segregation within neighborhoods, the effects of that segregation will be felt within neighborhood schools. If anything, we should be expanding opportunities for parents to choose schools for their children, not limiting it.</p>
8	<p>I am a parent of CPS school students. My kids go to one of the selective enrollment schools and they have been enjoying the school now.</p> <p>I just read an article that CPS might consider getting rid of the selective enrollment and magnet school system in Chicago. The reason why many families are staying in Chicago is because kids go to school in their schools and they love it. If you decide to move away from magnets and selective enrollment school systems, many families will end up moving to suburbs. I'd like to ask you to save those schools as they are. Our school is a well diverse school and I was told that the most diverse schools are the ones that are magnet schools. Please save these school systems, and I really appreciate your hard work for better schools in Chicago.</p> <p>Thank you so much. Thank you for reading it.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
9	<p>Dear Board,</p> <p>As a parent of CPS students who have greatly benefited from the selective system, and recognizing that without this option, their learning experience might not be as positive humble background, immigrants, low-income, English as second languages, I would like to bring to your attention the following points that underscore the benefits of school choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversity Benefits in Selective Schools: The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students. 2. Customized Learning Environments: With school choice, parents are able to select educational settings that align with their child's unique learning style, interests, and needs. 3. Diverse Educational Options: School choice provides a range of educational approaches, from specialized programs to alternative learning methods, catering to diverse student interests and aptitudes. 4. Addressing Unique Student Needs: School choice allows for the creation of specialized programs that address the unique needs of students, ensuring a tailored educational experience. 5. Innovation and Experimentation: School choice encourages innovation and experimentation in teaching methods and curriculum design, fostering a dynamic and responsive educational environment.

	<p>I appreciate the challenging decisions that the school district board faces, and I believe that by embracing school choice, we can work together to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective educational system.</p> <p>Sincerely, Raina</p>
10	SAVE the Selective enrollment Schools!!!
11	please keep the CPS selective problem. This is critical for all the gift students growth.
12	<p>Please please do NOT get rid of selective enrollment! There are so many other issues to focus on with CPS. This is the ONE thing that does work!</p> <p>If you want to help neighborhood schools, DO IT! Support selective enrollment schools with proper bussing to help reduce stress. The neighborhood schools in my experience teaching in several cps schools are the LEAST diverse!!! Fix the lottery system to be more inclusive of the neighborhood s where the kids live. We were only given choices of schools far away when there were selective enrollment schools much closer! Testing helps kids challenge their brains and reach for more. LEARN! What happens to a kid whose parents can't afford a home. Near a school who has more parent involvement? They are stuck with no way into a different trajectory in life.. if you want more parent involvement in schools, help those schools. There is SO MUCH MORE CPS can do instead of creating chaos to the one functional aspect about it.</p>
13	<p>Advocating for School Choice in CPS</p> <p>Dear CPS Education Board,</p> <p>As a parent of CPS students who have greatly benefited from the selective system, and recognizing that without this option, their learning experience might not be as positive related to English as second languages and immigrants,!I would like to bring to your attention the following points that underscore the benefits of school choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversity Benefits in Selective Schools: The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students. 2. Customized Learning Environments: With school choice, parents are able to select educational settings that align with their child's unique learning style, interests, and needs. 3. Diverse Educational Options: School choice provides a range of educational approaches, from specialized programs to alternative learning methods, catering to diverse student interests and aptitudes. 4. Addressing Unique Student Needs: School choice allows for the creation of specialized programs that address the unique needs of students, ensuring a tailored educational experience. 5. Innovation and Experimentation: School choice encourages innovation and experimentation in teaching methods and curriculum design, fostering a dynamic and responsive educational environment. <p>I appreciate the challenging decisions that the school district board faces, and I believe that by embracing school choice, we can work together to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective educational system.</p> <p>Sincerely</p>

14	Please keep those kids that have the ability to excel in school be able to be identified and placed into continuing selective enrollment
15	<p>I think a majority of the families enrolled in Selective Enrollment schools prioritize education and academics. If selective enrollment schools were gone, these parents would move to the suburbs or enroll in private schools. As a parent of children in a top SEES, I see many parents of the school go to great lengths to make sure their kids get the best education. One example you see is that even when bussing was no longer offered, parents found ways to continue to send their children to the school, some families spend over an hour on the road each way. This simple example shows how dedicated families are to their children's selective enrollment schools.</p> <p>If equity is the priority for CPS, instead of taking away selective enrollment schools, CPS should spend the money and make more selective enrollment schools in more neighborhoods!</p>
16	KEEP selective enrollment. It benefits so much to our kids.
17	Please do not throw away the selective enrollment program in Chicago. It is the one thing that shows the nation there are bright children and good teachers in Chicago. Tearing down what works and not supporting high achievers is just awful policy.
18	<p>I am against Mayor Johnson's proposal to eliminate selective enrollment schools. I write as a parent of a diverse learner who has bilateral hearing loss and as a substitute teacher who has worked in schools like Manniere & Dett. This has become about race blaming Asians/Whites who fill most of the SE slots. He wants to revive the boundary school concept yet that would then keep kids from lower socioeconomic status from going to "better" schools than what is offered in their neighborhood.</p> <p>Taking away selective enrollment schools will not create education equity. The schools in the lower socioeconomic neighborhoods I see have stellar technology like iPads , smart boards etc. yet is not helping the 4th grader who can't read. The resources CPS is providing to these underserved schools should be resources to help the disenfranchised families to give them hope and support that they can do better motivating caregivers to be committed to helping their child educationally succeed and utilizing opportunities to the fullest .</p> <p>If there aren't accelerated learning environments for current SE kid's, most will probably leave the CPS system to go to the suburbs for the ones who can't afford private school or private school for the ones that can pay. Targeting Asians and whites as the problem is un true. As an immigrant I worked and hustled for every and any opportunity I could find, nothing was handed to me.</p>
19	I strongly object to the elimination of CPS selective enrollment schools. Offers to attend SE schools should be based on rank only (not tiers).
20	<p>Subject: Fostering Educational Equity: Strengthening Neighborhood Schools and Sustaining Selective Enrollment Excellence</p> <p>Dear Chicago Public School Board,</p> <p>I hope this message finds you well. As a concerned parent of the CPS community, I would like to express my support for the ongoing efforts to enhance the educational experience for all students within the Chicago Public School system. I believe that a comprehensive strategy is necessary to both uplift neighborhood schools and maintain the high standards set by selective enrollment institutions.</p>

Firstly, it is crucial to invest in the improvement of neighborhood schools by addressing infrastructure needs, ensuring access to quality resources, and fostering a supportive learning environment. By prioritizing these aspects, we can create an educational foundation that is equitable and conducive to the holistic development of students. Strengthening neighborhood schools will not only benefit the local community but will also contribute to reducing educational disparities across the city.

Simultaneously, I advocate for the continued support and advancement of selective enrollment schools. These institutions play a vital role in nurturing academic excellence and producing high-achieving students. To maintain their standards, it is imperative to allocate resources for advanced curriculum development, teacher training, and state-of-the-art facilities. Ensuring that selective enrollment schools remain at the forefront of educational innovation will contribute to the overall reputation and success of the Chicago Public School system.

Moreover, I encourage the Board to explore strategies that promote collaboration between neighborhood and selective enrollment schools. Initiatives such as mentorship programs, resource-sharing, and joint extracurricular activities can foster a sense of community and create opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to learn from one another.

In conclusion, I urge the Chicago Public School Board to adopt a balanced and inclusive approach that uplifts neighborhood schools while sustaining the excellence of selective enrollment institutions. By investing in both aspects of our educational system, we can build a foundation for a more equitable, prosperous, and unified future for all Chicago students.

Thank you for your dedication to the betterment of our education system.

Sincerely,
CPS Parent (Skinner North)

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I would like to voice my opposition for the proposal to do away with school choice. The Board should prioritize on increasing the rigor of instruction in neighborhood schools instead, holding teachers accountable for the performance of their students. This would be the correct path to inculcate excellence in our schools, and students. That will drive parents to enroll in their neighborhood schools. Doing away with school choice deprives the parents' agency in choosing the best possible education options for their children.

If approved, this proposal would lead several parents to leave CPS system all together. They might go to private schools, move to suburbs or out of the state all together. Depriving the city of the tax base it needs to thrive. I, for one, chose to stay in the City two years ago in the middle of a pandemic because of the selective enrollment school. If that choice is taken away from me, then I have no incentive to pay high taxes in a city where crime is also out of control.

As I see it, my options are to pay for private school (with its high fees), move to a neighborhood recognized for the quality of its schools (where property prices are bound to be already high given demand), wait for the quality of instruction to improve at my neighborhood school (which I doubt will happen in time while my child is school age), or move out of the City altogether. Moving out of the City then is a very viable and a rational choice. I am sure other parents think the same way.

	A much easier path for the Board, then is to provide resources to the neighborhood schools and to hold teachers accountable for performance.
22	<p>Selective enrollment schools ensure that children across the district are afforded the opportunity to be challenged in a school environment best suited to their needs. A lot of these children would not succeed in a traditional learning environment, particularly given the correlation between academic acceleration and neurodivergence. Selective enrollment schools help to foster unique learning environments that challenge and support these children mentally and emotionally. And because these schools help children across various neighborhoods, the ones most vulnerable in the worst areas will be affected the most as they are forced to matriculate at their local schools with children of vastly different academic standings. The attempt to create parody should not be to pull top performing students down, but raise others up. If selective enrollment schools are dissolved, our family, a law-abiding, tax-paying, community-giving Chicago resident, will be forced to find an alternative schooling situation for our son, leaving the city. Our ask is that you don't create more reasons to push upstanding citizens out of your city. Crime, delinquency and city-exodus are already at an all-time high. Please continue to foster programs that support a better Chicago - a place we have been proud to call home but as of late are beginning to wonder why.</p>
23	<p>As a future parent, it is my responsibility to make sure my kid has the best education possible to them, and as a proud lane tech alumn, I hope to pass the torch on and same my child to lane.</p> <p>All I see is that this is a bunch of bureaucrats taking away opportunities from children that excel academically. Make no mistake, if this passes, it is my duty to make sure to send my children to a private school or move to a neighboring suburb. I will also cut any donations I planned to make</p>
24	<p>As a parent of CPS students who have greatly benefited from the selective system, and recognizing that without this option, their learning experience might not be as positive. I would like to bring to your attention the following points that underscore the benefits of school choice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversity Benefits in Selective Schools: The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students. 2. Customized Learning Environments: With school choice, parents are able to select educational settings that align with their child's unique learning style, interests, and needs. 3. Diverse Educational Options: School choice provides a range of educational approaches, from specialized programs to alternative learning methods, catering to diverse student interests and aptitudes. 4. Addressing Unique Student Needs: School choice allows for the creation of specialized programs that address the unique needs of students, ensuring a tailored educational experience. 5. Innovation and Experimentation: School choice encourages innovation and experimentation in teaching methods and curriculum design, fostering a dynamic and responsive educational environment. <p>I appreciate the challenging decisions that the school district board faces, and I believe that by embracing school choice, we can work together to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective educational system.</p>

25	<p>The CPS selective enrollment program should stay in place to advance the students and parents to are ready for stretch goals for academic programs. Selective program school requires more than 100% focus & dedication by both students and parents to advance academically at the faster pace. Such environment should stay in place without mixing it with neighbourhood program.</p> <p>I'm in for selective program. This may be of interest for sub set of population who do want to move at the faster pace.</p>
26	<p>I am strongly opposed to eliminating school choice and selective enrollment schools. I encourage the board to flat out dismiss the proposal. As a Chicago parent our kids need the Choice to go to neighborhood school, selective enrollment or special needs schools. We are a large and diverse city and our system needs to support the needs of a diverse set of students. Doing more for our neighborhood schools should not come at the cost of selective enrollment schools.</p>
27	<p>This will have a huge negative impact on the high performing kids. SEES schools provide a thriving environment for these kids where there are challenged each day and look forward to school</p> <p>These kids will be bored in neighborhood schools, become complacent and lose direction in neighborhood schools as neighborhood schools cannot cater to these kids due to practical limitations.</p> <p>Many families would be forced to move to suburbs to provide a school which challenges their kid and pushes them forward and advocates for them if the city removes this option leading to loss of an amazing pool of high performing students. Infact our family would be one of them as we cannot afford private gifted schools. This also causes added stress to parents as their commute time to their work place from suburbs increases exponentially opposed to residing in the city .</p> <p>Communities where neighborhood schools are not great ...will take a long time,huge effor for those schools be reinvigorated over the years . Forcing high performing kids into neighborhood schools will severely have a negative impact these kids .The parents who are not in good school zones and are not financially able to afford private school have this amazing opportunity to send their kids to a SEES currently – This is the best option available for these parents to ensure a better future for their kids please donot take that option away from us.</p> <p>High performing kids come with their own set of challenges and not every school is equipped to handle it and mould the students to have positive progress. SEES staff specialize in this as a majority of kids are high performing here . Due to school buses not being available , we have parents who take public transport in our school to drop their kids which takes 1 hr. But they take that trouble in stride and do it daily as these are the best schools for their kids. Forcing these kids into a neighborhood school will remove the supporting structure they get in SEES.</p> <p>In trying to do justice to one part of the community please donot disregard the other part. You would be doing a huge disservice to this sect of the community by uprooting selective enrollment schools.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read my plea.</p>
28	<p>Our son goes to a CPS selective enrollment grade school. The school does not have any special resources, but rather teaches above grade level for a diverse group of</p>

	students who are ready for it (e.g. a 6th grade curriculum for 5th grade). We would not still live in Chicago but for the school.
29	As a parent, I strongly believe it is very necessary to keep selective school to provide diverse chances to children. Politicians and CPS administrations shouldn't make decisions for parents. The education system is built and supported by children, parents and teachers. I feel so sad because there are so many occasions that CPS intentionally ignores parents' opinion and only makes decisions which only benefit CPS administrations.
30	The Selective Enrollment Schools offer a chance for talented children from diverse tiers, demographics, and backgrounds to access an exceptionally high standard of education. If the goal is to promote equity within the district, efforts should be directed toward enhancing opportunities and resources for students in neighborhood schools. Eliminating the selective enrollment program and potentially lowering the nationwide ranking of our schools seems counterproductive to the improvement of our education system. I urge you to take this into consideration when casting your vote.
31	We must keep school choice and selective enrollment as an option. This option provides a uniform and unbiased way for anyone to gain access to better educational opportunities if they desire it. Competition is a reality of life, whether it be in terms of schools, peers, college, work etc. Taking away better options would be a disservice to students that want to excel in their learning. Instead of trying to eliminate options, CPS should be devising strategies and making observations in order to determine how to make neighborhood schools competitive, capable of matching outcomes of the more successful options so that they become the most desirable option.
32	Please keep the Selective Enrollment Schools system. Please vote to keep it in place.
33	Please keep the selective program. This is a critical environment for those gifted kids.
34	I'm a CPS parent, please consider KEEP the selective programs to give gifted/academically advanced students the education they need.
35	I hope CPS can keep the selective enrollment schools. I don't think the lack of students in neighborhood schools is due to the existence of selective enrollment schools, but rather due to population migration due to security issues.
36	We are not supportive of the plan to cancel the selective enrollment school programs. Families should have the option to decide whether to enroll their children to these highly successful programs.
37	Please save the Selective Enrollment Schools!
38	Eliminating school choice and selective enrollment is seriously flawed and will likely hurt disadvantaged students the most - just like the elimination of bussing already has. Wealthy people will always have options - suburbs or private school. It's the families who lack resources that can really benefit from school choice. The ability for these kids to be with peers who are serious about their education and future has a big impact on their lives. Quoting from the UChicago study on selective enrollment schools in 2016, "Students in [selective-enrollment high schools] also report a greater sense of safety — they are less likely to worry about crime, violence and bullying at the school," the authors write. "Perhaps it is factors like these that make [selective-enrollment high schools] highly desirable to students and families — more so than the potential to improve test scores and college outcomes." In addition to that, Harvard researcher Jay Chetty found that cross-class connectedness is the best way to promote economic mobility. The fact is Chicago is a highly-segregated city so it's not going to happen at the neighborhood level. Let these kids go to the best possible school they can. I grew up poor, but had a full scholarship to a private school, where, yes, I saw how the other side lived, made good money babysitting younger kids, and was invited to an SAT

	<p>tutoring group that shot my verbal score up 100 points consistently. All of these things mattered in my life. I can't help but feel like the elimination of school choice would punish talented disadvantaged kids and do absolutely nothing to change neighborhood programs. Many would say chronic absenteeism is the biggest challenge currently, so focus on that and let high achieving kids compete with well-resourced kids in other neighborhoods, better preparing them for college. I want my child to go to CPS, but things like this question my resolve. Please don't send more tax dollars to the suburbs, that certainly won't improve schools.</p>
39	<p>Selective schools are equally important as students diversity.</p>
40	<p>Removing SEES programs only divides communities even further into the haves and have-nots. You'll be limiting the educational opportunities for young, smart kids who happen to be born to the wrong zip codes. With SEES, they have a chance to earn their way into better schools through merit.</p> <p>You'd rather have parental income and zip codes determine quality of education? Sure you say that by removing these programs, resources can be diverted to neighborhood schools but to bring the quality of many of these schools to the level of an SEES school is a pipedream.</p> <p>SEES programs are the closest thing we have to equity right now and giving these kids from less affluent neighborhoods a fighting chance. We have many families in our neighborhood that have smart, dedicated children. Forcing them to attend their neighborhood school would drastically hurt their education and we will make sure the public is aware of the Board's efforts to keep us southsiders out of their "quality" schools.</p>
41	<p>As a former selective enrollment kid it was very competitive very early on and ultimately does determine a lot of someone's future whether they get into the top 3-4 schools.</p> <p>It really did feel like the hunger games for middle and highschool enrollment, I remember everyone putting their hopes and dreams into getting into schools like Payton as if they were Harvard and being crushed when things didn't work out. It always struck me as a bit strange because it was clear to see how the majority of kids who made it to these schools had more resources in the beginning, and then as a result they did well and were given more resources, like their starting pistol went off earlier than others and there was no catching up. In so many ways high school in a selective enrollment location was harder than college, and I went to a way better university than my high school was comparatively (Whitney and then NYU) so I do appreciate the challenge the schools give students but, yes, ultimately the struggle was premature.</p> <p>However, the idea of shutting out this light which benefits some of the poorest and lowest resourced students to make some sort of ideological point is perhaps the worst decision I've ever heard.</p> <p>While there were mostly kids who were given every opportunity there were crucially so many who worked their asses off from so little and clawed their way to these schools often waking up before dawn and getting on public transportation as these schools were their best chance out of their situations.</p> <p>It is these children for whom it's crucial that these schools continue to exist, and it is the success stories of both them and their well-resourced peers that show CPS at it's best</p>

	can compete and beat even the most well-funded schools in the state. Forcing these kids into a neighborhood school will limit their opportunities and we'll have less success stories of those from less affluent areas overcoming odds to be their best version of themselves.
42	Please keep selective programs.
43	I object to this proposal.
44	To Whom It May Concern: I am upset that CPS is thinking about removing magnet and selective enrollment schools. I am a proud product of a CPS magnet school and my husband a CPS neighborhood school. My daughter is currently in a selective enrollment school. We've found the selective enrollment school to be a much more diverse environment than neighborhood schools. Magnet and Selective Enrollment schools are a great way to meet the different needs of children. Every child is unique and learns a different way. That is why there are selective enrollment schools and Montessori schools and STEM schools. It gives us options that might be better suited for our children. A child at a selective enrollment school might not fit in at a neighborhood school because their learning skills might be different. Someone that is better learning in a hands on approach would be better at a Montessori school. If they remove these as options, children are going to get the short end of the stick. A neighborhood school would not be able to give these children's the options that allow them to learn. If anything, I think that there should be more selective enrollment and magnet schools.
45	I am against this proposal, please keep selective schools in Chicago.
46	Save selective enrollment schools
47	I strongly support the statement that every student should have an opportunity to reach their potential. However, the new changes will not accomplish this goal. This is a bandage so that the current CPS leadership can claim they have provided more opportunities to low-income students. In reality, the little decent public education remaining in Chicago will be destroyed. The good teachers and principals will leave and go to private schools or the suburbs. It will not take long before all former selective enrollment schools become mediocre at best as the rest of the CPS schools. I am yet to see a world-class education achieved by lowering the standards for every kid. What the Chicago Board of Education should do is convert more schools to selective enrollment and find resources and funds to provide to kids and parents in low-income neighborhoods to help these kids test for the selective enrollment schools. I would love to see my tax dollars being spent on such projects. That, however, requires real hard work and planning which no one seems to be interested in doing.
48	Need to keep magnet and selective schools. Different kids at different levels, how to study together?
49	This is going to kill the American Dream for black folks who worked hard to educate their kids so that they could be bussed out of their neighborhood to better schools. It's like saying "how about you experience the same fate of black youth at large". Is this really being driven by progressives or is it actually wealthy racists who want their quality neighborhood schools to be reserved for the wealthy?
50	We want to keep the selective enrollment school . Please don't cancel it.
51	Please do not eliminate selective enrollment schools in Chicago! This is the last thread that keeps some of these families in the city, committed to make it a good place to live and thrive for the next generations. Chicago prides itself with the best elementary and high schools in the State and in the country, why would someone want to cancel this opportunity for our city? Please keep the selective enrollment schools alive in Chicago!

52	<p>This is blatant classism disguised as equity. You're just limiting the brightest children from the southside who have an opportunity to attend better schools with quality teachers, extracurriculars and even dedicated and driven classmates. We work hard to raise our children right, even if they are surrounded by negatives.</p> <p>Forcing our children to attend their neighborhood schools means to limit this upward mobility so many of us strive to provide for our children. This is outright segregation and only drives further division for Chicago.</p> <p>I hope the board really thinks through removing the selective enrollment programs and is ready for the negative national press that will come. This isn't 2020. Broad well-intentioned moves that are only equitable at the superficial level won't fly in 2023, nor in 2024's vote.</p>
53	<p>I believe the proposed plan to cancel Chicago Public Schools' selective enrollment program would have serious negative consequences for our city.</p> <p>Reasons for my opposition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disenfranchising high-performing students: Selective enrollment schools provide opportunities for academically motivated students from diverse backgrounds to thrive, regardless of their zip code. Canceling these programs would leave them with fewer options and potentially limit their academic potential. 2. Exacerbating existing inequities: Canceling selective enrollment programs could be perceived as abandoning families who rely on them for quality education options, particularly those from underserved communities with limited access to strong neighborhood schools. This could deepen feelings of distrust and further disadvantage already vulnerable populations. <p>Alternatives for consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investing in and strengthening neighborhood schools to ensure all students have access to quality education. 2. Expanding access to selective enrollment programs through scholarships or lottery systems to make them more equitable. 3. Implementing reforms within the program to address any potential biases or disparities in admissions.
54	<p>I DO NOT support any attempt to reduce school choice in Chicago. My children's selective enrollment schools are SUBSTANTIALLY MORE DIVERSE THAN our neighborhood school. I am a single mother--a Black mother of 2 children. I believe that--like Stacy Davis Gates--we should have the *power* to send our children to schools that support our family's needs. We do not need to choose BETWEEN neighborhood schools and selective enrollment schools. It is possible to do both!</p>
55	<p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to the decision to eliminate the selective/gifted school programs. These schools have consistently nurtured numerous outstanding talents in our community, contributing greatly to society.</p> <p>The discontinuation of these programs may compromise the quality of education in our community and limit the opportunities for students who excel in specific subjects or fields. Such a decision could weaken the diversity and competitiveness of our school district, ultimately affecting the overall quality of the entire school system.</p> <p>I urge you to reconsider this decision and explore alternative ways to enhance the standards of community schools without discontinuing these valuable programs. I hope</p>

	that together, we can work towards ensuring equal opportunities for every student to receive a high-quality education.
56	According to WBEZ, "Some 76% of high school students and 45% of elementary school students do not attend their assigned neighborhood schools." You are talking about a dramatic shift! People will leave the city if they feel they do not have sufficient educational options for their children!
57	Save Selective Enrollment School!!!! Save Selective Enrollment School!!!!
58	Stop political correct, classical and gifted schools are crucial to helping kids grow better academically.
59	<p>I am writing to express my extreme concern and displeasure with recent reporting indicating that CPS would consider moving away from its Selective Enrollment and Magnet school systems. I am the parent of 2 children in CPS- one in an SE classical elementary and the other in an arts-focused magnet elementary. By virtue of school choice, we have been able to find the schools that best fit the needs of both of our children, and more importantly, would have the flexibility to seek change when and if their needs were not being addressed. With our younger child having an IEP, this flexibility is doubly important to us.</p> <p>I sat near your CEO, Mr. Martinez, when he attended the Winter Arts Showcase at where one of my children is enrolled just last year, and heard him praise it for leading in its arts-focused curriculum – its presence affords all who are interested across the city a chance to engage in an arts-forward/focused curriculum through K-8. And many of the SE/magnet schools are absolute gems of the city, just like this. Taking these special places away will starve so many children of these sorts of unique curriculum opportunities.</p> <p>I again sat with Mr. Martinez just a couple months ago, when he sat down in the morning with a Young Leaders group from the Economic Club of Chicago, and I asked him specifically about the future of SE/magnet for CPS. At that time, he assured me that these programs weren't going anywhere. I truly hope that is true and that the media reports are overblown.</p> <p>I am highly involved in directly supporting both our kids' schools, from directly supporting school events and chaperoning every single class field trip, to working on the fundraising committees and helping organize our annual Friends-of fundraisers, to donating generously ourselves to support our teachers and staff. But if I don't have a choice in finding the right school for my kids within CPS, then I'll be forced to seriously consider taking them out of CPS entirely, along with my support for those schools. I don't share this because I think I'm special, I share it because I think you will see many, many other parents just like me taking not only their children, but their time, energy and support away from CPS.</p> <p>While my kids are only in elementary school, if support for SE/Magnet even appears to be wavering within CPS now, we'll be forced to begin considering private schools right away, lest they have the rug snatched out from under them as they approach high school- I'd rather them have the opportunities to make their friends now than have to switch schools further down the road.</p> <p>I sincerely hope that you'll consider what I've said, and know that it reflects the views of many, many parents across the city who truly want their children in public school, so</p>

	long as they can find that right-fit school that their kid needs. I hope that you'll vote to continue to support the SE/magnet school system across CPS. SE/magnet schools are treasures within the CPS system and ought to be regarded as such, rather than thrown under the bus in the name of misguided progressive ideals on equity.
60	While I understand the idea behind the suggestion to remove options for knowledge schools for equity purposes, one size school does not fit all. My child has thrived at their classical school and hopes to attend an academic center with a focus on areas where they excel and/or wish to learn more about. This choice has saved my neurodivergent academically advanced child many times. They are in a classroom with many unique skills, academic abilities and quirky behaviors. Being in this environment has allowed them to be themselves and have support geared toward their unique abilities. They would struggle socially and emotionally in our neighborhood school and most likely would not get the academic support and enrichment they need to grow. Neighborhood schools should be equitable, there is no arguing that, but these options are important for so many students. Please do not remove these options for all those who need them to thrive.
61	Selective enrollment schools are critical to the success of Chicago Public Schools and the ability to provide a rigorous academic environment for academically advanced students. Removing opportunities for some does not create opportunities for others. CPS has an obligation to provide the best education possible for all students.
62	Don't remove test-in programs from the CPS system. Students should be encouraged to perform better and gifted students need to be treated differently also.
63	<p>Please save CPS selective enrollment school choices (SEES) for CPS students and families! Both of my daughter and son are in a gifted /classical school, and I know what these school options mean for them. My daughter started with the school in our neighborhood but it did not work for her. She used to complain the school was boring everyday. She was later tested into Bell Gifted Center. Now she loves the school and definitely thrive in the new school. Not only the curriculum better meets her everyday learning needs but also her peers and the vibe in the class are just right for her. I can imagine how many other kids are in the same situation like my daughter. Please don't take away the school options from the existing and prospective CPS students, especially those with limited access to education resources.</p> <p>It took several decades and multiple generations to develop these precious school options to accommodate diverse groups of CPS students. Each school has developed its own culture and unique style to attract students that look for a rights school for them. And SEES is the reason why we have the best high schools in the state, which is a big proud. SEES is an essential part to our city and community. CPS and our communities should work together to make both our neighborhood schools and SEES stronger to create an effective and quality education system!</p>
64	<p>I hope this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to convey my deep concern and earnest plea regarding the upcoming vote on the selective school program. As a committed advocate for quality education, I urge you to cast your vote in favor of preserving this vital program.</p> <p>The selective school program has proven instrumental in identifying and nurturing the talents of exceptionally gifted students. It has consistently produced outstanding academic results and contributed significantly to the educational success of our community. Losing such a program would not only be a setback for these students but also for the reputation and quality of education in Chicago.</p>

