



Illinois African Americans For Equitable Redistricting

Proposed Black Student Achievement Committee

I. Statement of Need

As a group, Black Chicago Public School students, who comprise nearly a third of the District's enrollment, are suffering from entrenched problems that have only been exacerbated by closing 50 schools in 2013 and shutting down from the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020-2021. They have suffered significant learning loss, trauma, isolation and reduction in social and emotional support, economic loss and health and safety concerns.

- a. In 2021, 80% of Black children graduated from high school in 5 years, as compared to 85% of Hispanic children; 91% of White children and 92% of Asian children. (Block Club Chicago, 2021)
- b. African Americans comprised 36% of Chicago Public Schools but accounted for up to 61% of the 19,799 school suspensions in 2021. (Julian Johnson, Esq., 2021) Today, Black children only comprise 29% of the CPS population.(CPS 2023)
- c. African American children accounted for 63% of the 2,244 school referrals to police. Eighty-three percent (83%) of the detainees in the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center are Black. It costs \$4,397 per year to educate a child in CPS (Julian Johnson, Esq., 2021) and \$28,196 per year to detain them in the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center (National Juvenile Justice Network 2011).
- d. Between March 8th and March 12, 2021, a daily average of 89% of White students showed up to in-person classes, compared with daily averages of 77% for Latino students and 60% for Black students during that same period. Asian students had a daily in-person attendance average of 83%. (Matt Masterson, WTTW, 2021)
- e. Approximately 88% of school actions (ie, school closings, turnarounds, removing principals, etc.) have occurred at predominantly African American Schools. (CTU, 2013) These actions alone have disrupted student learning and further destabilized Black communities that have endured decades of disinvestment.
- f. A WBEZ investigative report has found that since the pandemic, the need for mental health services has increased, particularly for students from very low income families, many of whom are Black. The state is failing to ensure thousands of children get any follow-up help after mental assessments, let alone the type of intensive behavioral health support many need. Senator Lightford has called for public hearings and the creation of a 15-member task force to better understand the problems and explore the issue, (including operational, programmatic and financial issues surrounding the program). (Sarah Karp, WBEZ, 2023)

These problems persist despite the fact that there are Chicago Board of Education committees to address the needs of all CPS students and their families.

II. IAAFER Position Statement

It is the position of IAAFER that the chronic underperformance of Black students is the result of chronically underfunded, separate, and unequal CPS schools in the Black Communities of Chicago.

III. Chicago Elected School Board of Education: Black Student Achievement Committee

The Chicago Board of Education Black Student Achievement Committee shall be a standing committee of the Board, with the purpose of providing Black students with maximum opportunity for success in areas where research shows that there has been chronic underperformance during African American students' elementary and secondary education experience in Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The Committee shall develop strategies and recommendations for:

- a) children to excel in their educational performance;
- b) providing children with the character-building tools to succeed;
- c) reducing absenteeism and truancy while increasing graduation rates;
- d) ensuring that children enjoy a fulfilling, memorable and affirming elementary and secondary educational experience;
- e) preparing Black children for post-secondary success in a global economy;
- f) facilitating educational transparency through developing channels of communication that keep the Black community informed on progress towards achieving specific educational quantitative metrics and qualitative goals, as well as barriers to progress;
- g) increasing parent engagement in ways that lead to improved academic and social outcomes for Black CPS students.

The Black Student Achievement Committee shall interface with other CBOE standing and advisory committees and task forces and local stakeholders as necessary to ensure that the interests of Black CPS students and their families are represented in the development of new CPS policies, master plans, programs and initiatives.

The Black Student Achievement Committee shall have two co-chairs who shall be members of the Chicago Board of Education (CBOE). The co-chairs shall be CBOE members and elected by other Members based upon their interest and credentials to lead this Committee. The Black Student Achievement Committee shall be composed of the two (2) co-chairs and up to eleven (11) members to form a committee of seven (13). The co-chairs shall select committee members based upon their expertise in one or more of the areas where research shows that there has been chronic under-performance of African American students. The membership shall be diverse in terms of skills and geography.

Non-CBOE members with the specific expertise needed to complete the assigned deliverables shall also be asked to serve on the Black Student Achievement Committee in an advisory capacity. CBOE shall develop eligibility criteria, and recruit members of the Black Student Achievement Committee from a broad base of CPS stakeholders, including

Local School Councils, Parent Advisory Councils, Community Action Councils; Chicago's civic, business and faith communities and community-based organizations.

The Black Student Achievement Committee shall:

- a) utilize data from CPS, the community and other sources to conduct an evidence-based needs assessment to better understand student needs and establish a baseline for Black student achievement;
- b) build upon the needs assessment to prioritize issues and develop a set of goals, objectives and outcomes designed to bring about academic and social parity between Black children and their peers;
- c) develop a strategic management plan, utilizing the Balanced Score Card approach. This includes assessing CPS' organizational capacity to meet the goals, objectives and outcomes identified by the Committee; understanding how CPS' systems, processes and protocols may best support academic and social outcomes; considering the financial impact of proposed strategies; identifying financial resources to implement the strategic management plan; and assessing the impact of proposed strategies on student academic performance, resilience and ability to successfully transition to a college environment or the workforce;
- d) identify and track a mutually agreed upon set of metrics and key performance indicators that demonstrate positive movement towards achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the strategic management plan
- e) prepare a report card and make quarterly written and oral progress reports to the CBOE and community stakeholders.

CPS shall:

- a) provide technical assistance by senior CPS staff and accomplished educational organizational development professionals;
- b) fund Black Student Achievement Committee activities at a level that will enable the Committee to function effectively;
- c) provide sufficient staff support to successfully develop and implement the strategic management plan.
- d) operationalize the strategies outlined in the strategic management plan

Respectfully Submitted,

Illinois African Americans for Equitable Redistricting (IAAFER) Strategy Committee
(Bios are attached)

Valerie F. Leonard, Chairperson, IAAFER
Karl Brinson, President, Chicago Westside NAACP
Natasha Dunn, Founder, Black Community Collaborative
Lafayette Ford, Chicago Board of Election, *retired*
Dwayne Truss, Founder, PACE
Craig Wimberly, President, Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL)