

**September 18, 2024 Special Board Meeting Written Comments
Received between Monday, September 16th and Thursday, September 19th
Submitted via Written Comments Form**

1	What is your plan to reinstate busing (that has been promised) to select enrollment students? This is a fixable problem that needs to not be ignored.
2	Members of the board please include plans to reinstatement of the bus service for our kids in the selective enrollment and magnet programs we are still here and want to be heard our kids are also still waiting for a resolution our kids deserve the opportunity as well to get those services can you please include plans for the service to come back to all the families in need. As a mom of 3 children in selective enrollment program we ask to please take a look and keep us in mind the issue still here and we need better solutions we need answers evading the subject will not change anything
3	There is no mention of reinstating transportation. The enrollment and educational experience at our school has suffered since the bussing was eliminated. We have increased tardiness and more students left in unsupervised situations before and after school. Since our after school budget has also been cut, the missing transportation piece is even more glaring.
4	Please provide bussing for selective enrollment students. Please continue selective enrollment programs. My sons thrive in a challenging, accelerated scholastic environment which was not provided by our neighborhood school. Please continue to provide selective enrollment options and support then through adequate transportation.
5	<p>Please bring back bussing for all students, including magnet schools! Many of us made life decisions based on the assumption that bussing would continue throughout elementary school, and are now really struggling. I have 5 kids in 3 different CPS schools and this is breaking me.</p> <p>School buses are a pretty standard service in most urban school districts, and it's hard to understand why Chicago would be different. My kids love their school, their teachers, and their friends, and uprooting them at this point seems unfair to them, and the absurd number of hours I spend in the car daily feels unmanageable to me, and is cutting directly into my work day. And now that the budget for free after school programs has been cut, I'm paying hundreds per semester to keep them occupied until I can make it all the way to these schools.</p> <p>I'm crying uncle here! Help! Bring back our buses!</p>
6	Nothing about bussing. Unbelievable. My child is currently in 6th grade. When he entered the program at first grade, bussing was offered. How does CPS just take away bussing all of a sudden? This year, I kept hoping there will be a solution. My child is too young to take public transit by himself. I am left to run left and right to drop off pick up arrange rides. This is taking an emotional toll on me to provide this opportunity for my child. And there's no mention of bussing on this plan? ! I cannot bring my child back to the neighborhood school because he's doing work 2-3 years ahead. How will he be challenged at our neighborhood school? Why would CPS set families up for failure like this?!
7	Please include a plan for reinstating bussing to magnet and selective enrollment elementary schools. These schools will become less diverse and access will be limited to deserving students if bussing is not available.

8	<p>I am very disappointed that there is nothing about bussing. I have a child who is only 12 but must ride both the Metra and the blue line to get to school. She is not old enough to be left at home but yet cps no longer will bus her to school. The gaps in transportation on the south side of the city make it impossible for her to use a single transportation system to get to school.</p> <p>Not all schools are on bus lines or near trains which means now some options are only for those whose family can bring them to school. This will lower the diversity and equity and inclusion in all schools.</p> <p>The lack of busing creates a system that is less equitable and does not serve the city. The selective enrollment schools are excellent and I worry that they could lose their amazing diversity without busing. Even hubs would be an improvement.</p> <p>I do not think that getting rid of SEES schools is the answer. I love that my children can meet and get to know others from other neighborhoods. That they learn of worlds farther away. Busing makes that possible for all kinds of families especially those of us who are not close to a train line.</p>
9	<p>Is not fair that I have to travel 2 hours each way for my son to attend school He loves his school and is learning dual language We need our buses back With this crazy world I cannot let him take the bus alone</p>
10	<p>Please reinstate bussing. The impact that retracting bussing has had on children and families is devastating. I have had to pass on opportunities at work because I spend three hours a day driving my kids to and from school. All these. Additional drivers in the road during drop off and pick up is also having a profound impact on traffic in the city as well as contributing to global warming. It's truly unacceptable that a city like Chicago won't prioritize this.</p>
11	<p>When do you plan to get school bus back to our children? No more excuses.</p>
12	<p>Questions Regarding CPS' Five-Year Strategic Plan</p> <p>The questions below summarize some major concerns regarding CPS' Five-Year Strategic Plan. Many of these questions were asked during community input sessions, yet none of them were answered, and there is little information about these topics in the plan that is set to be approved by the board today. In the interest of the transparency promised by this board of education, we respectfully ask that you answer these questions publicly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where are the notes from the budget meetings with communities that supposedly informed the strategic plan? 2. Why are you pushing this plan through less than 5 months before there are elected representatives chosen by voters on the board? 3. Your plan says you will "accelerate proven practices" and "increase the number of students meeting grade-level standards." Magnet and selective enrollment schools are sources of these "proven practices." Why are you defunding them and restricting access to them instead of using them as a model to raise standards at neighborhood schools? 4. Why isn't the transportation of low-income students to magnet and selective enrollment schools included in this plan? You said that the strategic plan would be

informed by community input, and you received community requests for the reinstatement of transportation at multiple community input sessions.

When there is a teacher shortage, you put more students in each classroom, but with a bus driver shortage, you put fewer students on the buses. Please explain this logic.

Using travel times for students with IEPs is not an excuse. This board was asked to allow nearly empty buses to pick up students at hubs before students with IEPs (thus not increasing the travel times of students with IEPs) in October 2023.

5. Why schedule this meeting last minute with little time for stakeholders to review the plan? Why at 8:30-9:30am when parents need to drop children off at school/work?

The plan does not say CPS is closing Selective Enrollment and Magnet schools, but the actions taken by this board are cutting funding and access to those schools. You ignored all of the community input that you received regarding busing to these schools.

ATTACHMENTS

Dr. Angel Alvarez, CPS Board Special Meeting 5-Year Plan Written Public Comments 9/18/24

The Board's 5-year plan fails to address specific long-standing problems within CPS that contribute to the disparities in opportunities for students. A lack of understanding and acknowledgement of how institutional problems within CPS will increase the odds that these problems will persist. A lack of transparency is covering up how resource allocations are not serving the students who need it most.

I will continue to advocate for reforms and hope the board will incorporate changes to improve the experience for all students.

Be well,
Dr. Angel Alvarez