	<p>I implore you to consider the long-term impact of your decision on the lives of countless students who benefit from the enriched learning environment provided by the selective school program. By voting in favor of its continuation, you play a pivotal role in safeguarding educational opportunities for the brightest minds in our community.</p> <p>Your support for the selective school program is an investment in the future success of our students and the overall educational landscape of Chicago. I trust that you will carefully consider the positive impact this program has had and continue to champion the cause of educational excellence.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, dedication, and consideration of this crucial matter.</p>
65	Please keep the gifted and classical program in schools
66	The proposed resolution before the board to move away from selective enrollment schools is not appropriate at this time. As announced, CPS will be going through a strategic planning session starting in the new year. It is far better for that sort of broad policy recommendation to come from a planning process like that, after opinions of families from across the city are heard. More substantially, CPS should much more rigorously try to make a clear-eyed case that the equity benefits of eliminating selective enrollment schools are worth the cost it would impose on families whose choices would be limited as well as help provide assurance that the likely outcome is increased equity? The board has not had enough analysis and public conversation to consider this resolution at this time. I respectfully request that the board strike this item from the agenda tomorrow.
67	I believe that magnet and selective enrollment schools are essential to the public school system in Chicago. I have two children that both attend schools outside of our neighborhood school and these opportunities have enabled them to have a greater exposure to diversity than would have been possible in the neighborhood school. Removing school choice from parents will not increase equity or diversity. Chicago is a heavily segregated city and having children attend schools from all across the city is an important step in overcoming the entrenched segregation in the city.
68	<p>I am the parent of two CPS students. I believe that selective enrollment and magnet schools should remain in place, at least until more neighborhood schools show a record of high achievement. We need additional investments in neighborhood schools, but until those investments translate into higher performance, selective enrollment and magnet schools are for many students the best opportunity to go to a high-performing school. Until more neighborhood schools have a track record of strong performance, the option to apply to selective enrollment and magnet schools should not be eliminated. Otherwise there will be negative impacts on equity in the near term.</p> <p>I support the proposal to redirect funds from underperforming, privately-run charter schools to CPS schools.</p>
69	We want the SEES program as the neighborhood schools are not at all good. If these programs are not continued ppl will be forced to move out to suburbs. PLEASE DO NOT DISCONTINUE SEES
70	Hi I really like having the options of gifted/classical schools. It offers an opportunity for students with needs to go beyond the regular curriculum. For example, my son finds reading and math at our neighborhood school too easy for him, and he complains about going to school because he thinks it is boring. I have to ask the teachers to give my son extra challenges to keep him engaged. I feel bad about the teachers, because I understand that most other kids are just fine with the regular curriculum. The other thing

	is that these gifted/classical schools bring these academically advanced kids together and they bring their better selves out of each other. And they do make better friends more easily as they get to meet a lot of kids with similar mindset and knowledge level. I hope CPS can keep these advanced programs running.
71	I vote for keep selective enrollment to provided the accelerate education to the talent kids in low income.
72	Please keep selective program for the student who has capability to learn more.
73	SAVE Selective Enrollment, Magnet & Charter schools!!!!
74	<p>Please don't discriminate against children that are advanced academically. Both parents and students are proud to be in these schools, similar to college students in Ivy Universities.</p> <p>The local government has already lower the testing standard under Lori Lightfoot's term. Please don't destroy the best schools in our city, unless your goal is for more families to leave the city. I hope you will save our selective enrollment, magnet and charter schools in our city.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
75	I'm writing to oppose the elimination of selective enrollment and magnet schools. I believe giving families more options that fit their needs is beneficial to all parties. If these schools are helping students excel, why is there a need to eliminate them. I think neighborhood schools needs improvement but that doesn't mean we have to take away options and opportunities for families and students. Please reconsider. There should be many ways that we can improve neighborhood schools without sacrificing school choice.
76	The school bus situation can be challenging but it's up to the parents to decide if they choose to enroll their child in the school - they can always attend a neighborhood school. Please do not decide for parents whether students should have opportunities to attend a gifted or accelerated school by cutting these enrichment programs
77	I am writing in support of KEEPING the magnet and selective enrollment schools. I would absolutely support more transparency about schools and the application process and more funding to neighborhood schools, but not at the expense of magnet programs. The assorted "friends of" charities attached to schools in more well-off (and often very white) neighborhoods will always mean those schools have more funding. Moving people back to neighborhood schools will just mean the schools are as segregated as our neighborhoods are (which is very segregated in many areas). I'm white and sending my kid to a magnet school meant that he had significantly MORE racial and economic diversity in his school than our neighborhood school has - I looked up the stats online and his magnet school (Walt Disney) is 16.5% white, while our neighborhood school (Budlong) is 32.7% white. The same website shows the city as 11.1% white, so white kids are overrepresented in both, but far more so in our neighborhood school. You can't fix inequality by putting everyone back in their segregated neighborhoods. There has to be a better way to fund and lift up neighborhood schools in need.
78	I oppose the proposal to eliminate selective enrollment program. The selective enrollment program is the only advantage of CPS over school systems in other cities. We would move out of Chicago if not the CPS selective enrollment program.
79	Cps shouldn't get rip off selectively enrollment, magnet & charter school. You can't take away the happiness from the students that are attending to these schools. Also

	students deserve the right to attend the high schools that's based on their testing results.
80	I don't agree to cancel Selective Enrollment, Magnet & Charter schools.
81	Please don't not cancel choice school as different students has different strengths and weaknesses. Magnet program allows students to further develop their strength and focus on certain academy subjects
82	There is news that the CPS selective enrollment will be cancelled in the following five years or so. Not sure if this is true or not, but wanted to say here that this will prove a disaster by itself and many families will move out of the city. Having no selective enrollment will not further diversity and equity but deprive capable kids their opportunities to advance.
83	The proposal to swift away from selective enrollment schools is a disconcerting notion that undermines the fundamental principles of academic merit and excellence. Selective enrollment schools play a crucial role in identifying and fostering the intellectual potential of students who exhibit exceptional abilities and dedication to their education. This proposal jeopardizes the very essence of providing an environment where motivated and high-achieving students can excel and reach their full potential. In addition to the aforementioned concerns, it's imperative to emphasize that maintaining selective enrollment schools with admission tests does not inherently harm neighborhood schools. These institutions are designed to cater to students with particular academic aptitude and dedication, and their existence should not be seen as a detriment to other schools in the district. Instead of dismantling successful programs, efforts should be directed towards bolstering resources and support for all schools, ensuring that each can meet the unique needs of its student body. The focus should be on enhancing the overall educational landscape, fostering a collaborative environment where diverse schools can coexist and thrive, rather than pitting them against each other. The key is to create a comprehensive educational system that addresses the varied needs of students across the district, ensuring that excellence is not a finite resource, but a collective goal for every school.
84	Please keep the choice school options available for the kids. Both of my kids attend a magnet and selective enrollment school. They are more diverse than our neighborhood school.
85	<p>1. Diversity Benefits in Selective Schools: The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students.</p> <p>2. Customized Learning Environments: With school choice, parents are able to select educational settings that align with their child's unique learning style, interests, and needs.</p> <p>3. Diverse Educational Options: School choice provides a range of educational approaches, from specialized programs to alternative learning methods, catering to diverse student interests and aptitudes.</p> <p>4. Addressing Unique Student Needs: School choice allows for the creation of specialized programs that address the unique needs of students, ensuring a tailored educational experience.</p> <p>5. Innovation and Experimentation:</p>

School choice encourages innovation and experimentation in teaching methods and curriculum design, fostering a dynamic and responsive educational environment.

I appreciate the challenging decisions that the school district board faces, and I believe that by embracing school choice, we can work together to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective educational system.

Sincerely,
Jun Liu

86

Dear Board Members,

As a parent of CPS students who have greatly benefited from the selective system, and recognizing that without this option, their learning experience might not be as positive as it is today, particularly we are first generation of immigrants to the United States and English is second language. I would like to bring to your attention the following points that underscore the benefits of school choice:

1. Diversity Benefits in Selective Schools:

The data has shown that CPS selective schools often exhibit greater diversity among students. The rich and inclusive environment can enhance the overall educational experience for all students.

2. Customized Learning Environments:

With school choice, parents are able to select educational settings that align with their child's unique learning style, interests, and needs.

3. Diverse Educational Options:

School choice provides a range of educational approaches, from specialized programs to alternative learning methods, catering to diverse student interests and aptitudes.

4. Addressing Unique Student Needs:

School choice allows for the creation of specialized programs that address the unique needs of students, ensuring a tailored educational experience.

5. Innovation and Experimentation:

School choice encourages innovation and experimentation in teaching methods and curriculum design, fostering a dynamic and responsive educational environment.

I appreciate the challenging decisions that the school district board faces, and I believe that by embracing school choice, we can work together to create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective educational system.

Sincerely,
Fan Liu

87

Subject: Petition Against Cancelling Magnetic and Selective Enrollment Schools

Dear CPS Board,

I am writing this petition to express my strong opposition to the proposed cancellation of magnetic schools and selective enrollment schools in Chicago, particularly in consideration of the impact on equity for our children. I would like to present three key points in defense of

maintaining the diverse educational options provided by magnetic schools and selective enrollment schools.

Firstly, the assertion that neighborhood schools inherently promote equity is flawed. My personal experience with both a neighborhood school and a selective enrollment school has shown that the latter, through a two-way selection process, actively promotes diversity. Selective enrollment schools consider factors such as socioeconomic background and utilize tier-based admissions, resulting in classrooms that reflect a mix of races, cultural backgrounds, and income levels. Moreover, the emphasis on creativity and critical thinking in the curriculum aligns with the educational needs of my child, making it a compelling choice for our family. Describing selective enrollment as a "hunger game" is an absolute misunderstanding of the system. Instead, it provides an alternative educational approach. What the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) should focus on is fostering diversity in educational methods across all schools, rather than eliminating unique and effective programs.

Secondly, advocating for only neighborhood schools exacerbates inequality. Well-regarded neighborhood schools often correspond to affluent neighborhoods like Lincoln Park and Lake View. This approach, based on geographic boundaries, is inherently disrespectful to children. For true equality, CPS should ensure that all neighborhood schools have similar teacher qualifications, academic improvements, enrichment programs, and facilities. Otherwise, the disparity between schools allows affluent families to choose neighborhoods strategically, while others, due to financial constraints, are limited to less favorable educational environments.

Lastly, we must consider the long-term perspective of educating the Next Generation. While our educational foundation may be in Chicago, our children will inevitably venture beyond.

It is undeniable that a child's academic interests are closely tied to their personal choices. There is a stark difference between a child choosing to study ballet out of personal interest and being compelled by parents to solely focus on ballet. When children autonomously choose ballet, it becomes their passion, fostering a genuine interest in development. Similarly, when children choose their own schools, they are more likely to joyfully embrace knowledge and education. Taking a more long-term view, if the ultimate goal of education is to nurture children who excel in various fields, granting them the right to choose from an early age, particularly in elementary school, becomes crucial. We cannot expect this generation of children, who have been consistently directed, to suddenly awaken their thirst for knowledge at the age of 18 and comprehend how to plan their future studies.

We do not want Chicago, with its abundant educational resources, to fail in cultivating a generation of children with an exploratory spirit. More frightening is the prospect that, despite championing equality, all children, regardless of their differences, are confined to a singular public school resource. From the moment they are born in a specific neighborhood, their educational resources are predetermined, and this scenario is one we cannot endorse.

Sincerely,

A CPS Parent

Mengyao Yu

88 | I am a parent of 2 kids in the CPS , We need to keep the Magnet system. Please stop the cancelation about it !!!

89	School choice will always exist for people of means and privilege. CPS only has the power to get rid of it for people without privilege. Ridding school choice further stratifies inequity for the very same people this measure is purportedly supposed to help.
90	As a single parent, one of my children tested into a gifted program, and the other is attending a therapeutic school for autism. In our journey to find appropriate educational settings for them, we tried local schools, and they failed my children and delayed their development. Their current schools are diverse and suited to their needs. Eradication of programs that allow kids to attain education suited to their needs would reduce academic performance and hurt the lower and middle income families that benefit. While there are pros and cons to adjusting the approach (e.g., tiering, revisions to charter eligibility), restricting students from applying to other schools in their district is a bad move. This removes the ability for schools to specialize (art, stem, dual language, etc.) and means that the most we could expect from any school that 90% of us send out kids to is mediocrity as opposed to insufficiency.
91	We are 100% opposed. Words alone cannot express our level of opposition.
92	Please do not remove the selective enrollment option within the cos organization. These schools serve as a crucial stepping stone for students who have shown to be ahead of the curve. I understand the rationale behind eliminating these programs. However, eliminating these programs will not lead to these students going to the neighborhood programs. Most of these students will end up in the private sector or move out of the cps boundaries. Neighborhood programs need to be stronger and have better enrollment but removing these programs will not achieve this.
93	I'm writing this to advocate for the current CPS gifted programs and magnet programs. As a faculty member in university and committee member of several DEI committees, I believe that the current system with gifted programs and magnet programs of CPS is the best approach to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. The system allows students from different Tiers to receive appropriate education at different levels based on kids development rather than based on income levels of their families. To move away from this system will make the children from lower income families and minority communities more difficult to receive the same educational benefits. Please consider keeping the programs for the students in Chicago Public Schools system.
94	Do not get rid of school choice. It is a horrible policy idea.
95	Please don't close selective enrollment schools. This will lead to mass Exodus of tax payers from Chicago
96	I would like to keep current school system.
97	Selective enrollment schools ensure that children across the district are afforded the opportunity to be challenged in a school environment best suited to their needs. A lot of these children would not succeed in a traditional learning environment, particularly given the correlation between academic acceleration and neurodivergence. Selective enrollment schools help to foster unique learning environments that challenge and support these children mentally and emotionally. And because these schools help children across various neighborhoods, the ones most vulnerable in the worst areas will be affected the most as they are forced to matriculate at their local schools with children of vastly different academic standings. The attempt to create parody should not be to pull top performing students down, but raise others up. If selective enrollment schools are dissolved, our family, a law-abiding, tax-paying, community-giving Chicago resident, will be forced to find an alternative schooling situation for our son, leaving the city. Our ask is that you don't create more reasons to push upstanding citizens out of your city. Crime, delinquency and city-exodus are already at an all-time high. Please continue to

	foster programs that support a better Chicago - a place we have been proud to call home but as of late are beginning to wonder why.
98	Withdraw selective and gifted program is wrong idea since kids have opportunity to learn deep understanding and diversity group of students. Do you guarantee of improving neighborhood school quality while I can see a lot of high school students stealing things in supermarket like Target. Walgreen.
99	I think selective enrollment is such an integral part of the CPS program. I have children in both neighborhood and selective enrollment programs and they are honestly the reason we stayed in the city. If this program were to end, I would see many more families forced to leave since CPS cannot fit the needs of his diverse learners. I love that my child has a wide range of cultures he is exposed to in his SE school.
100	More than one thing can be true. I believe in investing more broadly in CPS neighborhood schools. I also believe in school choice, and that is 100% why my partner and I had chosen to raise our family in the city of Chicago. The ability to have options, such as send one child to the neighborhood school that meets their needs, and send another to a selective enrollment school because 1) they earned it based on merit and 2) it provides the academic environment that meets their needs, is integral to what makes Chicago an attractive place to raise a family. If the option is removed to allow children the opportunity to attend a school that is both public and not in their neighborhood, the city will see repercussions that will slowly, but surely erode a core population of this city. Your highest population of low income children will never have the opportunity to leave their neighborhood unless they find another way. Your highest earners will send their children to private school. Your middle class will leave the city. More than one thing can be true. Think carefully about the implications of the decisions being made--not just purely in theory how things are expected to go (e.g. if we take away school choice, and children only go to their neighborhood schools, then neighborhood schools will automatically be better), but also taking into consideration human nature. At its core, people will do what is best for their own family. ABSENCE OF AN OPTION to provide many an opportunity to not just have a safe environment to eat regularly daily, but to be expected to learn, be challenged, and be set up for a more successful future WILL DRIVE FAMILIES AWAY FROM CPS. We would be one of them.
101	If you dismantle the selective enrollment schools you better have a solution to giving the south loop a neighborhood highschool IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD- not 30 blocks away.
102	Selective enrolment schools should be retained as they provide a healthy competition for kids to outshine and help boost innovation for the community, city, state, and country.
103	I'm writing you to voice my strong opposition to any plan to remove or reduce investment in Selective Enrollment schools in Chicago Public Schools. My children attend Skinner North Selective Enrollment school. They have received the absolute highest quality education in this school for 5+ years. Further, they benefit from the diverse student body and faculty. The selective enrollment system in CPS is the number one reason we choose to live in Chicago (rather than the suburbs). I am adamant that this system stays in place in Chicago. It is extremely valuable. Skinner North is the number one school in all of Illinois. Please do everything you can to support the continued health and growth of the selective enrollment system in CPS. You won't fix CPS by snuffing out the brightest parts within it.
104	I feel that dismantling the system of "student choice" within CPS would be detrimental to students (and families) who prefer accelerated and/or more rigorous curriculum. Our

	"SEES" school enrolls diverse learners from many backgrounds and ethnicities from neighborhoods across the city. My family's experience with the "SEES" program has been very positive and its the primary reason we still reside in Chicago. I understand the Mayor's concerns and agree that neighborhood schools need more resources, however this should not be at the expense of the Selective Enrollment Programs.
105	Eliminating the current elective system at CPS will harm the diversity of students, limit families options to pursue better education for their kids, and make educational resources disparities even worse.
106	Choice schools are critical for the city of Chicago. If you remove my ability to send my children to choice schools my family will be forced to leave the city. You will run a high volume of tax paying citizens out of the city with this change.
107	The selective enrollment schools have a strong track record of several decades. Why would you dismantle them? And despite what the news media would have you think, many of the students and beneficiaries of the system are not white or Asian. The success stories are not limited to just Jones College Prep and Payton. What about Westinghouse, Hancock and South Shore? Please go tour these schools and see for yourself what they are about. Kids need models of excellence to strive towards.
108	The selective enrollment schools have a strong track record of several decades. Why would you dismantle them? And despite what the news media would have you think, many of the students and beneficiaries of the system are not white or Asian. The success stories are not limited to just Jones College Prep and Payton. What about Westinghouse, Hancock and South Shore? Please go tour these schools and see for yourself what they are about. Kids need models of excellence to strive towards.
109	The selective enrollment program has allowed my son to be among peers at the same educational level as him while being integrated into a diverse neighborhood school. While I do see how equalizing the playing field for neighborhood schools would be beneficial, I do not think that eliminating programs for gifted students is the way to do this.
110	<p>Students in gifted schools typically perform at a level approximately 2 grades above their counterparts in other schools. Children attending gifted schools benefit from an environment that accommodates their preferred pace of learning. Eliminating these schools would not only restrict educational resources and opportunities for these students but also hinder their academic development. Therefore, as a community, it is crucial not to deprive them of these valuable educational settings.</p> <p>Please acknowledge the positive impact of gifted schools. They have nurtured numerous talented individuals across generations who have made significant contributions to society. Instead of eliminating something beneficial, consider ways to enhance neighborhood schools without sacrificing the strengths of gifted programs.</p> <p>Selective enrollment provides an opportunity for everyone to test in. However, neighborhood school in the other hand, you have to live in certain aera to apply. CPS should focus on creating more opportunities for kids facing disadvantages but displaying potential. Raise the awareness of the gift tests in their community, encourage them to take the test and offer other assistance (such as transportation, more credits, etc). Ensuring they have an improved chance of gaining admission.</p> <p>The advantages of selective enrollment are significant; discontinue it will not enhance the quality of neighborhood schools or contribute to the improvement of our society.</p>

111	<p>This shift will likely drive everyone paying the lionshare of the taxes that fund schools (large single family homes) to the suburbs and then ultimately as some of the highest paid teachers in the country you'll see pressure to reduce salaries. Is the teachers union really on board with this approach? If top high schools nationwide are not available anymore in the city (and if you kill selective enrollment they almost certainly won't be) where will families look to go that can go? The suburbs....and Chicago becomes Detroit more quickly than it already is. Getting rid of selective enrollment is a TERRIBLE IDEA. You should be building more and better resourced schools in the areas that need it, not removing something that is working so well for so many of chicago's kids.</p>
112	<p>Your plan based on the article below get rid of selective enrollment schools is a bad idea. I strongly oppose.</p> <p>As a tax payer and a parent of a CPS student I am mortified with the current administration. First the testing fiasco and now this.</p> <p>Brandon's "plan" and all of you are going to stunt students with the ability to learn at a higher level. I find it deplorable that you are only giving parents one day to act upon your deliberate actions of holding back students that are gifted.</p> <p>I grew up in a system where there were no gifted schools and I had to go to a regular public school. I can tell you integrating kids that are extremely gifted and average kids who may or may not want to learn will hurt the ones who want to learn at a higher level. How will the teacher create a curriculum that addresses to both audiences? There will be a lot of wasted time. These gifted kids are learning 1 to 2 years ahead of a normal student. What you are all doing is creating a standard of mediocrity. These gifted kids will not be challenged. The US education system is already a joke compared to the rest of the world. And now you're going to make it even worse. We are way behind people. Wake up.</p> <p>Let me ask you all a question. University of Alabama has some of the best football players in the country. It's not by accident. They are all gifted. Would Nick Saban put a team of average/middle of the road athletes on the same field? So why is sports any different than education? Is this elitist? No. It's the real world and we all live in it. It's competition. That is the real world. Who is your plan benefiting? Certainly not mine and that is all I care about as a tax payer and IL voter. As parents we all want the best for our kid and I'm sure that if your child's education was going to be stunted you'd be angry.</p> <p>Your agenda is making this about economics rather than education.</p> <p>Many immigrants come to this country with the goal to get the best education for their children. You are depriving them of this with your course of action. Don't leave a legacy of mediocrity for these kids.</p> <p>Cheers, DY</p>
113	<p>How would this affect children already enrolled in the school? Future siblings as well?</p>
114	<p>I'm writing to express my concerns about the plan to phase out the select enrollment program. Over the past few years we've turned down work related moves and requests from family to leave Chicago primary due to our commitment to CPS and strong belief in the RGC program (our son is currently in the program at Bell Elementary). If this</p>

	<p>program were to be phased out, it would force our hands to leave the city and I know from discussions with many of his classmates parents that they are also contemplating moving if such a drastic decision were made by the school board.</p>
115	<p>Please do not consider the removal of selective enrollment schools and continue to push and focus on a near south highschool. the continued population growth of the near south will only make it a more imperative to have a near south high school for the south loop, chinatown, Bridgeport, and Pilsen neighborhoods. The fact that these things are being discussed and voted on before a fully elected board comes into play next year is very disappointing and self serving.</p>
116	<p>I was unable to access the live stream of the Chicago Board of Education meeting even though I signed up for it. This seems intentional as the Board of Education is about to make a monumentally poor decision to remove Principals from the decision of SRO's in CPS schools. No person who has spent time in CPS schools would ever say that removing SRO's is a good idea.</p>
117	<p>I am writing to express my deep concern and opposition to the recent proposal to remove the CPS school choice. As a parent and a concerned member of our society, I firmly believe that this decision undermines the educational opportunities and future prospects of our children.</p> <p>The selective school has been an essential institution that has consistently demonstrated a commitment to academic excellence and provided a nurturing environment for the intellectual growth of our students. Its removal threatens the educational foundation that has been crucial in shaping the future leaders and contributors to our community. This will adversely impact millions of students, family members, and Staff in CPS. Forcing them to move out of Chicago or left with no choice but going backwards in their education journey and not providing what their children deserve.</p> <p>Selective schools play a pivotal role in identifying and nurturing gifted and talented students, fostering a culture of academic excellence, and providing an environment that challenges students to reach their full potential. Removing the selective school sends a troubling message about the value our society places on education and excellence. It jeopardizes the educational pathway for those students who require specialized and advanced learning opportunities to thrive. Our community has benefited greatly from the contributions of graduates from the selective school and removing it would undoubtedly have far-reaching negative consequences. The followings are the vital roles the school choice presents and will be lost with this progressive movement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diverse Educational Options: School choice allows families to choose from a variety of educational options, including traditional public schools, charter schools, magnet schools, and selective enrolment schools. This

diversity helps cater to the diverse learning styles, interests, and needs of students.

2. **Meeting Specialized Needs:** Different students have different learning needs, and school choice enables parents to find schools that specialize in certain areas such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), arts, language immersion, or other specialized programs. This helps ensure that students receive an education that aligns with their interests and future goals.
3. **Addressing Educational Inequities:** Selective schools, especially those with a commitment to serving underprivileged or underrepresented communities, can play a role in addressing educational inequities. By providing access to high-quality education based on merit, these schools can contribute to breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for students who may face systemic challenges.
4. **Addressing Achievement Gaps:** School choice can help address educational disparities and achievement gaps by providing opportunities for students in underserved communities to access high-quality schools that may offer specialized programs or additional resources to support their academic success.
5. **Increased Competition and Quality Improvement:** School choice can create healthy competition among schools. When parents have the ability to choose the school that best fits their child's needs, schools are incentivized to improve their offerings to attract and retain students. This competition can lead to higher standards, better teaching practices, and overall improvements in the quality of education.
6. **Promoting Community Engagement:** School choice fosters a sense of community engagement as parents become more involved in the decision-making process regarding their child's education. This involvement can extend to participation in school governance, parent-teacher associations, and other collaborative efforts.
7. **Diversity of Talents and Perspectives:** Selective schools often attract students with diverse talents, skills, and perspectives. By identifying and enrolling students based on merit or specific criteria, these schools create a diverse student body where individuals bring unique strengths, experiences, and viewpoints to the learning community. This diversity enhances the educational experience for all students, fostering a rich and dynamic environment.
8. **Mission Alignment and Specialized Education:** Selective schools are often established with a specific educational mission or focus, such as science, technology, arts, or language immersion. This allows them to

provide specialized education tailored to the needs and interests of the students. The focused mission contributes to a strong sense of identity and purpose within the school community.

9. **High Academic Standards:** Selective schools typically set high academic standards and expectations for their students. This commitment to excellence creates a culture of achievement and motivates students to strive for academic success. As a result, selective schools often become hubs of academic excellence within the larger educational landscape.
10. **Preparation for Higher Education and Career Success:** Selective schools often prioritize rigorous academic programs, advanced coursework, and opportunities for intellectual growth. This prepares students for higher education and successful careers by equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities needed to excel in their chosen fields.
11. **Cultural Enrichment and Global Perspective:** Some selective schools may attract students from diverse cultural backgrounds. This diversity contributes to a rich cultural tapestry within the school, exposing students to different traditions, perspectives, and ways of thinking. This exposure helps prepare students for a globalized world and fosters cultural understanding and appreciation.
12. **Innovation and Research:** Some selective schools may prioritize research, innovation, and cutting-edge educational practices. This commitment to staying at the forefront of educational advancements benefits not only the students within the school but also the broader educational community as these practices are often shared and disseminated.

118 | I strongly support enrollment program.

119 | As a parent of two daughters currently thriving in the CPS Selective Enrollment program, I have witnessed firsthand the incredible impact these schools have on motivated and high-achieving students. My daughters have been working tirelessly to meet and exceed the high academic standards set by their schools. Their experiences have not only fostered a profound love for learning but have also equipped them with the skills and knowledge essential for success in college and beyond. Removing selective enrollment schools would seriously impair the quality of education provided by CPS in addition to being a disservice to committed kids like my daughters. Maintaining and even improving these initiatives is essential to guaranteeing that every student has fair access to high-quality learning materials. And I really want you to think about how this choice will affect our kids' futures and the quality of schooling in our city in the long run. Keeping Selective Enrollment Schools open is an investment in the students who have the highest potential for success, and by extension, in the growth and development of Chicago.

120 | I hope can save Selective Enrollment, Magnet & Charter schools.

121 | I appreciate the Board and the Mayor's willingness and enthusiasm to tackle a long-standing issue about properly funding and supporting neighborhood schools. Hopefully, parents and the community at large can rally behind this important issue. However, I firmly oppose accomplishing this goal by defunding or removing magnet schools. Those schools play an equally important role in our city and are a strong example of what CPS does best. I have two grade-school children who attend a Spanish-immersion magnet school. The schools draws in students from across Chicago. I specifically chose that school, as opposed to my neighborhood school, because I wanted to show my children, on a daily basis, that their city and community were broader than the neighborhood they lived in. I wanted them to see students and families from backgrounds across the city - different races, different languages, and different socio-economic backgrounds. Exposing my children to these backgrounds is critical to their education and their development. It will prepare them to be more understanding, more accepting, and more appreciative of the diversity around them. Too often, we are caught up in our own bubbles, where we don't often have the opportunity to cross paths with people who come from different backgrounds. I am proud that my children get the opportunity to meet other students from across the city. And to be blunt, they wouldn't get this same opportunity outside of school. The goal of a well-rounded education is more than just what the kids study in books. They learn from other students just as much as they learn from their teachers. I want my kids to learn to be good citizens - to be respectful of others regardless of what they look like, what language they speak, or where they come from. I want my kids to be mindful that other communities face hardships that they don't face. I want my kids to learn compassion and empathy. These are lessons they will learn by attending a school that draws students from all over the city, and it can't be replaced or addressed in the same way by enrolling them in a neighborhood school. I also chose to enroll my children in the school because it is the only dual-language school that aims to bring in an equal number of students who are predominantly English-speaking and Spanish -speaking. I am thrilled that my older child is now fluent in Spanish and that my younger child is quickly catching on. I regret that I never learned Spanish, but I consider it a life skill that will serve my children well into adulthood. To my knowledge, no other school in the city would provide this same opportunity, and it would be a shame if the school were closed. I sympathize with the difficult situation the Board and the Mayor face. CPS neighborhood schools are underfunded and critical funds are directed away from those schools when they go to magnet, charter, or selective enrollment schools. But, this should not be a zero-sum game. The city should avoid trying to fix one problem while creating another, harming otherwise well-functioning and important schools in the process. It would be a disservice to our community and the city if the magnet schools were closed because it would preclude an opportunity to attend a truly dual-immersion program that does not exist elsewhere in the city.

122 | my kids really like his school (skinner north)it provides nice friendly for a Autism kid.

123 | I am writing to express my strong support for the continued existence and promotion of selective enrollment and magnet schools specifically managed by the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) system, excluding charter schools. While I appreciate the recent focus on neighborhood schools to address equity concerns, I believe it is vital to acknowledge and preserve the unique value that CPS-run selective enrollment and magnet schools bring to our educational landscape.

Diverse Learning Needs:

These schools are essential in catering to diverse learning needs and interests, offering specialized programs that engage students and contribute to their academic success.

Academic Excellence:

Selective enrollment schools create an environment of academic excellence by attracting and challenging high-achieving students. This not only benefits individual students but also fosters a culture of achievement that positively impacts the entire school community.

Innovation and Specialization:

Magnet schools, with their focus on specific areas such as world languages, arts, STEM, or vocational training, play a crucial role in developing unique skill sets needed for the modern workforce.

Enhanced School Choice and Parental Involvement:

Preserving these CPS-run schools ensures parents have a variety of choices, empowering them to actively participate in their child's education by selecting an environment aligned with their child's learning style and aspirations.

Addressing Achievement Gaps:

Rather than eliminating or limiting funding for these schools, efforts should focus on addressing the root causes of achievement gaps. Strengthening and supporting CPS-run selective enrollment and magnet schools can contribute to a comprehensive strategy to bridge educational disparities.

Global Preparedness:

In an increasingly globalized world, exposure to diverse perspectives and specialized skills is crucial. Magnet schools, in particular, play a vital role in preparing students for success in a competitive global environment.

I encourage the Chicago Board of Education to adopt a balanced approach that acknowledges the importance of neighborhood schools while recognizing the valuable role that CPS-managed selective enrollment and magnet schools play in fostering academic achievement and preparing students for the future. I specifically call for your support of CPS-run selective enrollment and magnet schools, distinguishing them from charter schools that, despite being funded with public dollars, operate under private management.

124 I STRONGLY OPPOSE the elimination of the Selective Enrollment program. One of the main reasons why my family moved to the city of Chicago instead of the nearby suburbs was because of the Selective Enrollment program. If the Selective Enrollment program is cancelled, I will campaign vigorously to have Mayor Brandon Johnson voted out of office. Ultimately, I will move my family out of the city of Chicago, giving my property tax money to a more deserving municipality that properly supports education.

125 As a family, we made the choice to live in the city with the understanding that we had some school choice. We have exercised our right to that choice - and in the process played the many frustrating games CPS demands of us.

With competent leadership, CPS shouldn't have to diminish magnet and selective enrollment schools to improve neighborhood schools. It isn't one or the other. What CPS needs to do is drill into the unique needs of every school. In a city as big and diverse as ours, there is no "one size fits all". The school communities are all so

different and the needs are wide ranging and vast. Taking away resources from kids who are high-achieving is no different than taking away resources from kids who are under-performing. All kids deserve access to an education that challenges and inspires them!

Also, CPS needs to demand much, much more from parents, caregivers and families. Parents have to be involved in their kids' education. Parents should be held partially accountable for the successes and failures of a school. It isn't fair to continually dump all the blame on teachers or CPS when kids don't perform to their potential. If the parents are not involved with their kids' education, then that is something that needs to be considered when allocating resources to a school.

126 In today's board meeting, the recently appointed Chicago School Board members are planning on doubling down on the failed policies of the past.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that there is an imminent risk of losing an entire generation of students, the Chicago Board of Education seems to be more interested in prioritizing the interests of adults at the expense of what works for students.

Specifically, the board wants the CEO of Chicago Public Schools to propose a strategic plan that prioritizes neighborhood schools and deemphasizes public schools of choice. Not only is this morally objectionable but also detrimental to students. Studies have consistently shown that districts who embrace school choice improve student achievement, and research has shown that reforms such as the expansion of public charter schools are working in Chicago.

Moreover, taking away choice from parents and forcing students to attend failing schools is actively reinforcing the very same racism the school board claims to be fighting against. School assignments in Chicago and the country are primarily determined by where you live, and where you live is decided by how much wealth you have. In effect, by proposing a plan that focuses on taking away choice from parents and exclusively forcing them to attend neighborhood schools, the board is doubling down on education redlining.

Public school choice is extensively embraced by parents in Chicago, with 3 out of 4 high school students and almost half of all elementary school students opting not to attend their designated neighborhood schools. Notably, the schools with the lowest performance rates have the highest utilization of school choice, as only 4% of parents zoned into failing schools choose to attend them. The system is working, as the preponderance of evidence strongly suggests.

For example, as outlined in a recent RAND study, multi-grade charter schools generate positive outcomes across a variety of metrics, including ACT scores, graduation rates and college-going rates. Additionally, venerable education researcher Sean Reardon of Stanford University found that Chicago students between the third and eighth grade were improving faster than 96% of the school districts in the country, achieving 6 years' worth of growth over 5 school years.

The proposed resolution the board is voting on today would undo much of this reform. It calls for the CEO to propose a new five-year Strategic Plan for FY 25-29 to the Board that will, in part, "transition away from privatization and admissions/enrollment policies

and approaches that further stratification and inequity in CPS and drive student enrollment away from neighborhood schools.”

School choice in Chicago, as a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago pointed out, does not increase stratification and segregation. Students most likely to utilize public school choice are Black students and students living in the poorest neighborhoods.

Reducing stratification and inequity by doubling down on neighborhood schools is like fighting fire with gasoline.

The entire resolution would basically take Chicago back to the pre-reform era of 1995. It uses the anti-racist language of our time while, paradoxically, pushing for policies that would very likely result in resegregation. It does nothing for students and makes zero mention of what students should be able to learn or how to recover from the devastating learning loss from the pandemic.

Our education system is at risk of losing a generation of students, but the current Chicago school board is playing politics and proposing to go back to a day where parents were forced to send their children to failing schools and promised by bureaucrats - who often use school choice themselves - that they just need more time and money to fix them. Parents have no reason to believe that reverting to failed policies would work any better now than it did decades ago when the current reforms were first put into place

127 Do not do away with school choice programs in CPS!! If you're worried about the inequity of selective enrollment, give ALL incoming kindergarteners the SEES test. Pull out the truly gifted - don't let it be an opportunity that is only available to those who know about it and sign up! Also don't treat gifted students as less than in the name of "inequity". Gifted students need an opportunity to thrive too - they do not do well in a traditional classroom setting. If we care about giving every child the right to a decent education, that includes gifted students.

128 Dear Chicago Board of Education Members,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern and opposition to the proposed dissolution of the Selective Enrollment Program within the Chicago Public Schools system. The Selective Enrollment Program has been an integral and invaluable component of our educational landscape, contributing significantly to the academic success and growth of students across the district.

First and foremost, the Selective Enrollment Program has played a crucial role in nurturing and challenging the intellectual abilities of high-achieving students. By providing an environment that fosters academic excellence, the program has consistently produced graduates who go on to excel in higher education and contribute positively to society. Dissolving this program would risk depriving these gifted students of the specialized education they need to reach their full potential.

Furthermore, the Selective Enrollment Program has contributed to the diversity and vibrancy of the student body within Chicago Public Schools. By attracting students from various socioeconomic backgrounds and neighborhoods, the program has helped bridge

educational gaps and promote a culture of inclusivity. This diversity is essential for creating well-rounded individuals who can thrive in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

Additionally, the Selective Enrollment Program has been an effective tool in addressing issues of educational inequality. By providing an opportunity for students with exceptional abilities, regardless of their economic background, to access a high-quality education, the program has helped level the playing field and break down barriers that often hinder academic achievement in underserved communities.

While it is acknowledged that there may be challenges within the current structure of the Selective Enrollment Program, I believe that these challenges can be addressed through thoughtful reforms and improvements rather than complete dissolution. I urge you to consider alternative measures to enhance the program's effectiveness, ensuring that it continues to benefit both high-achieving students and the larger community.

In conclusion, I strongly advocate for the preservation and improvement of the Selective Enrollment Program within Chicago Public Schools. The positive impact it has had on students' lives, educational outcomes, and community dynamics cannot be overstated. I trust that you will carefully weigh the implications of dissolving this program and work towards a solution that enhances its strengths while addressing any existing challenges.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to seeing the Selective Enrollment Program continue to thrive and positively impact the lives of Chicago's students.

Sincerely,

Anand Banthia (parent of a daughter currently enrolled at Skinner North)

129	If the board decides to dismantle selective enrollment/choice schools then the south loop area NEEDS a neighborhood high school (not Phillips that has decided its focus is sports not academics). The South Loop TIF paid for all the updates to Jones high school in early 2010s so everyone in that TIF should be zoned to Jones. I personally think that should have always been the case as soon it was decided that TIF would pay for the remodel.
130	School choice is an important reason why CPS schools rank as some of the top schools in the state. If you take away the choice program, those with resources will still have a choice (they can still go private, move the suburbs, or even move neighborhoods). Taking away choice only disfavors those without resources. If you want neighborhood schools to be the best option then work on fixing the neighborhoods first - segregation in this city is what causes inequity, not school choice. Choice and selective enrollment are currently the only option to change this dynamic. Taking take away means abandoning certain kids to a neighborhood school that will ultimately not meet their needs.
131	To whom it may concern, I'm writing you to voice my strong opposition to any plan to remove or reduce investment in Selective Enrollment schools in Chicago Public Schools. My children

	<p>attend Skinner North Selective Enrollment school. They have received the absolute highest quality education in this school for 5+ years. Further, they benefit from the diverse student body and faculty. The selective enrollment system in CPS is the number one reason we choose to live in Chicago (rather than the suburbs). I am adamant that this system stays in place in Chicago. It is extremely valuable. Skinner North is the number one school in all of Illinois. Please do everything you can to support the continued health and growth of the selective enrollment system in CPS.</p> <p>Thanks, Katherine Smith</p>
132	<p>If this is enacted, we would either move out of our neighborhood or out of the city altogether. Although selective enrollment is a bit painful, it allowed us to stay in the neighborhood that we've lived in for many years and not move out of the city. I believe that, although well meaning, the unintended consequences of eliminating this program will be to further segregate communities according to school choice and income. It may be a long term solution, but it may take so long to come to fruition, that it'll never get there (families with resources will move away from underperforming school districts and out of the city).</p>
133	<p>CPS must prioritize transparency and genuine community involvement in its planning process. The recent unveiling of the New Five-Year Transformational Strategic Plan before seeking comprehensive community feedback raises concerns about the authenticity of input. The resolution's framing of selective enrollment schools harming neighborhood schools oversimplifies the issue. A more constructive approach would acknowledge that a well-designed system can enhance both concurrently. I urge the Board to reconsider the planning process, ensuring transparent communication and a collaborative approach from the outset, fostering trust and genuinely reflecting the community's needs.</p>
134	<p>I object to the ending of Selective Enrollment schools, they are the only beacon of hope in an otherwise underfunded system, and provide safe spaces for students to achieve their best</p>
135	<p>Dear Chicago Board of Education Members,</p> <p>I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern and opposition to the proposed dissolution of the Selective Enrollment Program within the Chicago Public Schools system. The Selective Enrollment Program has been an integral and invaluable component of our educational landscape, contributing significantly to the academic success and growth of students across the district.</p> <p>First and foremost, the Selective Enrollment Program has played a crucial role in nurturing and challenging the intellectual abilities of high-achieving students. By providing an environment that fosters academic excellence, the program has consistently produced graduates who go on to excel in higher education and contribute positively to society. Dissolving this program would risk depriving these gifted students of the specialized education they need to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Selective Enrollment Program has contributed to the diversity and vibrancy of the student body within Chicago Public Schools. By attracting students from various socioeconomic backgrounds and neighborhoods, the program has helped bridge educational gaps and promote a culture of inclusivity. This diversity is essential for</p>

creating well-rounded individuals who can thrive in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

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In conclusion, I strongly advocate for the preservation and improvement of the Selective Enrollment Program within Chicago Public Schools. The positive impact it has had on students' lives, educational outcomes, and community dynamics cannot be overstated. I trust that you will carefully weigh the implications of dissolving this program and work towards a solution that enhances its strengths while addressing any existing challenges.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to seeing the Selective Enrollment Program continue to thrive and positively impact the lives of Chicago's students.

Sincerely,

Parent of a daughter currently enrolled at Skinner North

136	<p>I believe that until you can show that neighborhood schools can provide the same quality of education as choice schools, you should not get rid of choice schools.</p> <p>As flawed as the selective enrollment system is, it is still a better alternative than some neighborhood schools, especially in the west and south sides.</p>
137	<p>I believe that until you can show that neighborhood schools can provide the same quality of education as choice schools, you should not get rid of choice schools.</p> <p>As flawed as the selective enrollment system is, it is still a better alternative than some neighborhood schools, especially in the west and south sides.</p>
138	<p>Please do not get rid of selective enrollment schools</p>
139	<p>I would like to register my support for selective enrollment schools. These schools allow my kids and other kids to receive a top tier education in the City without having to pay to live in a top tier neighborhood. I believe that magnet schools and selective enrollment schools do help provide equity in the system, even if it isn't perfect, it still helps. I am concerned that if selective enrollment and magnet schools are eliminated that many families with the resources to do so will leave CPS for the suburbs or private options.</p>
140	<p>I was accepted to Walter Payton from a selective enrollment test. I was happy the school chose me and I was lucky to have gotten good on the test in order to be chosen.</p>

	Don't get rid of selective enrollment schools! Some kids like me may find their home away from home through this.
141	Please don't get rid of selective enrollment schools, it makes no sense. These schools are in place for a reason. This change would be detrimental to our schooling system and a huge negative. This is coming from a CPS student so please consider my voice.
142	Fixing neighborhood schools is a great goal, but it does not necessitate eliminating SE schools. If you want to meet every child where they are (isn't what cps is talking about?), SE must stay. I can't imagine a teacher being able to differentiate for all the kids in a neighborhood classroom of about 40 with kids who are below grade level and those who are 3-7 grades above their grade level!
143	I am writing to voice my opposition against eliminating selective enrollment programs. While I understand all children need great education, the truth is all kids learn at a different pace. It would be a great disadvantage to all students if teachers cannot tailor their lessons to the level of their class.
144	I do believe neighborhood High Schools need to be supported. But selective enrollment schools are what allow high achievers to go higher. It also blends kids from all other neighborhoods, backgrounds, cultures etc. This is actually what helps unite our city and bring people together. Further digging in to neighborhoods and neighborhood schools will further divide and segregate the city and its kids. Is it a perfect system, no, but it is a system that allows all kids from all parts of the city to excel.
145	<p>My daughter attends a magnet elementary school. We, as a family, made the choice to send her there because it is the embodiment of equity in practice, coupled with significantly above average outcomes. The students lottery in (there is no test) and the makeup of the student body is diverse across every metric. So without targeting a pool of easy-to-teach children, our school somehow manages to raise a group of kind and educated children.</p> <p>If she went to our neighborhood school, she would encounter very few non-Latinx children of color – unlike her current school. And she would be bored out of her mind.</p> <p>If you decide to reduce funding for the magnet and selective enrollment schools, you are harming a vast number of the children you claim to want to help. Our neighborhoods are so segregated. The magnet and selective enrollment schools allow kids from different areas of the city to grow up together. And that exposure is good for the whole of our society.</p> <p>You will punish the gifted kids by not allowing them an accelerated curriculum. You will punish the diverse learners who need to be grouped by needs and not just by their home addresses. You will encourage those with the means to leave the public school system entirely. Or you will end up with even more dramatic money bubbles around the “good” neighborhood schools, where parents devote every dollar they have to live within the boundaries of the neighborhood schools that function well.</p> <p>If you pull funding or try to force these schools to close in favor of the neighborhood schools, I guarantee you that my daughter’s peers will largely shift to private or suburban schools. And then you will really have a city of haves and have-nots. You will kill public schools in Chicago.</p>
146	My name is Konstantin Gromov, and I am a resident of Chicago. I am a Board Certified Periodontist with two active dental practices. I pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes every year. If you decide to eliminate selective enrollment schools, I will move my

	family and my businesses out of the state because there will be no access to good quality education in the future for my young children.
147	<p>I'm writing in support of keeping CPS's outstanding selective enrollment high schools as they are. As a parents of 2 kids who attended them, I'm proud they are part of our school system. They are the gem that kept our family living in Chicago instead of moving the an affluent suburb. They keep many families and tax payers part of the CPS community. Without these tax-paying families, how will Chicago afford its schools? I understand that Mayor Johnson is trying to drive tax-payers out of the city with his policies, but without the wealthy, there will be no one to pay for the programs he's promoting. Closing down the selective enrollment high schools will put the nail the in the coffin of Chicago as a great city. Let's help it rise up, not deteriorate. Please keep the selective enrollment schools open.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
148	I believe CPS could improve the quality of all neighborhood schools, but that it will take years to achieve. Selective Enrollment should not be hastily eliminated (as was bus services that serve the SE students) before this has been achieved. Families will not be willing to switch to their neighborhood schools overnight, without proven improvements in resources for each school, including fully staffed and supported teachers and support staff
149	My child attends a selective enrollment high school and it has been a fantastic experience. Whitney Young has tremendous racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity. This school offers an extraordinary educational opportunity. This school is my favorite thing about living in the city of Chicago. The possibility of my child attending a selective enrollment high school was a major factor keeping us from considering a move to the suburbs. I cannot fathom why the school board would even consider ending such a successful program. These schools have a model of proven success that should be expanded and replicated, not eliminated. It would be a grave error for the school board to reduce the selective enrollment programs.
150	<p>I am a parent to two girls in CPS. We started at our neighborhood school, which is also a magnet so we could stay in it when we moved a mile away. My younger daughter is still there as a sixth grader, while my seventh grader just transferred into a regional gifted center (which is, ironically, within walking distance to our house but is not our neighborhood school).</p> <p>My thoughts are complicated.</p> <p>I support strengthening neighborhood schools. I saw the benefits of a tight-knit, local community at our first elementary school. While I get the desire for selective enrollment in elementary, I have seen the downsides of this. Year after year, the class got smaller and smaller as people started going out of the neighborhood to go to selective enrollment. Parents were searching for a "better school" for their kids - which is hard to define - but a lot of it was because our local school did not have the flexibility or autonomy to create curriculum that would meet the needs of a diverse set of students. Largely, it was the kids who were strong academically but not so smart to score 95th percentile and get into the truly great (again, "great" is subjective but that is the perception) SEES schools. I'm sorry to say that I then contributed to this trend, with my daughter transferred out for seventh grade. The remaining class is less than 40, from a class that was over 90 kids earlier in the elementary school years, and much of those 40 were transfers in through the magnet program (and therefore not from the neighborhood). This lack of stability in the class made it harder for the school to really</p>

meet the needs of the students and really differentiate the curriculum to what the kids needed.

For high school, I think what is needed is more high-quality high schools. The reason that parents and kids are so maniacal about getting into one of the five selective schools...is because there is SUCH a huge gap between those and their neighborhood schools. It's not like - oh there are a couple of more clubs, an extra level of math. It's a fundamental different curriculum, support model, school environment, and resources. If the answer was the following, I think I could potentially support it : Our long-term goal is to eliminate SEES high schools and we know it will take nearly 20 years to do so. Over the coming decades, we will strengthen local schools (likely in a phased way to manage resources / investments), create thoughtful transition plans, etc. - then I could be supportive. Any quick transition will have terrible implications for current CPS students (from all neighborhoods).

I also am conscious that neighborhood schools in rich neighborhoods will get more resources through parent fundraising. So there is a real risk here of continued under-investment in the communities that need it the most. The transition and implementation plans will again have to be incredibly thoughtful, and there may need to be targeted interventions in certain neighborhoods for those children who need more/different support than what their (under-resourced) local school can give them. But I think it should be much more targeted than it is today.

So overall - I'm supportive of CPS moving to make access to high-quality education more equitable, and to further strengthen neighborhood schools. I think CPS should lessen reliance on SEES/magnet schools, and seek to provide appropriate and challenging curriculum to all students in their local schools. I think this is most important for elementary, but could be implemented for high school as well if super thoughtful about implementation and transition.

151 Please, PLEASE keep the CPS selective enrollment programs. My daughter currently attends a RG school I'm grateful for the teachers in this program because they understand her. My daughter needs to be challenged academically, and she also learns differently from other children and she needs extra social emotional support. She loves school because the teachers really understand her learning differences and they know what she needs to learn best.

We wouldn't take support away from children who have other learning differences. The same is true here. We can "focus on neighborhood schools" while also CONTINUING to support gifted children who need the selective enrollment programs to meet their educational needs.

152 Dear Chicago Board of Education,
I strongly urge you to continue offering selective enrollment at CPS. All of my three children are currently elementary students in Chicago Public Schools. Two of my children benefit immensely from selective enrollment choices currently possible through CPS. We love our neighborhood school and deeply support it. It's the best place for one of our children. However, my other two children were strongly recommended by multiple teachers at that very same neighborhood school to apply for selective enrollment because they were ready for a more rigorous academic experience than the teachers at our neighborhood school could provide. It would be a terrible disservice to my children's education to put them back in a classroom where they are not learning. Enough so to make our family strongly consider leaving the city of Chicago. This is not

	<p>to say that neighborhood school's don't need more investment. They do! But don't do it at the expense of selective enrollment. My child matters just as much as any other child. Don't sacrifice anyone's learning for the sake of another. Please listen to the advice of your own teachers and continue offering selective enrollment.</p>
153	<p>I have lived in the South Loop for 17 years and my 10 year old has been attending our neighborhood school, South Loop Elementary School. I love our neighborhood, community and neighborhood elementary/middle school. South Loop has needed a neighborhood High School for many years. We do not have a viable neighborhood high school for our growing neighborhood. Families either leave the city so their child can attend high school or have to go through the selective enrollment process. This has been an ongoing issue and has only gotten worse due to the large amount of growth in this area over the decades. Families are wanting to stay in the South Loop and stay within their neighborhood.</p> <p>Upon hearing the news of the mayor and school board wanting to dismantle selective enrollment, the stress of staying in the city and having an option for high school is rising. Unfortunately, selective enrollment has really been the only viable option. So many in the Near South WANT to send their kids to a high achieving, safe, convenient neighborhood school. This is even MORE of a reason why the Near South needs a neighborhood high school.</p> <p>Myself and hundreds others living in the Near South have been trying to contact officials to get our voices heard and will not stop, as this is too important of an issue.</p>
154	<p>With the school choice option being on the table for distancing ... what options will be made available to South Loop residents? Does this mean the budget approved Near South High School will resume progress? Will Jones becomes our neighborhood school? What will the boundaries for the districts look like? Will there still be lottery into magnet schools? Will removal of school choice cut CPS funded positions at those schools and at other magnet schools outside of just high school?</p>
155	<p>Please keep the selective enrollment program. Differentiation is an important element in modern education. Students who excel should be given additional opportunities and challenges, while students who struggle should be given extra support and assistance. Teaching every child in the same manner hurts both categories of students.</p> <p>Our current selective enrollment program provides unique opportunities to talented students from socioeconomically challenged backgrounds by giving them preferential admission to selective enrollment programs. Without the selective enrollment program, these students would remain in their neighborhood schools and not receive the specialized instruction and challenges that help them maximize their potential.</p>
156	<p>Dear members of the CPS school board,</p> <p>I understand the rationale behind the proposed resolution on which you will vote today, but I need to express my concern that students like mine may be lost and hurt in sweeping changes.</p> <p>My son attends a selective-enrollment elementary school. We chose to have him take the admission test because he experienced disability-based discrimination at the magnet school in which he was enrolled in kindergarten and first-grade (that principal has since retired). In having him test for an SEES, we hoped he would be around other children like him who are described as "twice exceptional." Our son is both extremely intelligent and neurodivergent -- he has ADHD. He has been enrolled in the SEES since second grade and is now a sixth-grader. He is THRIVING.</p>

We intentionally chose to not enroll our son in our neighborhood school because there was no support or pathway for gifted children. We knew that our child would struggle academically and/or socially (likely both) if he were not in a challenging academic program, and frankly, he would have gotten into a lot of trouble because he would be bored. We believe in and support neighborhood schools, and had it been a good choice for our son, we would have enrolled him. Our decisions to enroll him first in a magnet school and then at an SEES were based on academic challenge and disability support.

What would happen to children like ours? Will every neighborhood school have a gifted curriculum? I can't imagine how that would be possible, nor can I imagine that neighborhood schools would have enough gifted students who are also neurodivergent, such that my child could find relatable peers and teachers/staff who could support his needs.

Our family supports equitable and well-funded schools for all kids in CPS. I worry very much, though, about my child and where he'll fit in.

As you consider changes to the district's school structures and choices, I beg of you to please consider how to best serve our twice-exceptional children. Please don't let them fall through the cracks. They need teachers and staff who know how best to support them. Please make sure they have that and that no disabled child will be harmed by your proposals.

Sincerely,
Parent of a 6th grader at selective-enrollment elementary school

157 I applaud the board's intention to focus on neighborhood schools. A great first step would be to proceed with CPS's CURRENT PLAN to build a south loop high school for the vibrant diverse community that is still growing. There are three 6th grade homerooms at South Elementary with 34+ students EACH. The census demonstrates the growth and the community support is there. BUILD THE NEAR SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL now, and in the planned timeline so that the class of 2030 can start their freshman year.

158 I firmly oppose any efforts to diminish or eliminate Chicago's selective enrollment high schools, magnet schools, test-in programs, or other school-choice opportunities currently available to Chicago families. I support the idea that Chicago Public Schools should raise the quality and performance of its neighborhood schools high enough so as to attract and retain high-performing students. Any approach that degrades the quality of the current high-performing schools, however, will harm those students who benefit from attending them. It will also accelerate the existing flight to the suburbs that many families undergo to secure good educations for their children in suburban school districts. Not only is this a disservice to Chicago families, but the loss of property tax income from such families will only further reduce funding for CPS and increase the burden on those families who remain in Chicago. The resulting death-spiral will end up starving CPS of the resources it needs to help all Chicago families.

