



HR0361 Enrolled

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HOUSE RESOLUTION 361

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WHEREAS, The Illinois State Constitution provides that the
3 fundamental goal of the people of this State is the educational
4 development of all persons and that the State shall provide for
5 an efficient system of high quality public educational
6 institutions and services; and

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WHEREAS, It is the intent and policy of the State of
8 Illinois as previously established by the General Assembly to
9 make the individual school in a school district the essential
10 unit for educational governance; and

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WHEREAS, The Chicago Public School (CPS) system estimates
12 that it will have a budget deficit exceeding \$1 billion for its
13 fiscal year 2014 budget; and

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WHEREAS, CPS indicates that it needs to close, co-locate,
15 and turnaround underutilized and underperforming schools in an
16 effort to attempt to close the estimated fiscal year 2014
17 budget deficit; and

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WHEREAS, After providing a preliminary list of 129 schools,
19 and participating in a series of public meetings regarding the
20 schools on the preliminary list, CPS, on March 21, 2013,
21 announced proposed actions involving 114 schools; and

1 WHEREAS, A major factor contributing to the
2 underutilization of CPS schools is the expansion of school
3 capacity; currently CPS has only about 1% fewer students than
4 it did in 1991 but has almost 100 more school facilities; and

5 WHEREAS, On May 22, 2013, the Chicago Board of Education
6 voted to close 50 of the original 54 schools from the initial
7 proposed closing list, despite opposition and recommendations
8 against the closure of 13 schools being raised by hearing
9 officers, retired State and federal judges, hired by CPS to vet
10 the closing process; the hearing officers raised doubts about
11 the wisdom of the proposals, that the proposals were
12 insensitive to the needs and educational success of students
13 and in some cases will place them in harm's way; and

14 WHEREAS, Over 30,000 CPS students will be impacted by
15 overall school actions; and

16 WHEREAS, The CPS school closing plan, which includes
17 actions affecting welcoming schools, turnaround schools,
18 co-locations, and school phase outs will impact 5,277 students
19 with disabilities, each of whom has an Individualized
20 Educational Plan; and

21 WHEREAS, School closings often have profound ramifications

1 for the educational experience of students and the surrounding
2 community, as numerous studies have shown that when a school is
3 closed or negative actions take place, student academic
4 outcomes are negatively impacted, safety concerns are
5 increased as children have to travel farther and through
6 sometimes dangerous territory, and parental and community
7 confidence in the school system is shaken; and

8 WHEREAS, Public Act 97-238 called for significant
9 reporting changes for Chicago District 299 in regards to the
10 State programs included in the General Education and
11 Educational Services Block Grants for which CPS has failed to
12 adequately respond or provide required information; and

13 WHEREAS, Public Act 97-474 called for the establishment of
14 an "Educational Facilities Master Plan" for CPS that shall
15 provide community area, individual, and school master plans, in
16 addition to community analysis, facility needs, and district
17 requirements that CPS is required to report by October 1, 2013;
18 therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
20 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
21 the intent and policy of the State of Illinois remains
22 educational success and well being of our children; and be it
23 further

1 RESOLVED, That we urge sensitivity to the perspective of
2 students, parents, community leaders, and local school
3 councils by the Chicago Public School system, and we urge CPS
4 to continue to actively engage all parties affected by the
5 school actions; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we urge CPS to honor its commitment to have
7 a 5-year moratorium on school actions as a result of the
8 passage of Public Act 97-1133, and we urge CPS to act in a
9 transparent manner and to fully engage the Illinois General
10 Assembly and all stakeholders, students, parents, and
11 community leaders in a process that is clearly delineated and
12 responsive to the perspective of all involved whenever it
13 engages in school actions; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Chicago Public Schools shall fully and
15 timely comply with the requirements of Public Act 97-238 and
16 Public Act 97-474 and provide information to families affected
17 by the school actions and the Illinois General Assembly on cost
18 savings from planned school closing, any extra security and
19 safety programs for students as well as equipment upgrades for
20 "welcoming" schools as passed by the Chicago Board of
21 Education; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the City of Chicago School District 299.