Selective enrollment high schools and other school choice options are directly responsible for keeping families in the city, paying property taxes, and otherwise supporting Chicago. The mere chance that such schools may not be there in the future is enough to affect decisions about where families will buy homes. In particular, the current administration has anchored its Bring Chicago Home program to increased Real Estate Transfer Taxes for high-value purchases. Bring Chicago Home's laudable and

	<p>important goal of increasing affordable housing for the unhoused will fail if CPS's policies drive down the price of such houses as families with options decide to leave the city.</p> <p>CPS should, indeed, improve the quality of neighborhood schools. The false choice presented in its "Resolution Regarding Values and Parameters for New Five-Year Transformational Strategic Plan, SY25-SY29" presumes that the to improve neighborhood schools is to diminish other schools. Not only will this either-or fallacy harm students, it will irreparably accelerate the flight of people and resources from Chicago.</p>
159	<p>Selective enrollment academic centers and high schools are valuable resources for the city of Chicago. My son is new to a academic center 7th grade and he has greatly benefited from this experience. They maintain a high-performing, diverse academic environment. Any changes to selective enrollment should allow students to remain at their selective enrollment school they attend, including academic center students remaining at their school through high school.</p>
160	<p>The board consistently refers to the school choice system as "pitting schools against one another." While it's essential to acknowledge concerns, it's also crucial to recognize that school choice can foster healthy competition, encouraging schools to continuously improve and innovate. Rather than viewing it as pitting schools against each other, we can see it as a catalyst for excellence and diversity within the education system. Effective policies and collaboration can ensure that all schools, regardless of their choice status, have the resources and support needed to thrive, contributing to an overall stronger educational landscape.</p>
161	<p>Could you please post the current president of the CPS Board, Jianan Shi's, personal financials and disclosures? How is it that he claims it is a volunteer position, yet he is taking funds from Raise Your Hand (funded by CTU), and Asian American Midwest Progressives and other CTU funded organizations? Also, is he still participating in the CTU Pension fund with contributions allowed? As well his racist social media posts should be fully investigated.</p>
162	<p>Selective enrollments schools provide a vital and valuable service to those students who excel and thrive from the additional challenge. Instead of being terminated it should be expanded to capture more students who make the cut. It provides an aspirational; goal for many students to achieve further and key to the success of CPS body and it's entire graduate class, both selective and not. In addition, I fear closing selective enrollment will further see many families (and their tax base) leave the city to search for appropriate challenging programs for their children.</p>
163	<p>As a parent of two children who have grown up in CPS schools, I believe that the suggestion of moving away from selective enrollment schools toward neighborhood schools is the worst possible choice for the children in Chicago. More school choice, not less, is important.</p> <p>Reducing the selective enrollment options in CPS will remove competition for the neighborhood schools -- and there is no question that competition improves the breed." If the educators at neighborhood schools want to increase their enrollment, they should do so by improving the level of education offered at their neighborhood school, so that parents WANT to send their children to that school, not by removing the options parents have if they feel that their neighborhood school doesn't have the right focus or sufficiently challenging coursework.</p>

	<p>My wife and I chose public schools for our children because we wanted them to get a diverse education, meet and make friends with children from every economic sphere and every part of Chicago. Ending the selective enrollment options that we currently have and requiring our children to go to a neighborhood school would have changed our calculus entirely. For many people who do not believe that their neighborhood school has the focus they want to see for their children, or has challenging enough classes, this will force them to move to private schools, or to move out of Chicago entirely.</p> <p>At a time when many states and city governments are trying to give more school options to parents, this potential move by CPS sends a bunker-like, retrograde message that suggests that Chicago is falling behind. And it will be one more reason for Chicago's tax base to leave for more progressive cities and states.</p>
164	<p>Enough of the delay tactics and attacks. Stop stonewalling the new South Loop / Chinatown high school because Jianan Shi and Representative Theresa Mah don't like the location. Either give South Loop the high school they already paid for, Jones College Prep, or finish the job. Enough of Shi's racist and Marxists undertones, he must be fired.</p>
165	<p>I appreciate the ongoing discussions regarding potential changes to the current education system, and I want to bring attention to a crucial aspect of community feedback. It is often observed that those who are most dissatisfied with a system tend to be the most vocal. While it is essential to consider the concerns of this group, it is equally important to hear from individuals who have benefited from the existing school choice and selective enrollment offerings.</p> <p>To ensure a comprehensive understanding of community sentiments, I propose conducting a survey or seeking feedback from current parents and students. By actively seeking input from both those advocating for change and those who appreciate the current system, the Board can make more informed decisions that genuinely reflect the community's diverse needs and aspirations.</p> <p>This inclusive approach will provide a more accurate representation of community sentiments and contribute to a well-rounded dialogue on potential changes to the education system.</p>
166	<p>As an immigrant business owner, former LSC chair, and the father of two CPS students, I support the sentiment behind the proposed 5-year strategic plan, including efforts to strengthen neighborhood schools and drive social justice across the educational system. However, I am also strongly opposed to the Board's plan to weaken or eliminate the selective enrollment system for gifted and high-performing children.</p> <p>My children — both Spanish-speaking Latinxs — are twice-exceptional, with physical and mental health challenges that require 504 plans, and (based on my conversations with multiple neighborhood school teachers and principals) would have struggled in neighborhood schools. Instead, they were able to attend classical and gifted elementary schools and selective high schools, where they received the targeted interventions and specialized support they needed to shine academically. That didn't create inequity — it unlocked an amazing opportunity for underserved minority children to succeed and build better lives for themselves.</p> <p>Creating spaces within the CPS system where high-performing minority children like mine can thrive is a powerful driver of social and racial equity. And my children are far</p>

from the only minority kids to benefit from selective enrollment; in fact, both attend overwhelmingly majority-minority selective schools. The existence of such schools, and their accessibility via a tiered selection system, promotes access to specialized education for gifted children from all demographics and all parts of the city, while doing nothing to hinder the delivery of amazing educational opportunities for other kids via a strong and resilient neighborhood school system.

I strongly support public education, and believe charter schools and privatized education potentially harm neighborhood schools. But we shouldn't lump selective CPS schools together with privatized education as a cause of inequity. Access to selective CPS schools is based not on money or race, but on academic performance and the unique needs of gifted kids.

There may be ways to make the selection process itself fairer or more equitable, of course, and we should strive toward that goal. But we should also remember that the city's selective schools are fundamentally a powerful driver of social justice operating within, not separate from, Chicago's amazing public school framework.

The Board's focus should be on preserving these remarkable and highly successful schools while also doing everything possible to turn every neighborhood school into a success story. Achieving that would be best for everyone. On a purely practical level, the existence of selective and gifted schools within the CPS system helps ensure that middle-class families like mine stay in the city — creating jobs, spending money, paying taxes, and supporting the strength and resilience of our shared community.

Please, don't harm minority and immigrant families like mine by diminishing the selective enrollment system. Yes, we must invest in making our neighborhood schools the best they can possibly be. But we must also keep our city's vibrant selective enrollment system in place, and give high-performing children from every background and every community a chance to achieve their full potential within the CPS school system.

167	I am against the plan to remove selective enrollment. If selective enrollment is removed and there will be no new South Loop school, it's with certainty that I would move out of the city. I understand the privilege of being able to move out to the suburbs but unfortunately it's one that I share with a lot of neighborhood parents.
168	I stand to keep the magnet/gifted.
169	As a former CPS teacher who is now a parent, I would like to share my sincere disappointment that the resolution on Thursday was passed. Supporting neighborhood schools while also allowing students to test into some of the best schools in the country is not mutually exclusive. Please do not take away this opportunity from our students.
170	Save selective enrollment schools and give children who are truly gifted from all neighborhoods a chance. Improve neighborhood schools for equity, don't take quality education away. Our city kids deserve better.
171	Getting rid of selective schools is not a wise choice. Only neighborhood schools will increase regional property value difference and widen inequality. Who suggests this doesn't really care about people who lives in lower cost area but willing to pursue better educations. And no competition, no better progress. We want a better Chicago. Not a sinking ship with crews telling passengers that we're equal and drowning together. Rethink about what really makes inequality and what is really helping people getting out of the mud puddle.

172	Please do not detract from the selective enrollment schools. Keep the Mayor's campaign commitment to finding a way to increase equity without taking away this great option.
173	Please don't destroy the future of our kids!
174	Please don't use the future of our children as your political bargaining chips! Stop ruining our school system!
175	Magnet schools are award winning, successful schools who meet the needs of students who need a faster paced, economically and racially integrated schools. Because magnets pull from all over the city, they are more diverse than neighborhood schools. Do not hurt 1 group of students who are thriving by taking away established communities that families have built up and invested in.
176	I had to enroll into online school due to medical reasons and because of this I have to re enroll in my selective enrollment school at the start of the next semester. I am not in the neighborhood of my selective enrollment school so if this were to take affect before I could re enroll then I most likely have to give up my seat. I am very proud of the school that I go to because it was difficult to get in and due to medical reasons I haven't been able to enjoy my time there. If this takes affect this will cause many problems for people like me.
177	<p>Can you comment on the neighborhood high school for the south loop. And don't say Philips Academy. That is NOT a viable solution. I feel as with all things CPS related, there is not a full thought out process. If Jones Prep becomes a neighborhood school will the entire South Loop including Chinatown be part of this neighborhood?</p> <p>Dont forget many of these areas are tax payers that contribute to the city coffers. If families move or go to private school that will be a loss.</p> <p>These SE schools are something to be proud of since they are such high performing schools throughout Chicagoland and the State. Dont take that part away from future children who want to be challenged. That would be a travesty.</p>
178	<p>My two children have attended 5 Chicago Public Schools over their 9 years of elementary school. None of those have been our neighborhood school. While our neighborhood school is decent, it did not meet our needs so we therefore used the lottery to seek other options.</p> <p>We were grateful to have other options, especially for several specific reasons. When attending STEM Magnet Academy, we made the sad decision to leave because the environment at the school had become toxic due to the principal. Had this been our neighborhood school and the lottery was not available to us, I am not sure what we would have done when it became too uncomfortable to stay.</p> <p>One of my kids needed a more challenging curriculum and was able to enter a selective enrollment school, where he is doing well among fellow classmates who benefit from more rigorous classes.</p> <p>My children are both now at schools better fitting our family's needs and their individual needs. Had we attended our neighborhood school, I am confident they would not be thriving as they both are.</p> <p>While having strong neighborhood schools is laudable, many schools I have visited and toured as possible schools for my kids to attend lacked either classroom rigor, strong</p>

	<p>parent community, opportunities for enrichment, teacher retention, or student turnover. There are reasons we parents seek out good school options for our kids. Even the good schools require a heavy lift from parents to help fill the gaps that CPS funding leaves. Having the ability to choose the school that meshes with our families' needs is critical to putting our kids in the path for success.</p> <p>The system is no doubt stressful and often is frustrating. But navigating that is preferred by far over simply being forced to attend a neighborhood school that is lacking some of the components that make a school strong.</p>
179	<p>South Loop needs a neighborhood high-school. Ridiculous there is not HS within walking distance.</p>
180	<p>The speech the Board of Education gives about community input is a joke. We have been coming before the board for the past four months asking them to consider our solutions to the transportation crisis only to have them announce two days ago that they want to get rid of school choice all together. They hold "Round-Table" meetings and pretend that they want to hear from parents, but in the end, they do what they want to do. They announced their plan to restrict school choice just two days before voting on it without ANY consideration of the parents and students at SEES and Magnet schools. Of course they voted in favor of it today. They never cared what we thought. I feel like an idiot for even entertaining the idea that they cared.</p> <p>They would like the public to believe that SEES/Magnet Schools are "taking funds away" or "more resourced" than neighborhood schools. But this isn't the case. SEES and Magnet schools do not receive more funding than neighborhood schools. In fact, the facilities of SEES and Magnet schools are often far inferior to those of neighborhood schools.</p> <p>The truth of the matter is that CPS leaders do know how to manage their budget. They spent over \$13.5 million to transport less than 300 students using two paratransit companies last year. Those same rides are provided by cities like LA and NYC for about 25% of the price that CPS pays. The Zum base rate for paratransit is \$153/day in CPS, but it's only \$50/day in Oak Park River Forest. CPS outsources, gets price gouged, and mismanages their funds because none of the people in decision making roles know what they are doing, and then they try to scapegoat SEES and Magnet programs, saying that they are draining the funds and that we need to get rid of them.</p> <p>Why does Mayor Johnson send his kid to a selective enrollment high school across the city instead of his neighborhood school? Why does he support the very system he thinks is creating a racist, inequitable system? Oh, he's going to dismantle it? In 5 years? Just in time for his kid to be out of high school and well on his way to a great college, thanks to the selective enrollment system.</p> <p>If this Board of Ed and the mayor are trying to drive people out of the city, people whose taxes are the basis for funding all of their grand plans, they're doing a great job. Keep up the great work, Board of Ed!</p>
181	<p>If the district is truly committed to meeting the needs of different kinds of learners, selective enrollment schools remain necessary. Choosing between supporting neighborhood schools and selective enrollment schools is a false choice, and students who thrive in one environment don't necessarily do well in the other. Our first grader landed at a selective enrollment school after being encouraged to apply by his neighborhood CPS preK teachers. They saw that he needed to be challenged in the</p>

	classroom in order to do well in school—like any other learner, he had a particular set of educational needs and we sent him to the school that could meet them. Selective enrollment schools aren't status symbols, they are specific learning environments. It's ridiculous and honestly somewhat lazy to claim that the district has to lower the bar for education, rather than provide neighborhood schools with the support and resources they need. These schools and students are not competing, and to view public education as one-size-fits-all does a disservice to everyone. As proud CPS parents who have championed the district, supported the teachers union, and encouraged our friends to turn to CPS rather than move to the suburbs, we're immensely disappointed in this proposal. There is no need to have such a limited view of what our schools can do and be.
182	I understand that there is discussion about ending school choice programs. I can't disagree with this more strongly. The notion that we will correct inequities by knee-capping the success stories within the system could not be more wrong. In fact, moving to an exclusively neighborhood system is only more likely to entrench the deep segregation—and accompanying inequality— of our city. My son goes to a magnet school that is truly diverse socioeconomically, with student representation from across the city, and the staff and parents have built a model for success within a public school system. We should be celebrating this as a model for other schools, not penalizing it for the very success it has achieved.
183	Selective enrollment is necessary in order to give the more advanced students a chance to excel in an environment that could that is safe for them. Students that excel would lose the opportunity to learn at a pace that will keep them stimulated and have to wait for those kids who do not excel to catch up and effectively keep selective enrollment kids from reaching their potential. They will be bored. My son is enrolled at Payton, but has literally missed a whole year due to health issues. He is currently enrolled at Virtual Academy, which is a great solution for kids that can't physically attend school, while keeping his seat open for when he returns. He finishes his work in a matter of minutes and sits for a hour doing nothing. Now he is back to good health and will return to Payton second semester. If this selective enrollment is abandoned, my son along with a multitude of other students, my son would not be able to return.
184	If selected schools are ended, we and our friends are moving our families of Chicago.
185	I object to the proposal
186	Selective enrollment is one of the few CPS success stories and one that my child would be lost without. We tried our neighborhood option and it was a complete failure. We moved when our kids were getting close to school age for a neighborhood school. We researched and bought a house specifically for the school. Kindergarten was awful. My son was in the principals office daily. I volunteered, his grandmother volunteered, his father volunteered...no help. My son was labeled a trouble maker and had no friends and was let on his own to read all day. His teacher recommended we test him for rgc and when he switched to rgc everything changed. No more trouble, he made friends and is thriving. We are driving an hour a day to make this school work. Would I take two hours of my day every day to do this if the neighborhood school was a viable option? CPS should bring back transportation to all and help not hurt the programs.
187	We love selective enrollment schools and want to have them
188	I agree it is important to build better neighborhood schools, but ending selective enrollment options will force families move out of Chicago, we lost population after the pandemic already. Please don't keep using equality & equity as excuses to take away hardworking high achieving students' chance to get adequate education to be prepared them in their future. The current resolution looks just simply want to even out the plain.

	<p>Stop saying you want to prevent students and schools pit against each other, it is a big lie, when neighborhood schools perform low then let's drag everyone down, is it really the solution? NO!!! Please don't keep using our children and families to fight political battles. Strengthen neighborhood schools first, so excellent learners have the challenges and courses and resources they need to be successful, and it is no longer necessary for families to seek other options. Do NOT vote for ending selective enrollment schools, that would be a huge mistake!!!</p>
189	<p>While I am in full support of eliminating the need for charter and other private schooling options by strengthening our neighborhood schools, I am also in firm opposition to phasing out selective enrollment schooling. Selective enrollment schooling helps to challenge and grow the child who has learnings needs that go beyond the abilities of the neighborhood school. Our child attended our neighborhood school for one year. And while their teacher and special education teacher attempted to give him the challenges and focus he needed as a more advanced/gifted learner, it was clear to us all (teacher included) that our child needed a more academically stimulating atmosphere. Staying in our neighborhood school would have meant our child wasn't provided an academic setting that met their needs. They would have been lost in the sea of too many children with too many varied levels of learning ability. They would have missed the opportunity to be with peers who were able to engage and stimulate each other in their like-ability. Every child deserves to be in an academic setting that meets their educational needs, enhances their learning and stimulates their growth as human beings. This includes academically accelerated children. Eliminating selective enrollment schools or scaling back in these vital institutions discriminated against accelerated students. It fails the child and stunts their potential growth. Numerous studies have shown the benefits of accelerated and ability-grouping in education. Reducing or eliminating selective enrollment schooling goes against sound educational science. Our child has flourished at our selective enrollment school. It provides them an education that meets their accelerated needs while being in an extremely socially, culturally and economically diverse setting of their ability-alike peers. We would have been forced to move from the city we love or pushed into near poverty trying to afford private schooling to meet their needs. Their selective enrollment schooling is the main reason why we have stayed in the city and have been able to enrich our community at the same time. We continue to support our neighborhood school, but know it would never have been able to provide our child the learning experience they deserve and need no matter how many dollars were thrown at it or "gifted" programs created. Selective enrollment schools absolutely must co-exist with stronger neighborhood schools. CPS must see the absolute benefits of having both. Having anything but both strong neighborhood schools AND selective enrollment schools is simply unacceptable and flies in the face of our democratic rights as citizens of this wonderful city to have quality education that meets the needs of ALL students, accelerated included. CPS, SAVE OUR SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT SCHOOLS!</p>
190	<p>The dismantling of the selective enrollment high schools in Chicago is a plan that will not benefit no student. I attended a low income school that could not challenge me in the necessary ways, and being able to attend a selective enrollment school gave me the opportunity to be challenged and actually be engaged in school. The issue at hand is making neighborhood high school betters to provide the same level of education selective enrollment schools receive. This will help students not stress about fight for their place in a selective school, but still provide them a fruitful education.</p>
191	<p>We should protect and enhance selective enrollment ! Look at how this system develops talented students with potentials despite their growing neighborhoods</p>

192	<p>Selective enrollment is absolutely critical and helps performing students and parents from ALL neighborhoods - this decision will negatively affect our kids from our less advantaged neighborhoods. Why would you change the one thing CPS does well? Unless you have billions to make all schools equitable you are making a mistake. In addition, families who can will move to suburbs (impacting our city financials) AND families who donate to CPS will move to private schools. Funding will evaporate.</p> <p>It's a shame. Something Chicso has done well will go - time for my family to move to the suburbs and stop supporting CPS.</p>
193	<p>The abolition of choice/selective enrollment schools will only further segregate our city. We can already see glimmers of this process this year without bussing. The "haves" continue to attend selective enrollment and choice schools while those that don't have caregivers who can drive kids to and from daily don't. The "haves" won't attend neighborhood schools if they're not safe, riddled with gangs, etc. I understand the intention, but it is misguided and quite short sighted as neighborhood schools need to be safe and well resourced FIRST. If not, this will only force those that can to leave CPS.</p>
194	<p>I'm eager to hear how the CBOE's plan to revert back to neighborhood schools will improve classroom diversity in the most segregated metropolis in our country.</p> <p>Do you plan to pool pta funds from all schools and divide them evenly?</p> <p>What's to stop those with the means to move to a better neighborhood, leaving those without to remain and take the scraps?</p> <p>This plan is a direct blow to diversity and opportunity afforded to families from all neighborhoods.</p>
195	<p>The south loop needs a neighborhood school.</p>
196	<p>The plan to ax the Chicago selective high schools is too radical for current time, which will only cause the decline of Chicago's education qualities. We should promote benign competitions in the education system, instead of zero competitions, such as forcing every school to become a neighborhood school.</p>
197	<p>I would like the Mayor and the Board of Education being fair to all the students in selected enrollment. The resources are there, we can't forced to use it , therefore, Mayor and the board of education can't not force to close all the selective schools. Please take all selective enrollment students in consideration. Please respect all the decisions that made by each selected enrollment students, parents, and families. If other parents and families didn't want to put their children to selective enrollment schools, and then you close all the selective enrollment schools. Please do not diminish our children learning opportunities, please do not hold our children back for advance education. Mayor, Board of Education, people choose you, I believe you can make the better choices by not closing down all the selective enrollment schools. please make our voices to be heard, please make Chicago, ILLINOIS, THE UNITED STATES PROSPEROUS. Thanks.</p>
198	<p>the point of equity isnt to bring certain people down its to bring certain people up, ruining the dreams and hard work of so many other kids that were blessed with such an opportunity wont fix the average mediocre public school, itll just give every single student a mediocre public school. fix. the. underresourced schools. that is equity. where if you go to a selective enrollment school or a neighborhood school you will be able to have the opportunities that you deserve.</p>

199	Chicago's amazing selective enrollment schools are the reason we chose to live in the city. We will leave if the city stops offering them.
200	Why break a good thing. Just fund more neighborhood schools. you'll go from having many top 20 schools in the country to none overnight. Hopefully the money doesn't go missing after it gets redirected. "Let's break the best thing about CPS schools"?!?!? great idea...shaking my head. if I don't have school choice pretty up move to the burbs "of my choice"
201	I am sad to hear that the CPS and Mayor Johnson are trying to end the selective enrollment schools. The proposal has two principle flaws. First, it creates inequality. It puts students from lower social and economic tiers in disadvantaged areas. Affluent neighborhood schools can find resources to fund advanced programs, to hire high skilled teachers, and to find support staffs beyond CPS budget. With selective enrollment, students from less fortunate areas can enjoy the same resources as their peers from affluent areas. Secondly, the proposal to end selective enrollment is in contradiction with the principle of diversity in schools. Chicago is a place with segregated neighborhoods, the selective enrollment schools break the neighborhood boundaries and provides a place for social, racial and economic diversity among students. It pools the resources to support academic excellence students, and it provides opportunities to students from different backgrounds to learn from each other. The CPS and Mayor Johnson should channel the resources to add more selective enrollment schools in Chicago to serve the community better.
202	Selective enrollment schools are vital to keeping people in the city of Chicago. Every child in Chicago should have the opportunity to strive for the best education they can possibly get at no additional charge if they are gifted or work hard enough. This program is one that makes Chicago so special. And if we get rid of these selective enrollment schools, there will be a mass exodus out of the city along with all of those tax dollars. It's truly an outrageously terrible thought to change this amazing system we currently have in place.
203	Selective enrollment schools are the most sought after in Chicago and is a pride of Chicago. I am against the decision to end selective enrollment. Also this will bring more segregation in the communities. At least now tier 1 and tier 2 kids can go to a prestigious school but with neighborhood boundaries this privilege will be gone
204	Dear Sirs , I would like to express my full support for the selective enrollment program, which has been part of CPS for some time now. Having an opportunity for students to strive for the selection by studying hard builds character and teaches students that hard work brings fruits, additionally, having an opportunity to study with similarly devoted learners helps the most hard working students achieve their potential. I do not see any conflict in improving community schools and keeping the selective enrollment program for the most devoted students, which has been serving our big Chicago community so well and which makes CPS so prominent among other school districts in our nation. Best regards,
205	CPS should keep selective programs!
206	Diverting focus and funding away from selective enrollment schools is going to drive people out of the city, never to return. The only reason I raised my kids in the heart of Chicago was because I knew we had good options for high schools. In fact, it's the selective enrollment schools that are widely used as examples proving that CPS actually can function well and provide an adequate education. You lose that and you've

	<p>lost everything. If you want to improve neighborhood schools then make them more like selective enrollment schools, not the other way around.</p> <p>Almost every family I know stayed in the city because of the possibility of sending their kids to a high quality selective enrollment school. You take that away and away goes your tax base with it. That's just stupid.</p> <p>You have a winning formula with selective enrollment schools. Why would you even consider messing with the only truly successful schools in the district? Again, put your energy into replicating the model- not destroying it!</p> <p>I fear for the future of this city every day. This decision is just another nail in the coffin.</p>
207	<p>Chicago residents struggle to stay in the city as they cannot "count" on CPS. Everything always changes. A free preschool becomes a for fee program. Then free again. A boundary or tier is changed. High School tests change yearly. High School admittance criteria (MAP tests required, then not). Now Selective Enrollment is jeopardized. How can the citizens of Chicago count on CPS when everything always changes? They cannot. They leave. For private schools, for the suburbs or for other states. Please stop continuously changing things. Allow CPS to be something the citizens of Chicago can count on.</p>
208	<p>Having elite, nationally recognized public high schools is one of the many things that makes Chicago such an exceptional city. Taking that away would cause lasting damage for generations. I can't emphasize enough what a loss that would be to our city. And how unfair it would be to gifted low income students who are looking for an opportunity to get out of their neighborhood school and be amongst kids at their intellectual level, but can't afford private schools. SE schools will give them opportunities they will never get at their neighborhood schools. Please do not take this amazing opportunity away from Chicago's children.</p>
209	<p>We live in North Lawndale and our kids both scored 99th percentile on their selective enrollment tests to make it into Walter Payton. They have had a fantastic experience so far with a diverse group of kids (both socio-economic and ethnic) and they are academically challenged. If we do away with the selective enrollment option, students like my kids would not be able to enjoy the quality of education they have. The selective enrollment schools are the bright spots in CPS. Please do not take away the motivation and incentive for kids to work hard. This would be another strike against the city and cause more residents to move to the suburbs. When we were contemplating a move from Berwyn, it was going to be a northern suburbs with strong schools or CPS selective enrollment. When my kids got in, it was a no-brainer even though housing costs much more in the city.</p>
210	<p>This is in relation to the transformation plan for CPS selective enrollment schools. We should continue the current model for selective enrollment AS-IS. The tier system already ensures equity in selection and these schools are a fantastic opportunity for students to study with like minded peers. To convert this to a neighborhood school would be a gross injustice to both deserving f kids and families. I would strongly suggest that we continue thr current model for selective enrollment schools the way they are and try to bring other neighborhood schools at par with them.</p>
211	<p>Neighborhood and selective enrollment high schools are NOT mutually exclusive. Students should still be able to have choice in where they want to go for their high school careers that does in fact impact their college opportunities. Selective enrollment schools do give a fair chance for everyone especially by changing the tier system.</p>

	Closing and reworking selective enrollment school will severely impact CPS as a school district and will have a domino affect on all students involved.
212	As the parent of the upcoming high schooler , I am strongly opposing proposed decision to move a way from the selective enrollment model. Kids who are capable and willing to learn needs that opportunity and recourses. Mediocrity is not way to go. City will be loosing population more , since if high school wouldn't be the option , we will move for better opportunities. It will be loss for the taxes and city.
213	<p>The Selective Enrollment Schools are Vital to Chicago's Future</p> <p>Chicago is the most racially segregated city in Illinois. If we resort to neighborhood schools, then where are we? The entire goal for which this motion was brought up for would be defeated: we would be even more segregated and divided than we began with. Our neighborhood nicknames even give it away: Little India, Chinatown, Greektown, Little Italy, etc. If we continue down this path, our children will grow up not knowing about other cultures and ideas and only chaos can ensue from that.</p> <p>In addition, the selective enrollment schools are there for a reason. If we want Chicago to continue as it is, full of visionaries, intelligent thinkers, respected individuals, we need to keep the school system as it is. Selective enrollment schools offer a springboard for Chicago's teens to gain a higher level of education and a better chance of getting into a prestigious college. They can use that to build back into their communities. By taking away selective enrollment schools, you are depriving the people of Chicago of a chance at being challenged in school and a chance at making a bigger difference in Their city.</p> <p>And who will get the funding and the better schools? it won't be North Lawndale or Englewood. The poorer neighborhoods' schools will naturally be less equipped and if that is all a child in those neighborhoods have, then their chances of gaining a higher education are severely damaged.</p>
214	I have had three children attend selective enrollment high schools in Chicago. We experienced two different selective enrollment schools, and we were so proud of the education our children received at these schools. There is no way they would have had the same experience at their neighborhood high school. The number of honors and AP classes selective enrollment schools provide is something that can only be offered at a school that has high preforming students. The preparation for college is significant, and teachers are able to provide this to students due to the high number of graduates that attend college. Taking away selective enrollment schools does not fix the major issues that plague CPS. It merely removes the opportunities for high performing students to be challenged and properly prepared for their next stage in life. To narrow the overall achievement gap in CPS, we need to look to bring in qualified, inspiring teachers at the elementary level. We need to build relationships between parents and teachers in communities that are struggling. Taking away selective enrollment is not going to change the gap, it's nearly going to eliminate the possibility of CPS properly serving high achieving students and preparing them for the future.
215	<p>As a mother of a 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grader in 2 different selective enrollment programs, I am against the closing of selective enrollment programs.</p> <p>As an employee of the state of Illinois Hospital, living in the city in close proximity to work has been a dream. However this would not be possible without a school option such as selective enrollment.</p>

	<p>My kids are being challenged and thriving in their programs and ending those programs would likely send us and countless other families to the suburbs.</p> <p>Some of the CPS SEES high schools are the best in the state. SEES should remain an option which improving education overall.</p>
216	<p>There is a great need for high school in South Loop, many families are frustrated and ready to leave the city as there is currently no good options. Please help to save our community in the South Loop.</p>
217	<p>Selective enrollment schools should stay. What would inevitably happen is that there would be learning tiers within schools, because some people have different skills to learn than others. It is like this is Texas and the suburbs of Chicago. Not only will this ruin peer engagement, but it will be harder for lower income students to integrate like they are now. The rich neighborhoods will have mostly advanced schools, and the poorer neighborhoods will have lower academics. Because everyone gets a fair show into these selective enrollment schools, it provides infinitely more opportunities. Getting rid of the selective enrollment schools will only set us back.</p>
218	<p>This is not a good idea. High school selection and rejection is like college but less severe. There is no reason for students to try if every school is the same when it comes to education. There are also behaviour problems to consider. There may be large gaps between students attending the same neighbourhood highschool.</p>
219	<p>I currently go to Walter Payton, a selective enrollment school. I have been challenged by my peers and have made many friends of different ethnicities, Black, Asian, White, and Latinx. I have debated these peers on differing beliefs and perspectives and have grown immensely because of this experience. If these schools are ended, by diverse friendships, valuable learning, and even safety would end with it. I am one of only a few non-Black residents in my neighborhood, so diversity would be limited. The schools nearest to me have a safety rating of weak, and very weak. I would also have less opportunities there than at Payton. Selective enrollment schools push people like me to study and work hard and provide a space with others who also study and work hard to spur each other on. Getting rid of selective enrollment school would also get rid of equality because only the rich living by Payton would get a good education and people with neighborhoods like min would not get that opportunity.</p>
220	<p>So many children in our city need the focus and individualized attention that only a school devoted to neurodivergent accelerated students can provide. Funding neighborhood schools to provide this type of ability-like focused education is not a solution. Separate schools dedicating their teaching curricula, resources and supports means our tax dollars are used wisely instead of trying to create small and less robust mini programs for each neighborhood school. Please keep selective enrollment schools AND create strong neighborhood schools. Amy Groessler, PhD, LCSW</p>
221	<p>Chicago Public Schools owes all its students the ability to thrive in their schools. By removing selective enrollment, CPS would be taking this away from 10% of its students. This is not an insignificant number. Far from it. (There are 101,948 high school students in Chicago according to CPS. Of these students, 10,007 attend a selective enrollment high school.)</p> <p>Five Chicago selective enrollment high schools are ranked among the top 75 public high schools in the United States in the US News and World Report 2023 national public high school rankings. By contrast, there were only six high schools from the entire state of California (pop. 39.03M) in the top 75. There were eight New York City</p>

high schools, and New York City's population (8.34M) is over three times larger than Chicago's (2.67M).

Chicago's selective enrollment high schools are a success story not just in Illinois but nationally. CPS should be proud of the efforts the teachers, staff, and students put in to make them among the best in the country. Instead, CPS is considering dismantling them. Dismantling selective enrollment high schools in Chicago does not make good sense for many reasons and would be disastrous to the lives, potentials, and futures of the over 10,000 Chicago High schoolers who attend these eleven high schools.

This not a story of resource discrepancies, as has been invoked. The depiction of selective enrollment schools as over-resourced at the expense of under-resourced neighborhood schools is a blatant mischaracterization. According to the Illinois State Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, per-pupil expenditure (PPE) at every one of the top five selective enrollment high schools in Chicago is under \$11,500 (ranging Lane Tech's \$9,342.56 per pupil to Payton's \$11,429.90 per pupil). These PPEs are lower—sometimes significantly lower—than many neighborhood high schools in underperforming districts. For example, Marshall Metropolitan HS in Garfield Park receives \$21,580.87 per pupil and Gage Park HS receives \$17,649.57 per pupil.

It is flawed logic to assert that the success of selective enrollment comes at the cost of neighborhood schools. The high performance of selective enrollment schools has not caused the low performance of some neighborhood schools. These are two entirely different issues. To suggest that selective enrollment schools are a causal factor for low-performing neighborhood schools is a misrepresentation by the Board of Education.

Chicago Public Schools can and should treat these issues as separate and focus on maintaining the high performance of selective enrollment high schools while at the same time working to improve neighborhood schools.

Five of the United States' best public high schools are in Chicago. Dismantling them is guaranteed to negatively impact the lives of Chicago high schoolers, who depend on the city's public education system to meet their academic needs, for generations to come.

222 I am disappointed and disturbed by the recent vote of the City of Chicago Board of Education. There are a number of issues and challenges for this city to address; the quality of selective enrollment education is not one of them. It should be a point of pride that the top five high schools in the state of Illinois are all CPS schools. This is what is working in this city; these are success stories. Why not look to these schools as models and as blueprints for further developing neighborhood schools? Why is it a zero-sum game in which selective enrollment schools have to "lose" so that neighborhood schools can "win"? With the board's current plan, I'm afraid that everyone will lose.

223 Horrible Idea.

224 In 1976 I lived in the South Shore neighborhood of Chicago. I had no intention to leave Chicago but then I got pregnant. The local schools were terrible, so my husband and I pulled up stakes and moved to Lombard, all because of the school system. Years later my son was able to move to Chicago and stay in Chicago when he and his wife had children of their own because of the magnet and selective school system. If you discontinue the selective school system or degrade it, they will be faced with moving to

	<p>the suburbs or using the money they need to send the kids to college on their grade school and high school.</p> <p>The selective school system is the reason Chicago still has a thriving middle class. Please don't ruin it.</p>
225	<p>I strongly disagree with ending the selective enrollment programs or reducing funding to these highly successful CPS schools.</p> <p>I also strongly agree with bringing up the level of neighborhood schools overall. Even without data is not difficult to understand that different children need different supports to excel and thinking that neighborhood schools can fully support EVERY child is simply ignoring logistics, not to mention a wealth of study data.</p> <p>BOTH supporting selective enrollment AND boosting neighborhood is the ONLY plan that supports EVERY child.</p>
226	<p>Save selective enrollment. We need to help the under performing children but we also have. Responsibility to help those children's who perform at a higher level so they can thrive</p>
227	<p>Addressing the issue of equity in Selective Enrollment Schools (SES) involves exploring avenues for expanding gifted programs in elementary schools. Focusing on areas with limited SES options, such as the south and west sides, can help ensure that advanced learning opportunities are more evenly distributed across diverse neighborhoods.</p> <p>Additionally, considering the expansion of language-specific gifted programs, particularly in Spanish, can provide valuable support to underserved Hispanic populations. This approach aims to create a more inclusive educational environment within Chicago Public Schools, fostering equal access to educational resources for all students.</p>
228	<p>Expanding gifted programs in elementary schools can contribute to making Selective Enrollment Schools (SES) more equitable. To address limited SES options, especially in areas like the south and west sides, consider strategically broadening the availability of gifted education opportunities at the elementary level. Additionally, extending language-specific gifted programs, particularly in Spanish, can support underserved Hispanic populations. This approach aligns with the goal of creating a more inclusive educational landscape within Chicago Public Schools.</p>
229	<p>I am a current sophomore CPS parent who is extremely concerned with the possible elimination of the CPS selective enrollment schools.</p> <p>The CPS SEHS are the very best of the best in the state and nation. Instead of breaking down the shining stars of the nation, at a dire time of when our educational system sees lower reading and math scores, these schools should be emulated and be the model for all. Destroying the successes and achievements of these school will negatively impact both lower and higher income high achieving students and their needs.</p> <p>It is without a doubt that neighborhood schools need an overhaul, but not at the expense of SEHS. All students deserve the opportunity to have resources within their community. Additionally, students should build a solid foundation in their elementary schools to be successful in their high school careers. It appears that CPS' solution to reinvigorate neighborhood schools is to cover up problems rather than confront and address it. There's also the reality that some students simply care more about their education than others. CPS and the city of Chicago should aim to raise the educational bar for all kids, rather than bring the brightest and motivated down, under the guise of 'equity'.</p>

In recent years, CPS has lost the faith of many and cannot afford to lose any more as evidenced by the low enrollment across the board. If this plan forges ahead, CPS must be prepared for the mass exodus of students to either the suburbs or private schools. If there was not the option of SEHS, I would not be a current nor a former CPS Parent.

230 I support keeping selective enrollment schools as a CPS parent and CPS teacher. My son loves his selective enrollment school. In an email to members yesterday, the CTU claims that selective enrollment schools are a major problem for the struggles of neighborhood schools. Why would one blame fellow CPS students and teachers as the root problem of CPS neighborhood schools? My son and daughter (who attends a neighborhood school) are not the problem for CPS. Why would this union seek to unify by pitting parents against parents at this time?

My son has the same class size, the same technology, same resources as the neighborhood school. My son does benefit from an accelerated curriculum and most importantly from the school culture where he attends, a culture that was built over decades of hard work. Why break what is working.

Against school closing in the past as it was an attack on school culture, CTU leadership's current attack on selective enrollment schools would disrupt my son and thousands of other students' school culture and learning. Their schooling has been disrupted enough by the CTU leadership's ideology.

I work at a successful selective enrollment school with a school population that is 80% African American and 20% Latino. The CTU just focuses on 5 selective enrollment schools rather than all in their email to members. Their one size fits all solution is not pluralistic. Also, my children identify as Asian. The CTU email ignores Asian Americans as a minority group.

Rather than tear down what is working, why not focus on improving neighborhood schools and deal with why so many parents on the west and south side of Chicago choose to send their kids to charter schools rather than neighborhood schools. I support gym/play everyday for our kids, smaller class sizes, and a curriculum that meets the needs of the 21st century. Getting rid of selective enrollment schools will only make the situation worse by breaking something that is working. There is so much potential for CPS to innovate without harming tens of thousands of children. Do not let CTU leadership crowd out other voices in bringing meaningful change.

Build up the neighborhood school without further disrupting my son's education and unnecessarily harming the school culture for thousands of CPS students in the name of CTU leadership's ideological agenda. The CTU mentioned Karen Lewis's name in its letter to members to raise awareness as for the evils of selective enrollment schools even though she taught at selective enrollment schools.

I send my kids to CPS schools, one selective enrollment and the other a neighborhood school. I am invested in this system. Buildup, rather than tear down.

As a CTU member, my union did not poll its members on defunding selective enrollment schools. For a group that prides itself on the democratic process, leadership does what it wants to do, regardless of member insight. They are not humble with their power. They speak for themselves and not parents and teachers.

231	<p>Strengthen gifted and classical schools! Our brightest and best students require equity, too - irrespective of race & color. Make SE gifted and classical accessible to all neighborhoods *AND* keep academic standards high & rigorous. Create programs so that they are found distributed across every part of the city. Gifted and classical students should be mapped to the SE school nearest to them - as we grow this network of schools, open them in areas that are currently underserved. As new students enter, continue to map them to closest SE school.</p> <p>Do not mimick the NYC public schools gifted model, it is fundamentally flawed and it will create discrimination against our most talented and academically accomplished students!</p>
232	<p>Keeping robust selective enrollment AND neighborhood schools is not a mutually exclusive choice. Chicago can and should offer both! It's a better use of tax payer funds to create specialized curriculum with specially trained teachers to serve divergent student populations in a limited number of schools than to try to create watered down versions of these programs in every school.</p>
233	<p>Lowering the bar is never the correct solution!!!</p>
234	<p>The decision for CPS to move away from selective enrollment schools would ultimately be one of the largest disservices to the education of certain students to date. Selective enrollment schools are the only place where extremely high achieving students can be properly serviced by their educational and this is due to the way that the curriculum and teachers are supported in educating the students. These schools provide a place for gifted students to be challenged, while also ensuring that each student's needs are constantly met. As someone who worked at a neighborhood school in CPS before, I saw first hand the detrimental effects that a neighborhood school had on a student whom I believed needed more challenge. This student slipped through the cracks, often missed school because she was bored and did not feel like she was in the right place, and had no love for the education she was receiving. The question of whether or not selective enrollment schools should exist is deeply troubling to me, as I truly believe that there should be a place in which students who are extremely accepted can be challenged, encouraged, and developed. Should these students wind up at a neighborhood school, they would not receive the education they deserve, as they wouldn't be labelled as 'low scoring' or having 'behavior problems' and thus would not warrant the attention of teachers who are struggling to bring up students who are below grade level. The students who are making good grades and doing well socially wouldn't be taught at all- they would go unnoticed and forgotten, as these kids wouldn't be creating any issues. Therefore, they would be done a GREAT disservice, as they wouldn't be given even a fraction of the type of education they would receive at a selective enrollment school.</p> <p>To reiterate: BECAUSE THE KIDS WHO ATTEND SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT SCHOOLS DON'T PRESENT ANY PROBLEMS, THEY WOULD BE DENIED THE TYPE OF HIGH CALIBER EDUCATION THEY ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING SHOULD THEY BE ADMITTED TO A NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL INSTEAD. JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE SMART, DOESN'T MEAN THEY DON'T DESERVE QUALITY EDUCATION. THIS TYPE OF EDUCATION CAN ONLY BE TAILORED TO THEM WHEN THE SCHOOL IS TAILORED TO THEM. THIS IS WHY WE NEED SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT SCHOOLS. I would be devastated to hear that CPS dropped the ball on this one and abolished these types of schools.</p>
235	<p>Dear Board,</p>

I am supportive of the Board's intent to invest in neighborhood schools. That is a commendable and long overdue goal.

I oppose, however, any plan that would reduce CPS's current commitment to its selective enrollment institutions. CPS's selective enrollment schools are some of the top performing schools in the city, state and nation. They are a model for what other schools, including our neighborhood schools should strive to be. To the extent there is concern that enrollment in these schools is not representative of the social, racial and economic diversity of this city, the Board should consider ways to expand the opportunities provided by these institutions rather than undertaking any action that would either decrease the number of available seats at these select institutions or deprive them of the resources that have contributed to their success.

Increasing the resources available to neighborhood schools will inevitably require increased resources from Chicago taxpayers. It would be counterproductive of the Board to undertake a plan that exacerbates the existing and longstanding flight of Chicago taxpayers with school age children to adjacent towns where their taxes will not contribute to the laudable project of making sure that Chicago neighborhood schools are as high performing for their students as those in surrounding suburbs.

236 Selective enrollment programs are the best thing about CPS. SE schools are consistently ranked at the top of all public schools in the state. For all the issues CPS has had, it's handled selective enrollment at a world-class level. The programs are diverse and give students from all backgrounds a fair chance to join a program where they learn at their accelerated capacity.

The real fallout from eliminating or reducing these programs will be the INCREASED, not decreased stratification of education by wealth. Wealthy families with students in selective enrollment will groan and grumble and then pay to have their children attend elite private schools. Alternately, they may send their children to their neighborhood schools, which (in more gentrified areas) have more money and better teachers and better student outcomes. Poorer families would have neither option. They can't afford elite private schools, and they live in areas with worse neighborhood schools.

Rather than dismantling selective enrollment, the district needs to focus more resources into improving poor performing schools.

237 Most of the students at Selective Enrollment schools are neurodivergent. That means these students have a brain-based difference in academic and social-emotional learning trajectory compared to their neurotypical peers. They need access to a specialized education that fits their needs. These kids will not do "just fine" on their own at a neighboring school. Without proper support and guidance from experienced teachers and staff, these students could become disengaged, distracted, and lose interest in learning resulting in low achievement.

Busing is critical to maintaining equitable access to these programs; it is Black and Brown students, and low-income students, who depend on bussing the most. Over 140+ students had to leave a school they loved because they lost bussing, and that was as of October! These students had to leave a school they loved with a curriculum and support that matched their needs.

	<p>CPS is unique in the country in failing to bus. No district in the country cut busing as much as CPS, which eliminated busing from 5,500 students this year. We're bussing 30% FEWER students this year. Why have other cities worked toward solutions and CPS has not despite its excessive spending? CPS is spending an average of \$15,000 for each student in transportation and still leaving 5500 students without a way to get to school or a stipend. That is more than CPS spends on actual education per pupil. Something is deeply wrong. We, the taxpayers, demand transparency.</p>
238	MY CHILD, MY CHOICE!
239	<p>Bussing was PROMISED to Magnet and Selective Enrollment students who live more than 1.5 miles away from their schools to desegregate schools in this segregated city. CPS' magnet and selective enrollment schools are much more diverse than CPS as a whole. They are far less likely to be represented by 75%+ students from the same racial background. Why cancel bussing now? Is CPS against diversity?</p>
240	<p>Please do NOT get rid of school choice, specifically selective enrollment and magnet CPS schools. We are a family of immigrants from a country ridden with poverty, injustice and lack of opportunity who had to work really hard to start our lives here in the USA from nothing. Our children are first generation born here. We have no wealthy family, network or connections. But our kids happen to be curious and fast learners, who are good at academics and whose SEES program keeps them interested, motivated and off the streets. Without the option of being in their current SEES and an aspiration to eventually go to an SEHS, they would not be sufficiently challenged in a neighborhood school. They would also be in a more crowded classroom compared to their class size capped at 30 in their SEES. They thrive at their SEES school not only because of being challenged academically, but also because they sit side by side with children from all over Chicago: black children, brown children, white and Asian children. Every day they are surrounded by all the various socio-economic and ethnical backgrounds of teachers, staff and students and learn to live in a diverse society and be anti-racist. This is not the experience they would have if they were to go to a neighborhood school where everyone is mostly homogeneous and there is not enough diversity. While it sounds like the goals of your recently passed resolution on 12/14/2023 are positive and want to achieve equity and prioritize the most vulnerable population, in fact you will hurt the most vulnerable. By eliminating choice, you are taking away the last opportunity from my kids. We cannot afford a private school or move to the suburbs. My children would not have the same positive diverse experience and friends of different races in their neighborhood school. If anything, we need more SEES and magnet schools to provide this opportunity to more children and families who want it and so need it. And you know they do. The SEES tough competition shows that there is more demand than supply of selective enrollment schools and magnet schools at the moment. If you want to stop the "hunger games" and give more opportunity to the disadvantaged and oppressed whom our family represents, please consider opening up more choice schools within the CPS system. Thank you for reading our family's opinion!</p>
241	<p>Selective enrollment schools offer school choice and accelerated programs for academically gifted students. Reducing these types of institutions is likely to drive these students and families out of the District to private schools or even out of the city altogether. Strengthening neighborhood schools is important but not at the expense of these other schools. Doing so will not be positive for CPS or the City of Chicago.</p>
242	<p>I am not in favor of transitioning away from privatization and admissions/enrollment policies.</p>
243	<p>My children have had the benefit of selective enrollment schools and have greatly benefited from the specialized curriculum provided to these schools. It is incorrect to</p>

	assume that children with a very differentiated learning ability can be helped at traditional schools. This is why we as parents seek out schools that can work with our children. You are doing a great disservice to many children by taking away their high achieving and specialized programs.
244	All 5 of my children have greatly benefited from selective enrollment schools, both elementary as well as high school. The opportunity to send our children to excellent public schools is one of the main reasons we stayed in the city and did not move to the suburbs. Our youngest will be starting high school in 2 years; we would be devastated if he did not have the same opportunity to attend a selective enrollment high school as his older siblings and we would likely strongly consider leaving the city if these opportunities were no longer available.
245	I am not in agreement with the current plan to end privatization of the cps schools. I agree that educational resources should be available to all but think that would be better utilized by increasing the budgets, teacher retention rate, curriculum at underperforming schools. Dismantling the schools who are performing above standards will cause a decline in the quality of education / community that already exists in these school communities. We are enrolled in a SE on the south side of Chicago and already have a great makeup of diversity and inclusion. We are focused on excellence and am now worried a lot of parents will be forced to send their students to paid private schools to get the quality of education we currently are receiving at our SE school. Why would we need to dismantle what's working instead of putting resources into getting what's not working up to par with what is working? It makes no sense to me and is causing a great deal of concern for our future as part of the Chicago Public school community. Please reconsider this plan particularly the dismantling of the programs that are already existing and doing well.
246	My twin daughters are currently freshman at two different selective enrollment high schools. They attended a private Catholic school in our neighborhood for elementary school and it was clear that, while we loved the small Catholic community that this school offered, it could not provide the academic challenge that they needed. One of my girls tested into a selective enrollment 7th grade academic center. For freshman year it became clear that my daughters, while being twins, were two very different individuals and the same school would not fulfill each of their needs. It was the first time that we embraced the idea of selecting the right school that was the best fit for each of my daughters. We explored choice schools, neighborhood schools, selective enrollment, and Catholic options. We decided on two different selective enrollment schools where each daughter would thrive individually, be pushed and challenged academically, and grow as individuals at separate schools. It's important that CPS continue to have this selective enrollment choice available to families. It is also important to support each neighborhood school, as those schools are also likely a great fit for certain students. My son will be approaching high school age in a couple of years and I want to have the same variety of options that I had for my daughters. It should be my choice where I send him, and if one of the selective enrollment schools is an option based his test scores then it should be an option for our family to consider. The options of having selective enrollment choices, and thriving successful neighborhood schools should not be mutually exclusive.
247	Rather than eliminating selective enrollment environments for families that have intentionally and deliberately prepared their children for rigorous academics, taking away options for many families. It would seem logical to invest in neighborhood schools and ensure they are equipped with proper resources and highly trained teachers thus making them a more attractive option to families. As a former educator and parent of children in selective enrollment, what is the plan for instruction when enrollment is open

	<p>to all? This creates a landscape with a broad range of students 2 years ahead and possibly 2 years behind grade level. What is the plan for differentiated instruction? What is the plan for teacher burn out? What is the plan for increasing teacher salary? All children deserve the right to a quality education. Selective enrollment was a response to the lack of options for high achieving students. The response to inequity in education would be to properly fund and invest in neighborhood schools creating more options rather than eliminating options.</p>
248	<p>As a parent invested in the education of my children within the CPS system, I am writing to express my concern regarding the potential decision to move away from selective enrollment schools and school choice options in the upcoming Board of Education meeting.</p> <p>I understand the district's commitment to reinvigorate neighborhood schools and address issues related to structural racism, past inequitable policies, and disinvestment. However, I believe that it is crucial to consider the potential consequences of eliminating school choice or drastically overhauling the selective enrollment school process without simultaneously addressing the quality of education in neighborhood schools.</p> <p>Selective enrollment schools have played a vital role in providing an academically challenging environment for high-achieving students and offering families an alternative to private education. Meanwhile, school choice has enabled parents to select educational settings that align with their child's unique needs, learning styles, and interests. My concern is that eliminating these options or significantly overhauling the selective enrollment school process before improving neighborhood school quality may result in parents with means opting for private schools, leaving those without means with fewer choices and options.</p> <p>To ensure the success of neighborhood schools and encourage families like mine to consider them as a viable option, I urge the Board to prioritize enhancing the quality of education in neighborhood schools before making changes to the selective enrollment and school choice system.</p>
249	<p>Doing away with selective enrollment schools serves no one and is an incredibly shortsighted plan that hurts the students. As a parent of a CPS student this type of plan is what drives families to the suburbs. Why can we not improve our local schools and use the selective enrollment schools as models of what works. A city as great as Chicago deserves and needs to have a great school system. We face many challenges ahead and our best line to success is educating our children. Taking away schools that are already successful or underfunding them so that they cannot achieve their goals is again only hurting the students. This proposal is a terrible idea and an absolute embarrassment to Chicago.</p> <p>If you are trying to be transparent why has there not been more public notice. This is again typical Chicago politics that serves the politicians and those who paid to get them in office.</p>
250	<p>Our CPS regional gifted center is providing an excellent education to my children. The needs of my children could not fully be met in their neighborhood school even after meeting with the teachers. The teacher could not teach my child without neglecting the other students in the room. I think the opportunity for students to be and learn with peers at their level is so important. The choice to have my children test for a gifted center is one reason we moved back to Chicago. Without these choices I do not believe</p>

	<p>that all children within the district will be equitably served, they may be equally served but equity is not equality. I hope that as the board maintains the inclusion and diversity of the district that they prioritize the schools like the gifted centers that allow students to meet others across the district who are not from their neighborhood but share a common interest in academics. This mixing and diversity is so important for equity in Chicago and is best seen at the SEES schools like the RCGs, academic centers, and high schools.</p>
251	<p>This 5-year strategic plan will transform the top 5 schools into the bottom 5. This plan should focus on the broken schools, not break the schools that are operating at the highest in the country. The city of Chicago will become even more divided by losing the middle class families to the suburbs with this drastic CPS change.</p>
252	<p>Eliminating school choice isn't possible. People with money will always have choices. So, all of these efforts will only hurt the people you're claiming to help. Strengthening neighborhood schools is essential, and if that's one then families will CHOOSE to send their children there. But until those schools are better, forcing families to send their children there will backfire.</p> <p>Strengthening schools does not start with throwing more money at underperforming schools.</p> <p>Instead of being threatened by schools that are successfully educating Chicago's children, learn from them. What works?</p> <p>Constantly lowering standards doesn't work. It may give you better numbers, but it isn't preparing our children to graduate and either enter the workforce or pursue postsecondary educational opportunities.</p> <p>Focus on attendance. Focus on accountability. Focus on achievement. Focus on exposure to all the options available to our youth.</p> <p>Set clear expectations and stick to them.</p> <p>If kids can't live up to them, there must be consequences. Cut them from the high school rosters and give them the opportunity to reenroll the following year.</p> <p>The Selective Enrollment high schools are successful because they are communities where learning is valued and hard work is expected. Can we establish that at neighborhood schools? Yes, but you can't have high-achieving and non-achieving students in the same school. Prioritize hard-working students. Give them an educational landscape to be successful.</p> <p>If you pull the plug on the Selective Enrollment Schools, you will fail the kids who deserve to be in an environment that prioritizes their achievement.</p> <p>Build the neighborhood schools first.</p>
253	<p>My children attend an amazing selective enrollment school that they worked very hard to test into and remain academically challenged enough to remain in the school. We are a lower income minority family and love that our children have the opportunity to learn at the appropriate level for them. With this, my children are not necessarily subject to the same level of issues that children in neighborhood schools face. If students of different academic levels are placed together it will not benefit the students at a higher level. The selective enrollment process was put in place for a reason; everyone is not and cannot be on the same level and receive the same kind of schooling.</p>
254	<p>Why would you take choice away from families? This will lead to an exodus of families from CPS</p>
255	<p>It certainly is ideal for kids to go to their neighborhood schools to minimize their commute but going to a good school is worth far more than the commute. There are ONLY poor quality schools in my neighborhood where students are not learning, teachers are not teaching, and schools not being maintained. (Look at school statistics for proof) While I don't have a solution for the crime and poverty related issues but the</p>

	<p>solution for my children is go to a good school with other good kids. I want to send my kids to schools where students learn, teachers teach. It is that simple. YOU ARE DESTROYING THE SUCCESS OF THE FEW GOOD SCHOOLS if you destroy the existing system and denying good kids want to learn a place to learn. If you destroy the existing system, every one will fail, now that's the equity you are looking for. Between all failures and some success you should choose some success. Face it, there is simply not enough resources to make all schools good.</p>
256	<p>Aren't there 10 selective enrollment schools? Why are we focused on only five? Why is a color-blind, objective, selection process now "inequitable"? Just because the end result doesn't meet some kind of made-up quota?</p> <p>Where are these high-achieving, driven, exceptional kids, at all ten schools, supposed to get the intellectual stimulation and preparation for the world they are currently getting? In a classroom based solely on their location in the city, and not their aptitude and merit?</p> <p>Why can't we keep these institutions and also invest in our neighborhood schools?</p> <p>The "brain drain" from CPS that will result from eliminating these schools will be disastrous. This is one of the most shortsighted ideas in city history.</p>
257	<p>I am strongly against taking choice away from parents. Parents currently have the ability to choose their local schools AND the option to pursue other options. The resolution's hope to make neighborhood schools equitable is noble and theoretically an ideal solution that our country has yet to materialize. It's not a Chicago issue, it's an American issue tied up with the inequity of linking education with property taxes. People who are well off can desert the system when it doesn't work for them and pay for private school. What can a poor person do if they are restricted to their local school if the experiment fails? Poor people are once again disenfranchised and trapped by a system that was seeking to liberate them while a well off parent continues to have access to multiple options.</p>
258	<p>Changing schools to be more inclusive speaks those who need an accelerated learning curriculum at a disadvantage when competing with districts outside of Chicago and in the world, while also taking children who may need more assistance and putting an expectation on them that may cause discouragement in learning. I understand to create a more level playing field, but the best way to do this is not eliminate selective enrollment, instead create programs that qualify for federal dollars to supplement the learning of those that need more support. With people leaving Chicago at an alarming rate, having a school system that neglects on both ends and looks for equality of outcome does a disservice to our youth.</p>
259	<p>Your email appears to suggest that it's not targeting selective enrollment, magnet, or charter schools for closure. However, a closer reading of your "Reimagined Vision" reveals a shift "away from privatization and specific admission policies that create social gaps and inequality in CPS, while also pulling students away from neighborhood schools." Frankly, this comes off as dishonest and misleading.</p> <p>This proposed 'Reimagined Vision' seems to imply a "one-size-fits-all" approach, which doesn't respect the rich diversity of learning styles and academic abilities among students. Special programs in selective enrollment, magnet, and charter schools cater to various learning needs and aptitudes - they exist for academically gifted students, those passionate about arts or technology, and more. A decision to transition away from such programs could deprive students of the opportunity to reach their full potential, potentially leading to lower overall achievement in the long run. These special programs</p>

often provide socio-economically disadvantaged students with pathways to high-quality education and better life outcomes. A blanket focus on neighborhood schools, while well-intentioned, could paradoxically intensify inequity if it reduces access to these programs - families who prioritize education may seek quality elsewhere.

Also, let's be clear about the fact that we live in a competitive world—be it in the job market, athletics, or academics. Rankings, whether we like it or not, create opportunities and motivate. Reducing the ability for students to attend highly-ranked schools appears to set them up for a tougher reality in both the national and international cut-throat job markets.

Also consider the repercussions for CPS's reputation. High-achieving students contribute significantly to CPS's image on a local, national, and global scale. Curtailing support for these students might eventually lead to a loss of donor funds and deter competent educators from seeking employment in our schools.

Lastly, consider the families. School choice is imperative—it allows parents to select what's best for their children based on their individual needs. Limiting options could lead to dissatisfaction, potentially culminating in families leaving for private or out-of-state schools, which benefits no one.

Having lived in Chicago for a considerable length of time, I understand the glaring need for funding within neighborhood schools. I wholeheartedly support creating robust neighborhood programs. However, the long-term solution should nurture these local schools without stifling the progress of high-performing schools or restricting educational options for families heavily invested in their children's education. Achieving equality is crucial, but not at the expense of those striving to achieve more.

260 Parents usually search for the best school, not just a good one. With only neighborhood options available, those who can afford to move will relocate to the area with the top-rated school. This, in turn, drives up real estate costs, effectively trapping lower-income families in underperforming schools. Magnet and gifted programs offer alternative options with specialized curricula, but eliminating school choice would remove families' ability to seek educational opportunities outside their immediate vicinity. Furthermore, without standardized testing, reliance on subjective measures like prominent individuals' recommendations could exacerbate social inequalities.

261 Dear CPS School Board and Mayor Johnson,

I hope this message finds you well and receptive to the concerns of the Near South community. While I appreciate the focus on neighborhood schools, particularly in high school education, I am compelled to express my deep reservations regarding the scarcity of high schools in densely populated neighborhoods, like Chinatown LOOP and South Loop, . As a devoted CPS parent and a resident of Printers Row for the past 24 years, my disappointment has been consistent due to the apparent lack of urgency and commitment to establishing a high school for our community.

Allow me to emphasize that Wendell Phillips Academy, situated 4 miles south of my home, is designated as my "Neighborhood High School." However, the reality is that it is not MY NEIGHBORHOOD, nor truly representative of our immediate community. The oversight and persistent disregard exhibited by CPS and the Mayor towards the families in one of the fastest-growing neighborhoods over the past three decades are not only disheartening but also contrary to the principles of equitable education.

If the decision is made to phase out selective enrollment high schools, I urgently implore you to consider transforming Jones College Prep into the long-awaited Neighborhood High School for the Near South community. Doing so would not only align with the principles of neighborhood-focused education but also address the longstanding concerns of our community.

Failure to heed this plea may result in more families leaving the area, and the subsequent loss of both families and tax revenue can only undermine the broader objective of establishing better, more equitable schools. It is crucial to recognize that we, as residents, contribute significantly to the city through substantial tax payments, and our community deserves a high school that reflects the quality and standards we are entitled to in our neighborhood.

Enough time has passed without progress on this matter, and the frustration within the community is palpable. We have been advocating for a Neighborhood High School for decades, and the time for action is now. Transforming Jones Prep into our Neighborhood High School would not only be a prudent decision but also a step towards fostering a more resilient and engaged community.

I sincerely hope that this appeal resonates with you and that you consider our plea with the utmost urgency and compassion. The future of our community's education is at stake, and the establishment of a Neighborhood High School is a critical and long-overdue step towards achieving a more equitable and prosperous educational system for all.

262 The current system gives ethnic and racial minorities as well as people of all socioeconomic classes the potential to access the absolute best schools in the state. The proposed system will not. Anyone can see this. Why not make modifications to the current system to make it more equitable instead of proposing this grand experiment? Let's get real.

263 Our children are students, and their top priority is to learn and excel. It's NOT A SIN to be smart or work hard to succeed. We all face challenges in life, and our children should have the chance to excel academically. Some have compared our selective enrollment and charter schools to "The Hunger Games." While we respect different opinions, education involves challenges everywhere. Suggesting that these schools are the sole source of stress oversimplifies the complexity of the system.

Additionally, some argue that our current system is outdated. However, these schools were established to provide choices for families seeking specialized education. We shouldn't return to a time when these options didn't exist.

We must not take away choices and opportunities from our children. Every child deserves the chance to pursue their academic interests and talents. Eliminating these options disproportionately affects families with limited resources. Equity in education means ensuring all students have opportunities.

As busy parents, we've entrusted the Board of Education to act in our children's best interests. Our collective perspective is vital to understanding students' needs.

	<p>We respectfully request that the board reconsider any decisions limiting educational choices, especially regarding charter schools and selective enrollment programs. Equity means giving every child access to opportunities.</p> <p>Thank you for your dedication to our students, and let's work together for their future.</p>
264	<p>We support elevating educational standards in neighborhood schools so all kids get their right for quality education they deserve. However, any attempts for that shouldn't be at the cost of penalizing or jeopardizing the current benefits for Selective enrollment school kids. It won't be fair to divert funds or resources away from the Selective enrollment schools which have proved to help millions of kids who need the accelerated pace of education to succeed.</p> <p>The funding for such schools are already very limited and much of the school activities are being run out of the PTO fund-raisers. They don't even have school buses this year and its on the parents to drive their kids to (and from) school, some have moved their homes to be near the schools, all because their kids need such schools. Kindly re-consider any plans to reduce funding or cause any changes that may impact the Selective enrollment process. Kids who go to such schools also deserve their fair share of quality education.</p>
265	<p>Saw new articles that CPS is looking to stop selective enrollment & gifted schools. Reducing inequalities in education level of children should be done by elevating the levels being offered in other schools and not by eliminating or lowering the levels of the top notch schools! I am a parent who bought a home closer to a gifted school to make the commute easier on my daughter, while commuting 1.5 hours each way to work myself. I could have gotten a much bigger property in the suburbs and a much easier commute for myself but chose to buy in the city so that my daughter can continue getting education that keeps her challenged. It is extremely unfair on part of CPS to even consider toning down selective enrollment and gifted programs. I hope sense prevails!</p>
266	<p>This transformational plan is internally consistent. It cites a "\$600 million structural deficit, over \$14 billion in facilities needs, and a decrease of approximately eighty thousand students over the last decade" but offers no honest explanation or solutions to those issues. It goes at great lengths to discuss working against a host of evils, but no where does it actually work to solve the existential risks to public schools. There is a passing reference to racism causing these problems, but that is exceptionally vague and none of the proposals actually will stop the flight of money and people from CPS.</p>
267	<p>Our children, as students, strive to learn and excel, and there is no fault in being intelligent or working hard to succeed. Life presents challenges, and we believe our children should have ample opportunities to thrive academically.</p> <p>While some liken our selective enrollment and charter schools to "The Hunger Games," we acknowledge diverse opinions. Education poses challenges universally, and attributing all stress to these schools oversimplifies the intricacies of the system.</p> <p>Critics argue our current system is outdated, but these schools were created to offer choices for families seeking specialized education. Reverting to a time without these options would be a disservice.</p> <p>Preserving choices and opportunities for our children is paramount. Every child deserves to pursue their academic passions, and removing these options disproportionately impacts families with limited resources. Equity in education necessitates providing opportunities for all students.</p>

	<p>As engaged parents, we entrust the Board of Education to act in our children's best interests. Our collective perspective is crucial in understanding students' needs.</p> <p>We kindly request the board reconsider any decisions restricting educational choices, particularly concerning charter schools and selective enrollment programs. True equity means affording every child access to opportunities.</p> <p>We appreciate your dedication to our students, and let's collaboratively work towards securing a promising future for them.</p>
268	<p>I think it is incredibly unfair to change the rules in the middle of the game so to speak. The children in selective enrollment schools and their parents worked incredibly hard to get into these schools. This decision will force thousands of black and brown kids into schools that have been neglected for so many years, that no immediate investment of cash will improve these schools fast enough to avoid damaging our children's education. This decision, however well intentioned will have a disastrous effect on our children. This reinvestment should happen slowly to significantly improve these schools before children are moved.</p>
269	<p>I do think that the selective enrollment elementary schools on the south side in particular have increased achievement and opportunity for Black children. In addition to looking at what might be wrong or unfair about the system, I think it would be valuable to look at these schools to learn what they are getting right for these students.</p>
270	<p>We need leadership who has the ability to maintain the selective schools as they are, and at the same time help the neighborhood schools flourish. Why is it needed to dismantle a system which is so good and is available to everyone living in Chicago ? Can CPS leadership find better solutions to help neighborhood schools? This is a terrible idea to eliminate the system that are offering wonderful opportunities to so many Chicagoans, including the underrepresented communities. So, I do not support this idea of removing selective enrollment schools to help the neighborhood schools. Parents should have a choice and that is what selective schools do.</p>
271	<p>I believe that the selective enrollment process is very important and I do not agree that it should be canceled. I think this program it helps nurse sharp young minds. It provides opportunities for underprivileged children to be accepted to a more rigorous school.</p>
272	<p>I think eliminating Selective Enrollment is one of the worst ideas from i have ever heard of for future generations. Chicago's selective enrollment process has given students the chance to go to amazing schools with curriculum and apply themselves to their desired level. It has given students amazing opportunities that they would never have access to if they just went to their neighborhood school. As a student at the best selective enrollment school in Chicago, I am so grateful for the Selective Enrollment Process because it's what led me to this school that perfectly matches my academic rigor, has introduced me to amazing connections, and has given me a chance to succeed in ways no other school would have. And I worked for it. The selective enrollment process requires a lot of hard work and a great work ethic if students want the the opportunity to attend an amazing school. Why should we stop encouraging that behavior? I understand that other students don't get the same opportunities but to solve that we should be finding ways to give them that opportunity to learn and succeed as well, but that is not going to be done by taking away the need to work hard to get into a school in the first place. All that does is worsen programs when we should instead be improving others. I know for a fact that if I went to my neighborhood school I would not be the type of student I am right now. I beg you not to dumb down future generations to make others' lives easier. Let people learn to work hard and succeed if they want a good</p>

education, don't take away advanced education to make it easier and accessible for all. That is how society will improve and advance, this won't happen if kids are just given everything from the start. They will have no work ethic, no challenge, and not nearly the amount of drive kids have for their education now. Chicago's education system is amazing, please keep it that way. Find a way to HELP disadvantaged students and give them the help they deserve and need to be accepted into selective enrollment schools with advanced curriculum and education that sets students up with lifelong skills and provides them with countless opportunities, but don't take away the amazing curriculum and education people can earn and work for and deserve. Don't destroy the amazing education system Chicago has by making all schools the same, just make other schools better!!!

273 I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed plan to move away from selective enrollment schools in support of equity, as outlined in the resolution dated December 14, 2023.

Firstly, it is crucial to recognize that it is far easier to dismantle an existing, functioning system than to construct a new one. The selective enrollment system, while not perfect, has proven effective in providing quality education. Its dissolution risks destabilizing the current educational landscape without guaranteeing an improvement in equity.

Moreover, simply removing selective enrollment will not address the root causes of inequity in education. This approach may only serve to mask the symptoms rather than provide a sustainable solution. It's imperative to focus on systemic changes that directly tackle these underlying issues.

Furthermore, selective enrollment schools often offer environments uniquely suited to children with special needs, providing them with necessary resources and support. Eliminating these schools could have devastating effects on this vulnerable student population, potentially upending their educational and personal development.

Lastly, this shift could negatively impact the overall quality of education in Chicago, potentially affecting its national educational ranking. The loss of selective enrollment schools could lead to a decrease in educational standards and outcomes, which would be detrimental not only to students but also to the reputation of Chicago's educational system.

I urge you to reconsider this plan and explore alternative solutions that genuinely address educational inequity without compromising the quality of education for all students in Chicago.

274 Studies find that low-income and minority students admitted into the CPS magnet and selective enrollment schools perform impressively on state assessments, achieving much higher scores than the district average of their more affluent peers and keeping up with the students in their schools who are not classified as low-income.

The CPS magnet and selective enrollment schools could be the ONLY chance for many low-income and minority students to have academic and future career success (affluent students have multiple resources for their success), especially when most CPS community schools fail to meet expectations regarding the reading or math proficiency of their students. The success of these hardworking low-income and minority students is fundamental for achieving a true equity for next-generation Chicagoans.

275	<p>The desire is to have quality education and equity for all our children, yet I don't believe the recently approved plan will accomplish this. Relying on neighborhood schools in struggling communities will inevitably be unable to provide the quality education afforded to a more financially stable community. Therefore our communities deserve to hear the carefully crafted plan to ensure that all the resources will be allocated and the quality delivery of instruction monitored to successfully help the children in each community reach equitable educational gains and opportunities. It is quite disheartening to hear a resolution pass prior to having the community share their voices and creative solutions for the best outcomes. This passing resolution disregards the community and oppresses the voices of the very ones who need to be heard. I urge that a plan of action is executed that fairly represents the needs and voices of the parents of the children of the full community.</p>
276	<p>As a product of Choice Schools its surprising to hear there was even a vote to dismantle the jewel of the district. In a city with rising crime, dwindling population, and major corporations leaving the city there fewer reasons to stay or come in Chicago as a working professional. I now have 2 children in Choice schools that are working at a pace 1-2 grade levels ahead. That made me excited to stay in my city. Now, I need to worry about safety and a possible academic regression for the sake of "equity?"</p> <p>What makes these choice schools successful is like minded parents, students, and a school staff that all strive for excellence. If that is the common goal and people put in the work, equity is achieved. This proposal is myopic shortcut that will cause more harm to high performing students and families with the means to leave the city than this commission realizes.</p> <p>We already see how Choice Schools have been targeted by the District by removing transportation with no viable replacement options. We already know CPS does not submit the data of top schools to US News and World Report. Now you will see the parents that care and have resources leave your city.</p> <p>It would be amazing for the district to come forward with how you are going to make the underperforming schools perform better. Not weaken the the best and brightest in attempt to make Chicago more desirable. You will set city back in a 20 year hole.</p>
277	<p>This policy seeks to raise the quality of neighborhood schools by bringing down/eliminating the selective enrollment schools. Why would that sound like a good idea to punish advanced students and hold back their potential? Chicago ranks highly in the nation thanks to these schools and this will hurt the city in the long term, forcing middle working class to relocate to neighboring suburbs or enroll in private schools to get the quality of education their children deserves. we strongly urge the board to help the neighborhood school program without affecting the selective enrollment schools.</p>
278	<p>Please continue selection enrollment and resume busing</p>
279	<p>Please save selective enrollment schools. We need to keep these very bright students in Chicago rather than families moving out of Chicago.</p>
280	<p>One of the solutions is to elevate the neighborhood schools and not to dismantle selective enrollment.</p>
281	<p>First it's absurd to allow 24 hours for a community response to this resolution. To me that means you don't really care about the response. Second, improving neighborhood schools is a must but eliminating SE and choice schools is a ridiculous answer to inequities. This forces families and tax revenue out of the city and therefore decreases overall funding for schools. Additionally a successful school in Chicago relies on outside</p>

	fundraising from involved parent communities. Without involvement from parents the school is likely unsuccessful. Unless neighborhood schools get additional funding above and beyond what they receive now there's a low likelihood of success. Most SE schools find success by parent based funding to offer programming that would otherwise not be funded in the school. Better schools = more money. Trying to back out of the single most successful cps school model in order to create equity is the wrong answer. Make the neighborhood schools better but not at the cost of the SE and choice school model.
282	We are low income family living and my son is attending a gifted school. He is very happy attending there. He has anxiety and smaller school fits him the best. This is sad for cps to make this decision.
283	As a parent of CPS students who attended Selective Enrollment school, I am not in favor of shutting them down. Our current city administration does not seem interested in the achievement of our young students who worked hard in order to gain admission into selective enrollment schools. Please do not touch CPS Selective Enrollment Schools.
284	You cannot get rid of selective enrollment schools and then make them all public. Smarter children need more stimulation and a different curriculum.
285	I disagree with ending selective enrollment schools. They provide access to a higher level of education for low income and racially diverse students that wouldn't otherwise have access.
286	We will leave Chicago
287	How are we defining equity? Are motivated, high-performing students not allowed to strive in a setting with other similar students? Why would the BoE decide dismantling selective enrollment high schools is an equitable solution? What is the role that allowing choice in enrolling in non-neighborhood K-8 schools has in this situation? Are you saying that academically curious children who rely on their parents as their advocates are no longer allowed the option of a magnet school? Do not dismantle selective enrollment high schools. Set up programs to identify students across the city who are high-performing and support them in a pathway to a high quality high school where students exceed ELA and Math proficiency on average, in addition to graduating that high school.
288	I'm glad SEES will be removed. I am a parent at Skinner West Elementary and the children that get bussed in from outside the West Loop are disturbing. They frequently cause disruptions and are not fitting in to our culture here at Skinner. Many of those classical program students are from the south side and they should attend their own schools and not take coveted spots in ours. I agree with getting rid of this program. Let us have our school reserved for those that actually live in the West Loop and are a part of our community.
289	Gifted education is special education. Those students deserve a place where they can thrive. Destroying selective enrollment won't better the neighborhood schools. The neighborhood schools need to rise up to the level of selective enrollment through more investment from the city into their communities. I also think, that this will mean that families in low income neighborhoods will have no options while the rich will continue to thrive, and, because the city is segregated, less diversity in schools.
290	Please don't remove selective schools. This is horrible for the kids who try so hard to get into selective enrollment schools, and Chicago's education will go down.
291	Shifting away from a model that emphasizes school choice to one that elevates our neighborhood schools will NOT ensure that every student has access to a high-quality educational experience. School qualities vary from school to school depending on the

taxes the school receives from its neighborhood and the test scores of its students. The first factor is taxes. Taxes come from the income of the families residing in the neighborhood of the school. Different neighborhoods have different incomes. In the downtown area of Chicago, residents often have higher incomes compared to those living in the southern areas of Chicago. These income differences are a result of schooling, yes, but they are also a result of various other factors as well, including racism. As much as people try to ignore the racism happening in Chicago with the sloppy excuse that Chicago has many different people of all races and ethnicities, there is still racism. On a map of Chicago's population by race, one may observe that most African Americans in Chicago live in the south. On a map of Chicago's neighborhood income, one may also observe that many neighborhoods in the south have relatively low incomes. Coincidence? It doesn't take someone observant to notice that. People in Chicago usually tend to live in neighborhoods where their race is the dominant race. This idea of staying with 'one's own kind', stems from a lack of diversity and meeting new people across all races, ethnicities, and cultures. Because people tend to stay in an area where their race is dominant, they don't get as much exposure to new opportunities, information, or knowledge. Knowledge is gained through the interaction of many, many people, across all races. Forcing students to go to their neighborhood school would mean forcing children to never gain knowledge further than the knowledge in their neighborhood. Growth would become stagnant in certain neighborhoods. Due to America's history involving African Americans, racism was born. African Americans have been subject to many different challenges simply because of the color of their skin. Thus, African-American neighborhoods have lower incomes and are at the bottom of this growth because their school would not be as funded either. The school would not have many funds because the taxes would not draw much in and the students' test scores wouldn't go up either until after the taxes and funds reel in. Many other minorities have a difficult history with America as well and they ended up at the bottom of this growth. I elaborated and used African Americans as an example because this example is most recognized. The people who are at the top of the growth usually have higher incomes. By higher incomes, I mean white neighborhoods. Those of Caucasian descent have long been favored by America and their long history of being favored won't just disappear. Generally, Caucasian neighborhoods have high incomes. Because of the high incomes, the taxes would reel in more money for the school, and consequently, the students would have enough (sometimes more than enough) funding to have good test scores. More funding for this school would be provided because the test scores are high. The rich would get richer, and the poor would stay poorer. Those at the top will forever stay at the top, and those at the bottom would forever stay at the bottom. The cycle of poverty would be repeated without any chance for students in low-income neighborhoods to receive an education in a high-quality school like students in high-income neighborhoods. Because neighborhoods are generally dominated by one race and that race sticks together in that neighborhood, there is a high sense of community, but little-to-no diversity. Diversity allows for students of different races to interact with one another. The ability to select one's school through their own merit and hard work will grant them opportunities to meet new races to gain a deserving quality education together and rid racism.

292 My son currently attends one of the selective enrollment high schools. I feel very strongly that eliminating charter schools and selective enrollment schools would be a huge mistake on the board's part. These high schools are not only ranked at the top in IL but also highly ranked nationally. Honestly our family would have left Chicago if the selective enrollment schools were not an option. Over 50% of families at our son's school live either below the poverty line or live paycheck to paycheck. Particularly when

students from these families are able to attend a selective enrollment school- it can be life changing for their entire family. Why would you destroy this model? If the selective enrollment program is dropped -many families will leave the city or look to private schools: CPS cannot afford to lose these schools. I sincerely hope that the board reconsiders this decision. Our son is a senior - so the decision will not impact him. However I know what an amazing experience my son has had attending a school with such a diverse student body. To take this away from future students would be a tragedy.

ATTACHMENTS



Charles Tocci, Ed.D.

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December 12, 2023

Chicago Public Schools Board of Education,

I'm writing today and speaking at the December 14th Board meeting to ask that you end the district's School Resource Officer (SRO) program in its entirety. This is based on my personal experiences as a former CPS teacher, parent of 4 CPS students, and engaged researcher.

In the latter, I co-authored a comprehensive review concerning the effects of school-based law enforcement (SBLE) in K-12 schools, which was published last month in *The American Journal of Community Psychology*. Based on our analysis of the history, research literature, and available alternatives, we argue that the "presence and actions of SBLE negatively affect individual students as well as school systems, with particularly harmful outcomes for students with minoritized and marginalized identities. Research on SBLE and school crime does not provide consistent evidence of positive impacts, and many studies find null effects for the relationship between SBLE and school crime or increases in crime and violence in schools. Though funding for SBLE is often prompted by high-profile acts of gun violence in schools, evidence suggests that SBLE neither prevents these incidents, nor lessens the severity when they do occur. Thus, we advocate for removing law enforcement from school settings and redirecting resources into inclusive, evidence-informed responses that are generally safer and more effective than SBLE."

Enclosed is the entire article for review.


I applaud the Board for evolving the districts' SRO program over the past 3 years to create more options for schools and communities to reimagine what safety and security look like. The necessary next step is to end the SRO program in its entirety and reinvest those resources into new school-based well-being initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles Tocci".

Charles Tocci, Ed.D.

POLICY PAPER**Statement on the effects of law enforcement in school settings**

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Abstract

School-based law enforcement (SBLE) have become increasingly common in U.S. schools over recent decades despite the controversy surrounding their presence and lack of consensus around their associated benefits and harms. Drawing on the history and evidence base regarding SBLE, we advocate for an end to SBLE programs. Grounding our argument in principles of Community Psychology and positive youth development, we outline how the presence and actions of SBLE negatively affect individual students as well as school systems, with particularly harmful outcomes for students with minoritized and marginalized identities. Research on SBLE and school crime does not provide consistent evidence of positive impacts, and many studies find null effects for the relationship between SBLE and school crime or increases in crime and violence in schools. Though funding for SBLE is often prompted by high-profile acts of gun violence in schools, evidence suggests that SBLE neither prevents these incidents, nor lessens the severity when they do occur. Thus, we advocate for removing law enforcement from school settings and redirecting resources into inclusive, evidence-informed responses that are generally safer and more effective than SBLE. We close by outlining the policy landscape governing SBLE programs and ways communities can lobby for change.

KEYWORDS

disparities, police in schools, school-based law enforcement, school resource officers, school safety, students

Highlights

- Youth attending schools with school-based law enforcement (SBLE) experience more negative outcomes.
- Black and Latinx youth experience greater negative effects of SBLE.
- SBLE presence negatively affects school climate.
- There is little evidence that SBLE prevents or limits school shootings.
- Recommendations are provided for school practices, policy changes, and grassroots organizing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School-based law enforcement (SBLE; i.e., sworn police officers assigned to schools on a full- or part-time basis) have become an increasingly common part of

U.S. schools over recent decades, despite the controversy surrounding their presence and a lack of consensus around their associated benefits and harms. Drawing on the history and evidence base regarding SBLE, we advocate for an end to SBLE programs. The presence

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and actions of SBLE negatively affect individual students and school systems, with particularly harmful outcomes for Black and Latinx students as well as others already marginalized within the United States. Although some individual studies find that SBLE are associated with reduced school crime (Owens, 2017; Sorensen et al., 2021), the body of research as a whole does not provide consistent evidence of positive impacts (Fisher et al., 2023). In fact, many studies find null effects for the relationship between SBLE and school crime, or even increases in crime and violence in schools (Curran, 2020; Gottfredson et al., 2020; Na & Gottfredson, 2013). Though funding for SBLE is often prompted by high-profile acts of gun violence in schools, evidence suggests that SBLE neither prevent these incidents from occurring nor lessen the severity when they do occur (Livingston et al., 2019; Peterson et al., 2021). Thus, we advocate for removing law enforcement from school settings and redirecting SBLE program resources into inclusive, evidence-informed responses that are generally safer and more effective than punitive measures (McCarter, 2017). Because direct authority over SBLE programs lies with states and local agencies, student- and community-led efforts have demonstrated that they are well-positioned to advocate for SBLE removal and for investment in nonpunitive school safety resources. Community psychologists can engage in values-driven advocacy and research on the effects of SBLE presence as well as advocate for removal for the benefit of diverse students and school communities.

INTRODUCTION

Controversy has long surrounded the presence of police officers in schools (Kautz, 2020; Kunichoff, 2017; Onion, 2020), but questions about school-based law enforcement (SBLE) have taken on new urgency with the upswell of local organizing for racial justice in the wake of George Floyd's murder (Jenkins, 2023) and a growing movement for police abolition (Gomez, M., 2021). In response, governments at all levels and school districts large and small have revisited policies on SBLE with results spanning from removal to defunding to expansion. Between May 2020 and June 2022, at least 50 school districts enrolling over 1.7 million students cut or reduced budgets for SBLE programs; subsequently, at least eight districts reversed this decision (Riser-Kositsky et al., 2022). Illustrative of this tumultuous situation, Denver Public Schools disbanded its school resource officer (SRO) program in 2020 and then reinstated it following a school shooting in 2023 (Asmar, 2023). Notwithstanding the political volatility concerning SBLE, the research evidence demonstrates that SBLE have no statistically significant impact on a variety of measures of school safety, but do substantially increase student punishments (Fisher et al., 2023) with a heavily

disparate effect on racially minoritized youth (Advancement Project & Alliance for Educational Justice, 2018). In line with this evidence base and in light of the widespread, pressing public debate on the issue, we advocate for the removal of law enforcement from school settings.

SBLE refers to one or more sworn law enforcement officers assigned full- or part-time to a school with the power to arrest and who often carry firearms. The two most common types of SBLE programs in the United States are SRO programs, which entail local law enforcement agencies providing officers to schools, and independent police departments formed by school districts (Stern & Petrosino, 2018). We use the term SBLE to encompass both scenarios and others where law enforcement officers are stationed in schools. Throughout the United States, an estimated 49.20% of public schools utilize approximately 45,200 school-based law enforcement (SBLE) officers (Wang et al., 2022). Most public middle and high schools, as well as schools enrolling more than 500 students, report SBLE presence, with few additional patterns emerging based on school characteristics (e.g., the proportion of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch; see Table 1).

This position statement provides an accessible, multidimensional discussion of the practical, theoretical, and empirical issues concerning SBLE. Our position builds from recently published systematic reviews (Fisher & Hennessy, 2016; Javdani, 2019) and a meta-analysis (Fisher et al., 2023), which indicate a lack of positive effects and significant racially disparate negative impacts associated with SBLE. It is further guided by several values centered in the Community Psychology field. First, we are informed by commitments to social justice, empowerment, and the promotion of well-being; we believe the goal of schooling is to uplift and position youth to become healthy, engaged citizens, and these efforts are most effective when they are supportive rather than punitive (Rappaport et al., 1984; Society for Community Research and Action, 2021). Second, our perspective is grounded in respect for human diversity; specifically, we consider how the effects of SBLE on youth and families differ by individuals' racialized identity, gender, social class, sexuality, and ability in their myriad combinations. Third, we ascribe to an ecological perspective, which recognizes that schools both influence and are impacted by individual students and other school actors and that schools themselves are embedded within broader hierarchical and interactive social systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979).

We use ecological systems theory to organize this position statement, beginning with the history of school policing (i.e., the chronosystem) and then examining the negative impacts of SBLE on individual students, and school climate and supports (i.e., the microsystem). Within each section, we attend to our values of social justice, empowerment, and respect for human diversity.

TABLE 1 Estimated percentages of public schools reporting presence of full- or part-time school resource officers or other sworn law enforcement officers by school characteristics, 2019–2020 (Wang et al., 2022, p. 18).

	School resource officers	Other law enforcement officers
School Level		
Elementary	39.0%	11.0%
Middle	68.0%	12.2%
High/secondary	67.4%	18.3%
Enrollment		
Less than 300	28.8%	11.0%
300–499	45.1%	13.0%
500–999	54.6%	13.6%
1000 or more	83.0%	14.0%
Percent of racially minoritized students		
Less than 5%	46.9%	15.2%
5% to less than 20%	54.1%	15.3%
20% to less than 50%	52.7%	11.4%
50% or more	45.0%	12.4%
Percent of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch		
0%–25%	49.3%	12.6%
More than 25%–50%	49.3%	10.9%
More than 50%–75%	52.3%	14.3%
75% or more	46.5%	13.7%

We also incorporate a developmental perspective, as school experiences contribute considerably to youth well-being and development over time (Dunn et al., 2015) and school practices may be more likely to lead to negative outcomes if they do not match students' developmental needs and behaviors (Eccles et al., 1993). Taken together, these values frame our interpretation of the empirical literature on SBLE and the alternatives we propose. We emphasize strategies that enhance the core goals of schools to promote academic engagement and student well-being, foster systems of support and inclusion, and strengthen connections between schools and communities.

The first section presents a brief discussion of the historical origins and growth of SBLE in U.S. schools and is followed by an examination of the ineffectiveness and harms associated with SBLE, with evidence drawn from scholarly reviews and empirical studies. The succeeding section includes evidence-based considerations for promoting school safety, followed by a discussion of policy and advocacy. We conclude with a

call for more engaged and value-aligned research to inform community decision-making about school safety and student well-being. Throughout, we use footnotes to detail the significant studies that inform our position while organizing the findings to be useful to the range of stakeholders involved in school safety: students, educators, administrators, counselors, safety personnel, parents, guardians, community members, policymakers, and researchers.

History of school policing

The history of school policing, from its emergence in the mid-20th century as a public relations initiative to its many varied functions in schools today, illustrates how deeply interwoven schooling and policing have become. Schools and law enforcement have long collaborated around issues like truancy and public safety, and some school districts created formal police units, such as Indianapolis in 1939 (Coy, 2004) and Los Angeles in 1948 (Brown, 2006). Flint, Michigan started the first recognized “school resource officer” program in 1953 (Girouard, 2001) with the specific innovation that officers were instructed to engage with youth to improve police-community relations (Kafka, 2011; Weiler & Cray, 2011). This represented the start of a “triad model” where SBLE played three different, interrelated roles: policing, public relations, and education (Gomez, W., 2021). This was formalized into federal policy in 2000, with SROs defined as “law enforcement officer, counselor, teacher, and liaison between law enforcement, schools, families, and the community” (Girouard, 2001, p. 1).

The law enforcement function of SBLE grew rapidly through the 1960s school integration era. The Lyndon B. Johnson administration launched the “War on Poverty” in 1964, which included far-reaching school integration and education reform policies; however, this was followed in 1965 by the “War on Crime” (Hinton, 2015). The “War on Crime” shifted the focus of federal policies addressing urban Black communities to an emphasis on policing and surveillance with “increased police presence on the streets, in the sky, and within schools and housing projects” (Hinton, 2015, p. 108). As part of the “War on Crime,” the Johnson Administration created the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration to distribute funding to state and local law enforcement agencies for education, research, and outreach; while a significant portion was used to equip and train officers, monies were also invested in psychologists and other helping professions (Keys et al., 1978). In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice helped intensify the focus on youth by arguing, “America's best hope for reducing crime is to reduce juvenile delinquency and youth crime” (as quoted in Platt, 1970, p. 17). This ideological position fed the growth of permanent police presence in urban schools,

including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Oakland (Byers & Criollo, 2020; Gomez, M., 2021; Kautz, 2020; Kunichoff, 2017; Onion, 2020).

During this era, SROs often surveilled students of color and curtailed civil rights organizing by youth (Gomez, W., 2021). In 1966, Chicago Public Schools, at the behest of the Chicago Teachers Union's concern for the safety of White teachers, began to hire off-duty police officers as school security guards in response to Black and Latinx youths' protests aimed at inequities in the school system (Kunichoff, 2017). The same year, Tucson Unified School District adopted an SRO program in response to a Chicano student movement demanding organizational and curricular change (Noble, 2017). Similarly, the Boston School Committee deployed police to predominantly Black schools during the late 1960s and early 1970s in response to student demands for equality, even though student protests remained nonviolent (Kautz, 2020). As Los Angeles Unified School District schools became increasingly desegregated and diverse in this period, White parents began to request that police be stationed in schools to address purported safety concerns. In turn, police presence became a symbol of unsafe schools to many White families fleeing the city for the suburbs (Kafka, 2011).

Dating back to the first SRO program in Flint, a stated purpose for bringing police into schools was to develop more positive relationships between youth and law enforcement (Kafka, 2011; Weiler & Cray, 2011). Programs such as "Officer Friendly" worked towards fostering more constructive relationships between police and racially minoritized communities (Onion, 2020). Later, SBLE served as educators through programs such as "Drug Abuse Resistance Education" (DARE), founded in 1983, and "Gang Resistance Education and Training" (GREAT), founded in 1992. Both efforts leveraged federal funding to incentivize local districts to hire police officers in instructional roles to help prevent youth from illegal or dangerous behaviors through education or intimidation. Research on these programs suggests they were largely ineffective in realizing their goals (Becker et al., 1992; Esbensen et al., 2011; Pan & Bai, 2009; Rosenbaum et al., 1994). They did, however, establish a policy pathway to direct federal funds to school districts that would support an expanded range of SBLE roles (Felker-Kantor, 2022), including security in and around school grounds, partnering with administrators to share information, community relations, teaching classes, coaching sports teams, and more (Higgins et al., 2020; McKenna et al., 2016).

SBLE program growth accelerated over the past several decades. In 1975, 1% of schools reported having SBLE stationed on campus (Advancement Project & Alliance for Educational Justice, 2018); by 2018, that number had grown to 49.2% of public schools (Wang et al., 2022, p. 18). A significant increase in students' exposure to SBLE came in the wake of the 1999 shooting

at Columbine High School, with a jump from 54.1% to 63.8% of students ages 12–18 reporting security guards or assigned police officers in their schools from 1999 to 2001 (see Figure 1). Over the decade following Columbine, the U.S. Department of Justice invested over \$750 million in grants to local police departments to hire 6500 new SBLE officers and provided them with training and technical assistance (Merkwae, 2015). By 2009, 68.1% of students ages 12–18 reported security guards or assigned police officers in their schools, and this trend continued through 2019, when 75.4% reported the same (Irwin et al., 2021; Musu-Gillette et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2016, see Figure 1).

In particular, there has been a rapid increase in SBLE presence in elementary schools, rising from about 1% to over 30% between 1990 and 2016 (Heaviside et al., 1998; Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). Gleit (2022) illustrates that the majority of White schools have seen the biggest increase in SBLE, especially at the elementary level, but students' exposure to SBLE differs along racial lines. Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students have more direct exposure to SBLE and experience more punitive discipline in comparison to White students. The exposure White students have to SBLE is more likely to be for educational purposes, not discipline (Hirschfield, 2010; Lynch et al., 2016).

The growth of SBLE to cover nearly half of U.S. public schools has been met with resistance from communities and organizations concerned about the over-policing of Black and Latinx youth (Advancement Project & Alliance for Educational Justice, 2018). In tandem with recent momentum in the broader movement for police and prison abolition, organizing by students, parents, teachers, and community members has focused attention on fully removing police from schools (American Federation of Teachers, 2020a; Issa, 2021). These activists highlight how SBLE disproportionately harm students of color (e.g., Ortiz et al., 2020), and how funding for SBLE can be redirected towards evidence-based practices with a greater likelihood of enhancing student well-being (e.g., Kamenetz, 2020; Tat, 2021). The responses to local campaigns to remove police from schools have varied (Camera, 2021), with some districts removing SBLE completely (e.g., Minneapolis, San Francisco), some decreasing their number (e.g., Los Angeles, Chicago), some increasing funding (e.g., New York City), and at least one district removing SROs and then, in the wake of a school shooting, reinstating its SRO program (Denver).

Ineffectiveness and harm from school policing practices

Despite the growth in SBLE over the past seven decades, empirical research documents limited benefits to their presence and instead highlights their negative impacts.

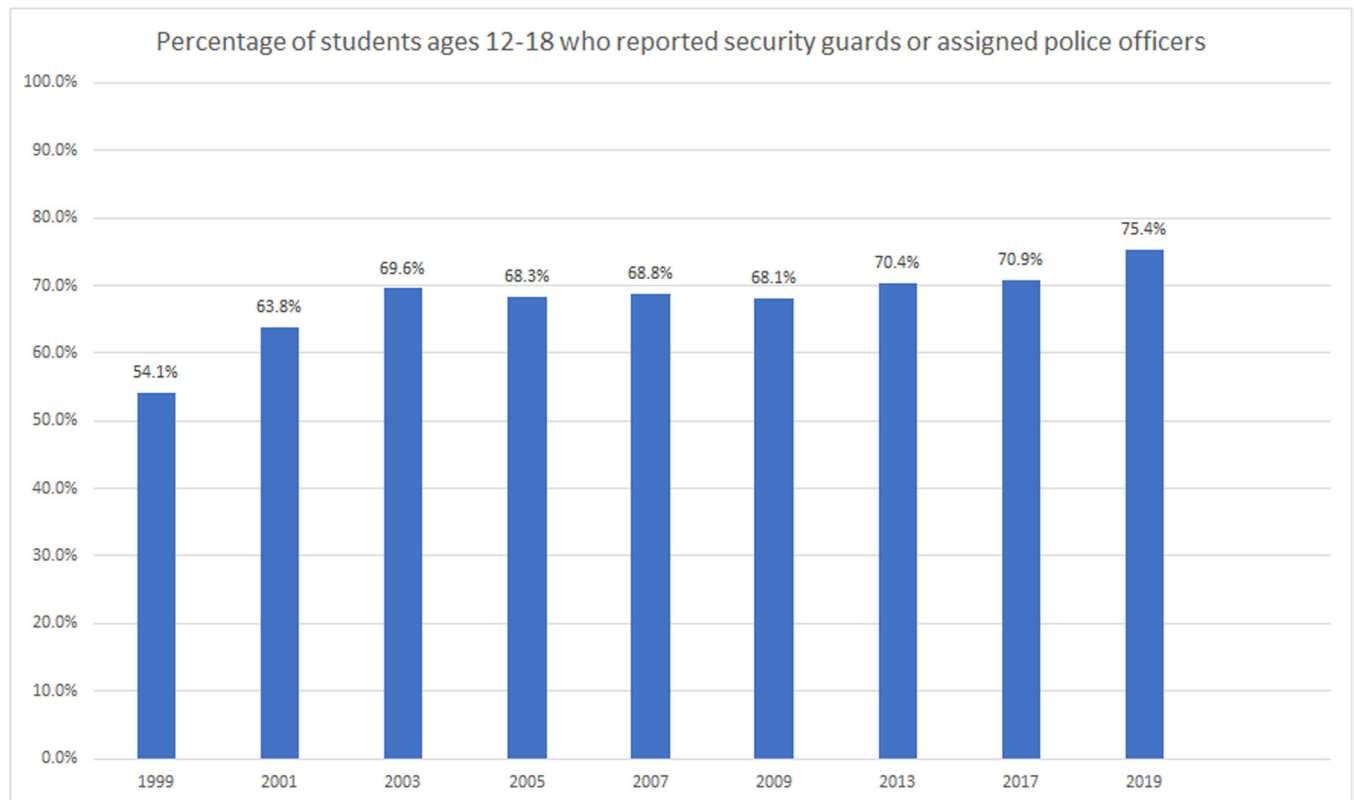


FIGURE 1 Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported security guards or assigned police officers,¹ 1999–2019 (Irwin et al., 2021; Musu-Gillette et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2016).²

While some individual studies find that SBLE can have crime reduction effects (Owens, 2017; Sorensen et al., 2021), the body of research as a whole does not provide consistent evidence of positive impacts (Fisher et al., 2023; Javdani, 2019; Nickerson et al., 2021). In fact, many studies find null effects for the relationship between SBLE and school crime, or even increases in multiple forms of crime and violence in schools (Curran, 2020; Gottfredson et al., 2020; Na & Gottfredson, 2013). In a systematic review of 28 studies of SBLE, Javdani (2019) concluded that although some studies provided limited and subjective evidence supporting SBLE presence, “the majority of evidence from the best designed studies suggests that SPO [School Police Officer] presence is associated with greater exclusionary discipline and arrest” (p. 265). In addition to several studies that provided evidence indicating SPO presence

was associated with an increase in crime, exclusionary discipline, and violence (Barnes, 2008; Brady et al., 2007; Devlin & Gottfredson, 2018; Fisher & Hennessy, 2016; Martinez-Prather et al., 2016; Na & Gottfredson, 2013; Swartz et al., 2016; Zhang, 2018), studies included in the review highlighted that in many cases SPOs received neither school-specific training nor clear guidelines regarding their role in the school via a memorandum of understanding (Barnes, 2016; Cray & Weiler, 2011; Lambert & McGinty, 2002; Teske, 2011; Thurau & Wald, 2019). Additionally, in many cases, SPO presence did not increase perceptions of school safety (McKay et al., 2006; Theriot & Orme, 2016), though in some cases some students viewed SPOs favorably (Chrusciel et al., 2015), and other studies found that more interactions with SPOs were related to more positive perceptions (Theriot, 2016); SPOs employed for longer were viewed more favorably (Wolfe et al., 2017); and having positive perceptions of SPOs was positively related to school climate (Zullig et al., 2017).

A recent meta-analysis also summarized this body of literature, including 1002 effect sizes from 32 studies that examined outcomes related to crime and behavior, academic outcomes, and perceptions of safety at school (Fisher et al., 2023). This study found no statistically significant average effect of SBLE on any measure of crime or violent behavior, suggesting SBLE do not make schools safer.

¹The question posed to respondents was, “Does your school have: security guards or assigned police officers? 1 Yes/2 No/3 Don't Know” (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019, p. 6)

²“The sampling frame was restricted to regular public schools, charter schools, and schools with partial or total magnet programs in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. It excluded special education schools, vocational schools, alternative schools, virtual schools, newly closed schools, home schools, ungraded schools, schools with a highest grade of kindergarten or lower, Department of Defense Education Activity schools, and Bureau of Indian Education schools, as well as schools in Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Northern Marianas, Guam, and the US Virgin Islands.” (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.).

Moreover, this same study found that SBLE were associated with higher rates of school-based punishment such as suspension. These findings were robust across primary studies that used a variety of different designs, including both cross-sectional and longitudinal estimates, controls for potential confounders, and adjusting for lagged measures of the outcome. Although individual studies may have identified beneficial, detrimental, and null effects of SBLE on the outcomes, this meta-analysis highlights that the body of literature as a whole does not find evidence that SBLE reduce crime or violence in schools on average. One complicating factor in this body of research is that a vast majority of these studies rely on administrative records of crime and violence rather than actual observations of behavior. Administrative records are sensitive to changes in detection and reporting, so adding SBLE to schools may simultaneously shift the likelihood that crime and violence are detected and reported, regardless of any actual behavior change.

School shootings represent a particularly horrifying and catastrophic phenomenon with a large influence on policy and practice (Curran et al., 2020; Madfis, 2016), such that funding for SBLE is often prompted by high-profile acts of gun violence in schools. Since the tragedy at Columbine High School in 1999, there has been an accompanying focus on reshaping schools to prevent these incidents, or at least to stop them as soon as possible (Madfis, 2016); however, evidence suggests that SBLE neither prevent these incidents from occurring nor lessen the severity when they do occur (Livingston et al., 2019; Peterson et al., 2021).³ The most comprehensive research on this topic examined the characteristics of every known school shooting incident in recent decades (Peterson et al., 2021). This correlational study found that, after controlling for school characteristics such as socioeconomic status or school level, SBLE presence was associated with a greater loss of life during school-based active shooting events. Related research using a fuzzy regression discontinuity design with longitudinal data from schools across the United States—permitting stronger causal inferences—found that SBLE presence did not reduce reports of school-based firearm-related incidents or school shootings (Sorensen et al., 2023). On the contrary, arming SBLE so they are prepared if a school shooting occurs may contribute to officer-perpetrated shooting deaths. Although this has not been subject to empirical scrutiny yet, incidents such as the case of a Long Beach, California school safety officer who shot and killed an unarmed 18 year-old in 2021 (Queally et al., 2021), as well as the murder of 20 year-old Raheim Brown by an Oakland, California SRO in 2012 (Lee, 2013) highlight the potential fatal consequences of having armed SBLE.

³Both Livingston et al. (2019) and Peterson et al. (2021) conducted retrospective analyses of all school shooting incidents they could identify that met their respective inclusion criteria.

The disconnect between stated purposes for SBLE and actual outcomes suggests that the expansion of these programs may be driven by local political considerations and cultural beliefs (Nolan, 2015; Turner & Beneke, 2020; Viano et al., 2021) and aided by federal funding (Koon, 2020). The overall effect of SBLE extends the reach and influence of law enforcement, with a demonstrably negative and racially disparate impact on youth.

While a bulk of research has focused on SBLE's role, or lack thereof, in the prevention of crime and violence on campuses, another body of research has explored the broader ways in which they impact school environments and students' experiences within them. It is well established that school experiences contribute considerably to youth well-being and development (Dunn et al., 2015) and that school practices may be more likely to lead to negative outcomes if they are misaligned with students' developmental needs and behaviors (Eccles et al., 1993). For example, early adolescence is a time in which autonomy and agency gain importance, while classroom management and discipline often increase in schools (Eccles et al., 1993). Informed by this and guided by ecological systems theory, in the following section, we review literature regarding how the presence of SBLE in schools impacts individual students.

Impact on individual students

The presence of SBLE often contributes to inequitably distributed, inconsistent, and escalated responses to students' behaviors. For example, the presence of SBLE in one district was associated with an increase in student arrests for highly subjective behaviors such as disorderly conduct relative to schools without SBLE (Theriot, 2009). SBLE presence is also associated with an increase in legal and school-based punitive responses, including higher rates of exclusionary discipline, juvenile misdemeanor complaints, and arrests (Fisher & Hennessy, 2016; Gottfredson et al., 2020; Hirschfield, 2008; Homer & Fisher, 2020; Sorensen et al., 2021, 2023; Weisburst, 2019; Whitaker et al., 2019). Aligned with Community Psychology values of social justice and respect for human diversity, and following research demonstrating the negative consequences of exclusionary school punishment (Gerlinger et al., 2021), we argue that the increased punishment of students is a problem. As discussed in the following section, these negative consequences disproportionately affect traditionally marginalized students.

Racially minoritized students

Racially minoritized youth are disproportionately represented in school-based arrests. Black and Latinx youth, for example, represent only 40% of the national public school enrollment, but comprise 58% of school-based arrests (Advancement Project & Alliance for Educational Justice, 2018). Although Black girls constitute only 17%

of female public school enrollment, they represent 43% of girls arrested at school and are four times more likely to be arrested at school compared to their White peers (Advancement Project & Alliance for Educational Justice, 2018; Inniss-Thompson, 2017). SBLE play a role in these disparities: arrests are, on average, higher for all students in schools with police, but are particularly high for Black students relative to White and Latinx students (Homer & Fisher, 2020).

The most methodologically rigorous studies⁴ on SBLE to date point to a host of disproportionately detrimental consequences for students of color and particularly Black and Latinx students. Although the meta-analysis cited above (Fisher et al., 2023) examined the impacts of SBLE on detrimental outcomes such as exclusionary school discipline, it did not include differences by student subgroup (e.g., race/ethnicity) even though existing theory and research suggest there are disparate impacts. That said, multiple rigorous quasi-experimental studies that permit strong causal inferences have found that SBLE presence coincides with disproportionate punishment of students of color through the use of arrest or suspension. For example, studies have demonstrated that when schools increased their use of or funding for SBLE, suspensions and expulsions increased for Black students relative to their White peers, as did contact with the criminal justice system via arrests and referrals to law enforcement (Crosse et al., 2022; Sorensen et al., 2021, 2023; Weisburst, 2019).⁵ In this vein, other correlational studies have shown that once in contact with SBLE, students of color were more likely to experience excessive force in their interactions with officers, such as the use of restraints, and were overrepresented in police stops in or near schools (Allen et al., 2018; American Federation of Teachers, 2020b; Lawrence, 2020; Ortiz et al., 2020). The result of these interactions disproportionately leads to incarceration or legal system involvement for students of color, and specifically Black students (Barnes & Motz, 2018; Kim et al., 2010; Mallett, 2016; Owens, 2017). Reflecting how students' racialized identities influence SBLE perceptions of them, one study drawing on in-depth interviews with SBLE found that SBLE in a mostly White and wealthy suburban school district were primarily concerned with protecting the students from outside threats, but officers in a more racially diverse urban district perceived the

students themselves as the primary threat to their schools (Fisher et al., 2020).

Students of color are also more vulnerable to vague and subjective policies and charges, such as “disorderly conduct” or “disturbing the peace” (Sussman, 2012), and are often arrested under these subjective categories. For example, Black girls are more likely to receive office discipline referrals for disobedience and defiance than White girls, at which point they are equally likely to be referred to law enforcement (Annamma et al., 2016). Although research on the impact of SBLE on Native American students is less common, correlational research shows that at least in one state—Montana—the presence of SBLE was associated with higher rates of arrest and referrals to law enforcement for Native American youth (Walker et al., 2022).

Research suggests that SBLE may amplify the consequences of these vague policies; a study of arrests in one school district found that schools with SBLE had significantly more arrests for subjective offenses (i.e., disorderly conduct) but not for more objective offenses (i.e., weapon possession), suggesting that SBLE are particularly likely to increase arrests for these subjective offenses that are disproportionately levied against Black students (Theriot, 2009). Other research has shown that Black girls' in- and out-of-school suspension rates were higher in schools with SBLE compared to schools without (Williams et al., 2022). Finally, we note that observational research has examined the link between varying levels of exposure to school policing and discipline and mental health among Black students (Perryman et al., 2022). This study found that greater exposure was associated with more depressive symptoms.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities, for example, those eligible for services through the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), are more likely to be referred to law enforcement, overrepresented in police-involved incidents, and disproportionately involved in unsafe interactions with SBLE (e.g., handcuffing, tasing; Mbekeani-Wiley, 2017; Ortiz et al., 2020; Whitaker et al., 2019; Zirkel, 2019). Students with disabilities are also more likely to be arrested than those without disabilities (Whitaker et al., 2019). Sorensen et al.'s (2023) study using regression discontinuity shows that the addition of SBLE contributed to particularly large increases in in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement among students with disabilities relative to their peers. Javdani (2019) notes that less than 40% of SROs receive specific training to work with students in special education, and many officers believe these students are more disruptive than their peers. These disproportionate rates of SBLE involvement are notable given that Individualized Education Plans and 504 Plans (i.e., support and accommodation plans put in place for students with

⁴We define the most methodologically rigorous studies as one that use advanced causal inference techniques such as instrumental variables, propensity scores, regression discontinuity, and comparative interrupted time series. We are not aware of any studies of SBLE that use experimental designs.

⁵Crosse et al. (2022) used a comparative interrupted time series design with 33 schools that added SBLE and 72 schools that did not. Sorensen et al. (2021) used 5 years of longitudinal data from all North Carolina middle schools, applying a difference-in-differences design to examine the impact of adding SBLE. Sorensen et al. (2023) used a fuzzy regression discontinuity design with nationwide data from U.S. schools. Weisburst (2019) took an instrumental variables approach to examine the impact of adding SBLE on individual-level (rather than school-level) outcomes of over 2.5 million students in Texas.

disabilities), are meant to protect students with disabilities from exclusionary discipline and police involvement. Yet these data suggest that students with disabilities are more vulnerable to negative interactions with SBLE.

Students with multiple marginalized identities

Students with multiple marginalized identities are disproportionately affected by SBLE (Annamma & Morrison, 2018); however, there is limited research examining this impact. As one example, schools with SBLE have particularly high rates of suspension and expulsion of racially minoritized students with disabilities (Fisher & Fisher, 2022; Ofer, 2012). Related research using a difference-in-differences design with a two-wave panel of all U.S. public schools found that adding SBLE contributes to disproportionately large increases in criminal justice system contact among Black students with disabilities (Fisher & Fisher, 2023). Citizenship status may also place students at risk of harm from SBLE. For example, in 2011, SBLE in a Colorado school district was found to be collaborating directly with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Indeed, three SBLE officers were specifically cross-designated to serve on ICE task forces, identifying students or family members of students without legal pathways to citizenship, and participating in home raids (ACLU of Colorado, 2011). Even when collaboration is less explicit, noncitizen youth who come into contact with SBLE are at heightened risk for a number of additional long-term consequences. Even if they are never adjudicated or convicted, arrest histories can be considered for discretionary purposes and potentially used to support denials of immigration applications, and adult status convictions may cause individuals to lose legal status and be deported. Fingerprints taken during arrests are entered into databases that ICE can access; ICE can then issue immigration detainers or holds, or local authorities can refer youth to ICE (Marquez & Prandini, 2018). Taken together, limited but compelling existing evidence underscores the need for an intersectional approach to understanding the impact of school policing on students with multiple marginalized identities (Crenshaw et al., 2015).

Impact on school climate

The presence of police in schools also affects the school community as a whole. Here, we examine how SBLE presence may harm *school climate*, which refers to all features of a school environment that impact student cognitive, behavioral, and psychological development, as well as inform students', parents', and school personnel's experiences of school life (Thapa et al., 2013). While research on the relationship between SBLE and school climate is still emerging, researchers have begun to explore specific aspects of this relationship, including school safety and school connectedness.

The most common element of school climate that has been studied in its connection to SBLE presence is individuals' feelings of school safety. Feeling safe at school is important on its own, but is also linked to improved academic performance (Lacoe, 2020). Some evaluations have investigated the link between SBLE and students' feelings of safety, generally providing some evidence that the presence of SBLE is associated with feeling safer (Katz et al., 2002; McKay et al., 2006; Stokes et al., 1996). Notably, the evidence in this area is fairly weak; these studies rely on observational data and study designs with limited samples that do not permit strong causal inferences. Nevertheless, additional mixed methods research in a single school district provides some insight into this dynamic. Elementary and middle students who interacted more with SBLE (without regard to the content or quality of the interaction) felt no more or less safe at school than students who interacted less with SBLE; however, those with more frequent interactions were more likely to report that the SBLE themselves made the students feel safer (Curran et al., 2021). Accompanying focus group data suggested that SBLE may convey to students a sense of potential danger at school (even in schools that were free of crime and violence), and students then viewed SBLE as a source of protection from that danger. Related research illuminates that SBLE can be a source of both fear and comfort for students depending on their school and neighborhood contexts (Shedd, 2015).

A major gap in this body of research is that few studies have focused on the relationships between SBLE presence and feelings of safety among traditionally marginalized groups, including students of color (Almanza et al., 2022). School climate research has only recently started to account for variability in students' and stakeholders' experiences and perceptions of school climate (Voight et al., 2015), but has not begun to link this variability to SBLE. One recent study, using cross-sectional data, found that Black boys felt less safe in the presence of SBLE as compared to no SBLE presence, and more safe compared to White boys when no SBLE was present (Siegal, 2021). Further, nationwide protests in 2020—accompanied by numerous testimonies at school board and city council meetings (e.g., Stephen, 2020)—provide some degree of evidence that many students of color feel *less* safe at school when SBLE are present. There is a clear need for more research in this area, particularly research that attends to students with marginalized identities.

In addition to examining perceptions of safety, some researchers have begun to explore the link between SBLE and school connectedness, another dimension of school climate. This body of research—which is correlational and does not permit strong causal inferences—has shown that students who interact more with SBLE have reported a diminished sense of connection to their school (Perryman et al., 2022; Theriot, 2016), and that the

presence of security personnel (including but not limited to SBLE) is associated with weaker student–teacher relationships (Devine, 1996; Fisher et al., 2019). Students have also reported feeling uncomfortable, surveilled, and harassed when SBLE officers are present (Byers et al., 2013). Further, inconsistencies in SBLE officers' application of disciplinary policies and their tendency to use harsher responses to behavioral concerns (Gottfredson et al., 2020) likely undermine the implementation of clear, fair, and consistent disciplinary practices in a school (Kupchik, 2010). In other words, the presence of SBLE likely contributes to decreased school connectedness.

Impact on school resources and supports

Given that SBLE require funding, another adverse impact of school policing is that it may divert resources from other vital student supports. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) documented that 1.7 million students attend schools in which there are police but no counselors; 3 million students attend schools with police but no nurses; six million with police but no school psychologists; and 10 million with police but no social workers (Whitaker et al., 2019). In 2013, the Oakland Unified School district and city hired six times more SBLE officers than school counselors and allocated \$5 million to the Oakland School Police Department in comparison to roughly \$1.5 million for school counselors and restorative justice programs (Byers et al., 2013). Furthermore, SBLE may further strain limited financial resources because they can accrue additional costs due to charges of misconduct. For instance, between 2012 and 2016, police officers assigned to Chicago Public Schools accrued over \$2 million in misconduct settlements from incidents that occurred on and off school grounds (Mbekeani-Wiley, 2017).

Due to this funding and staffing disparity, SBLE are sometimes called upon to occupy counselor or mentor roles (Almanza et al., 2022; Canady, 2018; Javdani, 2019). For instance, one study that relied on qualitative interviews with 18 SBLE officers found that officers reported “wearing many hats” and occupying different roles depending on the school's needs, such as that of a community liaison or mentor, in addition to enforcing the law (Bowers et al., 2022). However, SBLE are not required to receive similar accreditation and training as other school staff (e.g., school social workers, school psychologists, etc.; Javdani, 2019). These roles are indeed in direct contrast to their law enforcement perspective, which may lead SBLE to view students as potential criminals, even when an offense has not yet occurred (Higgins et al., 2022). Although training for SBLE is often offered as a solution, the very limited research on SBLE training has found additional training to be ineffective; Bolger et al. (2019) found that when

presented with a series of vignettes of children displaying disruptive behavior, law enforcement officers formally trained by the National Association of SROs were no more likely to use diversion or conflict resolution techniques than officers who were not formally trained. The solution we recommend, then, is not to continue to invest money into SBLE—who are not in positions designed to support students' social and emotional well-being—but rather to invest in resources that holistically support educational contexts in ways that attend to safety, wellbeing, development, and climate, such as mental and physical health supports (e.g., Dunn et al., 2015; Eccles & Roeser, 1999).

Impacts on socialization

Even in cases where SBLE do not have a direct impact on schools or students in terms of contributing to school punishment or shifting school climate, they likely contribute to harmful socialization of young people. Schools are a key site of socialization for children and youth (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). A constant police presence in school may socialize people to accept police surveillance as normal. This may have implications for students' willingness to engage in activism critical of policing, the government more broadly, or other topics that may not align with their expectations of what the police would condone. In this vein, prior research has linked greater punishment in school to lower rates of civic engagement in adulthood (Kupchik, 2016); we suggest that persistent exposure to SBLE may have similar consequences for the socialization, personal development, and empowerment of youth.

Additionally, a major goal of SBLE is to improve perceptions of law enforcement, particularly among young children who do not yet have firm opinions on the subject (Kupchik et al., 2020). Recent scholarship points to SBLE as a key mechanism for shaping how young people come to understand policing and the law more generally. For instance, one study found students who perceived that SBLE treat students with dignity and respect were more willing to comply with community police officer orders, even if they disagree (Granot et al., 2021). SBLE report some of their key roles—in addition to promoting safety—to be building trusting relationships with students and addressing antipolice bias, particularly among youth who may have had prior negative interactions with police (Almanza et al., 2022; Kupchik et al., 2020). This messaging in school may contradict the lived experiences of communities that have been subject to over-surveillance and even violence from police. As such, some students may be burdened with disentangling the public relations work of SBLE from the implicit and explicit messages they receive at home and/or in their communities about the police as potential threats to their safety. This is likely especially true for

students of color given the long history of racialized policing practices in the United States (Braga et al., 2019), potentially even putting students at increased risk of police violence outside the school context.

Promoting school safety

The primary responsibility of SBLE is ostensibly to make schools safer. As described above, however, there is a lack of evidence that SBLE presence is associated with school safety, and some evidence suggests the opposite (Fisher et al., 2023; Javdani, 2019; Nickerson et al., 2021). Thus, schools need not and should not maintain an SBLE presence to maintain safety. This does not mean that SBLE should be removed from schools rashly and without thought. Indeed, recent work has shown that while adding SBLE is associated with increases in Black-and-White racial disparities in out-of-school suspensions, removing SBLE is, as well (Fisher & Devlin, 2023). Although the mechanisms behind this are unclear—perhaps, teachers and staff compensate for the loss of SBLE by increasing their informal policing of students—it points to the need to provide schools with resources and support as they divest from SBLE. Utilizing frameworks of thoughtful de-implementation may be a useful direction, which can guide the discontinuation of harmful or suboptimal practices and the transition to new practices as part of a well-considered suite of changes (Walsh-Bailey et al., 2021). As schools explore removing law enforcement, they should instead employ evidence-informed promotional approaches to maintain school safety within a wider framework of policies that promote well-being; less school policing should be replaced with other harmful practices.

Preventing and responding to challenging student behaviors is a key area of school safety policy, and a plethora of potential approaches have been developed to understand and address student behaviors. We provide a broad outline of several complementary approaches aligned with principles of Community Psychology and positive youth development that schools and communities may choose to apply to promote school safety once SBLE are removed. Broadly, schools that use inclusive, evidence-informed responses to behavior are generally safer than schools characterized by excessive punitive strategies (McCarter, 2017). Schools and communities can choose to adopt practices from a long and varied menu of evidence-informed strategies to meet student's developmental needs and promote school safety; these choices can reflect the specific strengths, needs, and preferences of each school and community, and are best made with input from a variety of stakeholders within the school and from the wider community.

Consistent with an ecological perspective, systems-focused, holistic (i.e., academic, social-emotional, and behavioral) interventions may provide a promising

avenue for promoting safety for the full school community, while also connecting students with additional support as needed. One framework, which applies a public health model to educational settings, is the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework. MTSS is intended to provide a coordinated structure of supportive practices and intervention approaches that vary in intensity and the number of students involved, and span different school settings. These include “universal” supports that all students receive through the integration of supports into classroom instruction or schoolwide implementation; “targeted” one-on-one or small group interventions for a smaller number of students demonstrating heightened risk or early signs of behavioral, social, emotional, or academic challenges; and “intensive” interventions for an even smaller number of students with more significant challenges or needs.

Integrated student supports that span the continuum from promotion and prevention to intervention can, if implemented with such intentions, address the underlying contributors to youth behaviors that sometimes attract SBLE involvement (e.g., adverse childhood experiences). Culturally responsive trauma-informed approaches to supporting students can be integrated into all levels of support to disrupt the escalation of challenging behaviors into highly unsafe behaviors or violence (Chafouleas et al., 2016). Universally implemented practices can help all students feel safe and supported regardless of the behavior they exhibit (Herrenkohl et al., 2019); psychoeducation and training in trauma-informed practices can help school staff avoid punitive responses to certain children's behavior that may perpetuate a cycle of challenging behavior, negative consequences, and re-traumatization (Capatosto, 2015); and screening can identify youth who could benefit from targeted or intensive intervention, which can help prevent the development of more serious problems (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Ko et al., 2008). Trauma-informed practices in schools align with a paradigm shift from the punitive disciplinary logic that often justifies policing as an appropriate response to challenging behaviors to one that recognizes challenging behaviors as expressions of distress and unmet need. Trauma-informed practices prioritize responses that instead, aim to meet those needs.

Evidence related to the implementation of specific MTSS models is mixed. For example, while such models have been found in some cases to contribute to improvements in perceptions of school safety (Horner et al., 2009) and reduced student behavior problems (Bradshaw et al., 2012), other research highlights that racialized disparities in school discipline can persist under such approaches (Cruz et al., 2021). Indeed, one randomized controlled trial of a multi-tiered emotional and behavioral health crisis intervention found both to be true at once: the intervention had a significant positive effect on secondary school suspensions, office discipline



referrals, and juvenile justice referrals, but did not resolve racial/ethnic disproportionality rates (Bohnenkamp et al., 2021). To be clear, we are not advocating for schools to adopt a specific model or program; rather, we advocate broadly for schools to consider frameworks to guide how they might build an alternative, nonpunitive infrastructure that coordinates efforts to support students and respond to their needs. We suggest students may be well-served by supports offered across school settings that vary by individual needs and reflect a holistic and coordinated commitment to promoting student safety and wellbeing.

Establishing school-community partnerships offers additional opportunities to integrate support for students, families, and staff through the development and sustainment of relationships between community leaders, agencies, organizations, and schools (Valli et al., 2016; Warren, 2005). School-community partnerships aim to integrate the community into the life and work of the school and empower students and their families to use their voices to advocate for meaningful change (Stefanski et al., 2016). For instance, schools can establish partnerships with agencies or community-based organizations that address basic needs such as food access, housing, and health services to help meet the needs of students and families (Hands, 2010). Schools can work within communities to leverage cultural, social, and human resources and build on these collective strengths, with respect for human diversity (e.g., McKinney de Royston & Madkins, 2019). Stronger relationships between the school and community can also help to broaden youths' concept of social networks of support (Maier et al., 2017).

School, district, and state leaders can collaboratively consider approaches to maintaining school safety without SBLE. These can be implemented by schools and through partnerships to identify what is most appropriate for local context and community needs. One challenge is that needs shift over time and vary across stakeholders. SBLE removal is not an event but one step in the continual process of ensuring student safety and well-being.

Many schools and districts already implement such practices, and these recommendations can align with and support existing efforts. Students, families, and community members can also be given opportunities to shape decision-making (Bartz et al., 2018). For instance, school districts can empower students by creating structures to include them in decision-making that impacts educational policies (Cohen et al., 2020), such as those related to school safety. Further, school leaders can incorporate equity and empowerment frameworks to understand who is included in decision-making, who is given the power to make decisions, and how new and existing approaches to safe schools may differentially impact different students, staff, and families.

Limitations to schools' capacities to address social problems

Retaining SBLE to help address systemic problems represents a narrow and ineffective solution to mitigate societal problems, given the complex and intransigent social problems that manifest in school violence. Structural racism, poverty and widening economic inequality, and related stressors represent examples of extremely complex social conditions that exceed schools' capacity to meaningfully counteract. Schools frequently become the spaces where the social, emotional, and/or behavioral effects of these social problems are expressed by young people or their families, but neither well-implemented school programming nor placement of police in schools can fully address these problems.

The most pressing example of this remains school shootings, which have increased in frequency even while other forms of school violence have declined over the past decades (Irwin et al., 2021). This underscores that school shootings are embedded partially in a U.S. culture that celebrates and eases access to guns. To address acts of gun violence in schools, we must consider the complex set of causal factors—traceable to all levels of one's social ecology—that may lead an individual to engage in such an act (Henry, 2009).

Policy and advocacy

SBLE programs are shaped by policies across all levels of government. At the federal level, the Departments of Justice and Education jointly published a rubric to guide local SBLE programs, "Safe School-based Enforcement through Collaboration, Understanding, and Respect" (United States Departments of Education and Justice, 2016). The rubric informs decisions made by Department of Justice grant programs such as Community Oriented Policing Services and the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Program, which provide direct and indirect support for SBLE programs.

However, similar to most other domains of education policy, direct authority lies with states and local agencies. Forty-six states and five territories⁶ have policies governing school policing.⁷ Following the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, three states adopted mandatory armed police in school programs—Florida, Maryland, and Massachusetts—with the latter repealing its law in 2020. Within this patchwork of laws and policies, most decision-making power lies with school

⁶The states without laws governing school policing programs are: Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, and New Mexico. The one territory without such policy is the Northern Mariana Islands.

⁷The US Department of Education Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments maintains a database of state- and territory laws governing SRO programs at <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/school-discipline-laws-regulations-category>

districts and municipalities through various funding mechanisms, intergovernmental agreements, ordinances, and memoranda of understanding (Finn, 2006; Weiler & Cray, 2011).

Given that decision-making power largely resides at the local level, communities are well positioned to advocate for increased investment in nonpunitive school safety resources (e.g., mental health counselors, social workers, etc.) from school districts as well as state and municipal policymakers (Krasny, 2020; Peetz, 2021; Reilly, 2020). Student activist groups have argued that funding currently used for SBLE should instead be used to increase the number of counselors and social workers in schools (Dignity In Schools, 2016; Tat, 2021). It is crucial to listen to calls from students at schools with SBLE, as they are the ones most impacted by their presence. In Chicago, student-led groups (e.g., Students Strike Back, @stustrikeback, n.d.) have demanded the removal of SBLE from their schools and collected data and testimonials of student experiences with SBLE to document harm (Parrish, 2020). Due in part to student organizing, Chicago Public Schools funding for SROs has declined from \$33 million in 2019–2020 to \$11 million in 2021–2022 to \$10.2 million in 2022–2023 (Karp, 2021; Peña & Pomeroy, 2022); however, SROs still have a disproportionate presence in Black-majority schools despite decreased overall funding (Karp, 2021; Peña & Pomeroy, 2022). This has been criticized by student organizers, who continue advocating for the full removal of SBLE (Karp, 2021; Ortiz et al., 2021).

Students Deserve, a group of volunteer students, parents, and teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District, organized school walkouts, informational sessions, marches, and media campaigns to defund the district police (#StudentsDeserve, n.d.), resulting in a divestment of \$25 million from school police being reinvested into school resources to enhance positive school climate and provide specific supports to Black students (Gomez, M., 2021). Sierra Leone Anderson, a student at GALA High School and member of Students Deserve, said about this work:

Black students in the LAUSD are consistently the target of mistreatment by school police officers. We have experienced being pepper sprayed, handcuffed, arrested, and racially profiled on our own campuses and as young as 12 years old. Black students and all students deserve healthy and positive school environments. That means abolition of any threat to our lives, futures, or safety. That means fully defunding and abolishing the Los Angeles School Police Department and relocating those funds of up to \$50 million into services and supports for Black youth (N. Lippe-Klein, personal communication, May 19, 2021).

Supporting these student- and community-led activists aligns with Community Psychology values (e.g., empowerment, respect for human diversity, and social justice), and is empirically supported by an emerging literature (Fisher et al., 2023; Javdani, 2019).

Conclusion

This position statement advocates for the removal of SBLE in schools and the need to re-focus efforts on implementing nonpunitive interventions and processes that promote staff and student well-being and safety. Our analysis of the societal conditions that fostered the significant expansion of SBLE over the past several decades, interpretation of the research evidence on SBLE, and recommendation to remove them from schools are guided by values associated with Community Psychology, including commitments to social justice, empowerment, and promotion of well-being; respect for human diversity; and a focus on ecological perspectives. This position is also supported by empirical research documenting limited school safety benefits associated with SBLE presence, deleterious outcomes for many students, and disproportionate negative impacts on students with minoritized and marginalized identities (see systematic literature reviews by Fisher & Hennessy, 2016 and Javdani, 2019; and a meta-analysis by Fisher et al., 2023). Given that SBLE requires funding, another adverse impact of school policing is that it may divert resources from other vital student supports (Whitaker et al., 2019). We recognize that removal of SBLE in school settings does not automatically lead to better outcomes for marginalized youth, but posit that a thoughtfully executed de-implementation effort (e.g., see Walsh-Bailey et al., 2021) to remove law enforcement from schools and reinvest SBLE monies into processes and interventions that help other school community members effectively promote school safety, positive school climate, and social-emotional health for staff and students can lead to desired outcomes for the full school community.

Although there are still notable gaps in the evidence related to SBLE presence, we believe the accrual of evidence is sufficient to advocate for their removal rather than for continued research. However, we advocate for empirical scrutiny of the outcomes of SBLE removal. We recognize that SBLE often occupy roles unrelated to student punishment such as counselor or mentor roles (Almanza et al., 2022; Higgins et al., 2020; McKenna et al., 2016), and removing SBLE may leave meaningful vacancies. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research are all necessary to understand the impacts on the day-to-day operations of schools and student outcomes as SBLE are removed. Without this continued research, schools risk entering a new paradigm without guidance or removing police without an accompanying



implementation of new safety and well-being practices. This has been evident in recent years across several schools and districts that removed SBLE and have already reversed course as they struggle with issues of crime and violence (Armus & Natanson, 2021; Geha, 2021). As research continues to guide the use and removal of SBLE, we also encourage scholars, policymakers, practitioners, and community members to be collaborative and transparent about the values that guide their interpretation of empirical evidence as they exercise democratic governance over our school systems. Aligned with the values of Community Psychology, we hope the recommendations outlined in this statement can push us toward a more just society.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Members of The Chicago Board of Education:

I am writing to express my unwavering support for keeping selective enrollment schools in Chicago. Let me share my personal experiences, both as a first generation immigrant from China, and now as a mother of two (20 months and 10 years old).

My parents grew up during the Cultural Revolution in China, a terrible time when Communism took over, intellectuals and the wealthy (not the same) were punished and the poor came into power and closed all the schools. The government wanted to make things "equal" / "equitable". But instead, they elevated and rewarded themselves and those who were politically in favor, and denied opportunities to everyone else, especially those that they deemed as being "privileged". My family (on both sides) lost everything. My parents were both in the 4th grade when they were kicked out of school in China. I don't have the space or time to write their life history, but the reality is that without a lot of hard work, sacrifice, perseverance, and opportunity at the right time, they are now what one can call a success story in America.

I was born in China (lived with my grandparents, my dad left before I was born, and my mother left two years after I was born). I immigrated to the US (with a family friend) when I was 6 years old. My father was still in graduate school and for most of my life, I can remember being quite poor, but also seeing my parents prioritize money towards their family and anything that would give me more opportunity in life. My parents have always valued education above all else. My father would spend his free time teaching me math (beyond the scope of what was taught at school) at night and on the weekends. My mom worked full time as well. As a result, my math abilities far exceeded what was available to me in my grade. In middle school, by the time I was in 6th grade, I had placed out of the advanced 8th grade math course at my local school. My parents, unsurprisingly, fought to get me into an advanced placement program at a school in the inner city of Seattle so I could have better educational opportunities. In high school, I continued in the AP program at Garfield High School. If you are not familiar with it, it is an inner city school that attracts academically gifted kids from all over the city due to AP classes and extracurriculars (music, sports, newspaper, marine biology). Students have to test in if they do not live in the neighborhood. The demographics of the school are predominantly African-American, which reflects the neighborhood. The AP classes and extracurriculars are open to anyone who is interested, but you obviously have to audition for the extracurriculars due to the competitiveness. I took a mix of AP classes (in subjects for which it was available) and regular classes (when they weren't) and I spent all 4 years in the award-winning orchestra. So I would say I got to experience first-hand, a blended selective enrollment as well as a local neighborhood experience at the same time. I can reflect on the AP classes as being challenging, stimulating, and taught by teachers who were excited to work with students who loved to learn, were curious, motivated, and hard-working, and who wanted to be there and to push themselves. In my non-AP classes, there were truly mediocre and truly a reflection of the other students (disinterested, unmotivated, sleeping in class), which was demoralizing for me and for the teacher. Luckily they were not in subjects that actually mattered for college. Yes, I went far academically. It is not because I was privileged by wealth or opportunities that others

did not have (although I count my parents and their values and willingness to invest in my future as my greatest privilege).

As a mom, we have a 10 year old who attends Skinner North. They previously spent a year at Lincoln (our neighborhood school). Lincoln was great, but this is a child who is so curious, loves to read, loves homework, loves math, can solve a Rubix cube in less than 10 seconds, fold all sorts of intricate origami (all self-driven), and has flourished so much at Skinner North because of what the school offers. Please do not punish him.

All kids should have the opportunity for more (if they have the talent, drive, and worth ethic), but creating this idea of "equity" by taking away opportunities for excellence is a mistake. The world is not equal and some people will do better than others. Let's not pathologize it. Encourage our kids to be better and to be the best they can be, even if there are others that shine brighter than them. Excellence starts and ends at home. Push your kids. Don't hold back others. Our world is troubled enough and I think we should want to cultivate the best and brightest to make the world a better place (regardless of what background they come from).

Sincerely,
a troubled CPS parent

12.14.2023

To whom it may concern,

Your plan based on the article below get rid of selective enrollment schools is a bad idea. I strongly oppose.

As a tax payer and a parent of a CPS student I am mortified with the current administration. First the testing fiasco and now this.

Brandon's "plan" and all of you are going to stunt students with the ability to learn at a higher level. But you don't care. I find it deplorable that you are only giving parents one day to act upon your deliberate actions of holding back students that are gifted.

I grew up in a system where there were no gifted schools and I had to go to a regular public school. I can tell you integrating kids that are extremely gifted and average kids who may or may not want to learn will hurt the ones who want to learn at a higher level. How will the teacher create a curriculum that addresses to both audiences? There will be a lot of wasted time. These gifted kids are learning 1 to 2 years ahead of a normal student. What you are all doing is creating a standard of mediocrity. These gifted kids will not be challenged. The US education system is already a joke compared to the rest of the world. And now you're going to make it even worse. We are way behind people. Wake up.

Let me ask you all a question. University of Alabama has some of the best football players in the country.

It's not by accident. They are all gifted. Would Nick Saban put a team of average/middle of the road athletes on the same field? So why is sports any different than education? Is this elitist? No. It's the real world and we all live in it. It's competition. That is the real world. Who is your plan benefiting? Certainly not mine and that is all I care about as a tax payer and IL voter. As parents we all want the best for our kid and I'm sure that if your child's education was going to be stunted you'd be angry.

Your agenda is making this about economics rather than education. That's sad thing about this.

Many immigrants come to this country with the goal to get the best education for their children. You are depriving them of this with your course of action. Don't leave a legacy of mediocrity for these kids.

Cheers,

David Yang

With the language in the new resolution around equity and Brandon Johnson's mixed statements regarding selective enrollment schools, many of us have begun to feel concerned for the future of Chicago's most exceptional high schools. In the spirit of discussion, and before any more drastic actions are taken, we would like to submit a formal defense of the selective enrollment schools as an agent for student success and equitable public good.

We are two students at Northside College Prep. Both of us started in the neighborhood programs at our elementary schools on the North Side before switching to the Options programs. The ability to go to Northside even though we don't live in the neighborhood is very important to us personally and has opened up a lot of academic opportunities for us. Despite the fact that we both grew up on the North Side in a Tier 4 neighborhood, both of our neighborhood high schools would not offer nearly the same quality of education. Northside offers 23 AP classes; Amundsen, according to its website, only offers one (AP Calculus). Because selective enrollment schools are allowed to choose what students they admit, it gives them more freedom to tailor their school's curriculum to the needs of more academically inclined students. Especially for students who have subpar neighborhood schools, selective enrollment schools provide an incredible opportunity to find a better education. And to be quite frank, eliminating the selective enrollment schools wouldn't mean all students would receive the same opportunities. You might be able to add an AP class or two to neighborhood schools, but overall, all the kids who could've received a great education at a selective enrollment school would simply be denied that opportunity, especially the ones in poorer neighborhoods. Eliminating the selective enrollment schools would also deny students the opportunity to choose an educational environment that works best for them. "Moving away" from selective enrollment schools does not close opportunity gaps; it widens them. As one of our teachers said, "How is denying a low-income student the right to apply to a school that can provide the resources to secure them a free ride to the University of Pennsylvania anything but inequitable?"

A common argument against selective enrollment schools is that they exist only to serve the wealthy. This is not true. Compared to Amundsen and Lakeview, there is a significantly smaller gap in college readiness between high- and low-income students at Northside (according to GreatSchools). Additionally, CPS selective enrollment schools operate with a tier system, meaning that any incoming class of students must be evenly distributed across economic tiers. This system was recently made more equitable by the removal of the "ranked" tier, which gave 30% of seats to all the highest-scoring students across all districts (who were frequently wealthier). Now, enrollment is split fully evenly across the four tiers, ensuring equal admission opportunities for students of all income levels. Mayor Johnson also called the school choice system a "Hunger Games scenario." It is certainly not. What is Hunger Games-esque is forcing young people into schools that might not be the best fit for them based solely on where they live.

However, the distribution of selective enrollment high schools is certainly not equitable. Of the eleven selective enrollment schools, only four are south of downtown: Brooks, King, Lindblom, and South Shore; and the West Side has only one: Westinghouse. This is not a problem that will be solved by removing the selective enrollment schools; frankly, it is a problem that would be better solved by opening more selective enrollment schools in lower-income neighborhoods to ensure that all academically gifted students have access to a stellar education that meets them at their level, without needing to commute for hours a day. We urge you to consider not how to

make all schools and their admission processes the same, but why many families with the ability to do so choose to put their children in schools that aren't their neighborhood schools. Instead of tearing down selective enrollment, we ask you to consider programs to improve education across all neighborhoods, including distributing funds more equitably across elementary schools. If elementary schools were equitably funded and resourced, students would be on more even footing when applying to selective schools. If there is concern about equal access to and competition for selective enrollment schools, we ask you to expand access to selective enrollment all across the city, especially the South and West Sides.

Additionally, there would be drastic consequences for Chicago if the selective enrollment schools were eliminated. Instead of encouraging more students to go to public school, many more affluent parents of academically gifted children would leave the public school system entirely. Many parents would choose to send their kids to private schools that could challenge them and fulfill their educational needs, or even move to the suburbs and take their money out of CPS entirely. Chicago cannot afford to lose its brightest students to the suburbs, especially since the city is already in a state of population decline. Not only would families take their children out of the selective enrollment schools, but many highly qualified teachers would likely leave for other school systems. Without the educational appeal of the selective enrollment schools to keep middle- and upper-class families in Chicago, we could start to look less like Chicago and more like Detroit, with most well-off families concentrated in the suburbs.

Another argument frequently made against selective schools and academic differentiation of any kind is that it is inequitable and bad for students' self-esteem. In our experience, this is not the case. Academically strong students need to be in environments that will challenge them so they have the opportunity to actually learn, which is of course the point of school. There is a graphic used at both of our elementary schools to explain the difference between equality and equity in which three children of various heights are looking over a fence to watch a baseball game. On the equality side of the graphic, the children each have one box to stand on. On the equity side of the graphic, the boxes are distributed unevenly so that each child has the support they need to be able to see over the fence. When discussing this issue, one of our friends said, "They don't want to split up the boxes, they want to cut their legs off. Because then it's equal--- nobody gets to see." Eliminating selective schools would enforce a one-size-fits-all model for education under the guise of "equity". In reality, this is not equity. It is equality. Equity would mean meeting students where they are and giving them an education that is right for them. Nobody will deny that neighborhood schools need more funding to ensure students have proper support and are well-prepared for college. But this does not have to come at the expense of selective enrollment schools. It would be self-sabotage to undercut great schools, some of which make up the top five in the state, in the false name of egalitarianism.

Improving CPS schools does not have to come at the expense of selective enrollment schools. The top five high schools in the state are selective enrollment CPS schools, but this will not stay the case if selective enrollment is eliminated. We strongly encourage Mayor Johnson, his administration, and the Board of Education to consider all the good the selective enrollment schools have done for Chicago and to focus on building neighborhood schools up rather than tearing selective schools down. Dismantling exceptional free education will never, in any sense of the word, be equitable.

CPS Board Meeting Public Comments 12/15/23
Dr. Angel Alvarez

Dear CPS Board President Shi, CEO Martinez, Board VP Todd-Breland, and Board Members Estrada, Hughes, Lozano Jr, Morales, and Woods:

I have read your *Resolution Regarding Values and Parameters for New Five-Year Transformational Strategic Plan, SY25-SY29* and share your concerns over the impact of structural inequities that harm our children. I have shared my research and proposed solutions to the opportunity gaps for our most underserved students- particularly our low-income students of color, students with disabilities, students in temporary housing situations, and English-language learners. However, I have serious concerns over the long-term sustainability of the CPS budget and how the implementation of your strategies may inadvertently contribute to the disparities we want to eliminate.

Below are five areas of concern that I shared at the start of this term.

1. CPS needs to reform its budgeting practices to not just create a system that is financially sustainable, but also one that is equitable, transparent, and accountable to the children we serve. LSCs are marginalized, especially those that serve students of color, and are not given opportunities to develop their budgets. Schools need the freedom to direct investments and develop long-term planning while being accountable for their outcomes to ensure all children are successful.

2. We need to reform how we identify, protect, and serve our diverse learners. All students should be assessed for strengths and learning differences to empower families to be active in the education of our children while developing support services to those that need them. This includes classroom accommodations, paraprofessional support, and transportation that is truly accessible and not a Kafkaesque nightmare.

3. Health and Sexual Education needs to be revised to educate children about their bodies, body autonomy, and healthy relationships. Moreover, members of the school community need to be aware of their mandatory reporting status and provided with proper training and support. Most importantly, children need to be protected and survivors empowered, not silenced and shamed.

4. Accountability needs to be at all levels of our educational system. The bold reforms this board wants to implement will be stalled if some bureaucrats are allowed to maintain the status quo. We need accountability and transparency not just in the classroom and boardroom, but also at the desk of our administrators.

5. Policies need to be constructed with informed perspectives and unintended failures need to be remedied. It's unfortunate that the Parent Leadership Council was put on indefinite hold last year after identifying and proposing solutions to many of the problems this new board has prioritized.

These problems persist and the budget situation has worsened. Therefore, I will continue to reach out to meet with each of you to address specific concerns in each of your respective areas of expertise. Although I have been unsuccessful in scheduling meetings this year, and I have asked at every meeting I speak at, I hope you will be more willing to meet with me in the future.

Be well,

Dr. Angel Alvarez

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