

To: Dr. Janice Jackson  
Mayor Lori Lightfoot  
CPS Board of Education  
Miguel del Valle  
Sendhil Revuluri  
Louisiana Melendez  
Amy Rome  
Lucino Sotelo  
Elizabeth Todd-Breland  
Dwayne Truss

From: Grover Cleveland Elementary School Local School Council

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Re: Resolution Regarding Current CPS Reopening Plan

After engaging our community and carefully considering all of the information we have been provided, the Local School Council of Grover Cleveland Elementary respectfully urges CPS to reconsider the current Reopening Plan for February 1st, 2021, to include those already back in the building.

Our decision was guided by our school's CIWP and our responsibility as LSC members being elected by our community to guide our school and care for its children. We are obligated to act in the best interest of students, teachers, staff, and administrators. Having evaluated the current plan, we are left with concern about the execution, which will impact all stakeholders at our local school. The deficiencies in both the plan and its execution need to be addressed by CPS as they cannot be remedied at the local level.

Specifically:

**CIWP:** Our School Excellence Framework requires us to assess the Physical and Emotional Safety

Safety of the school by confirming that “students and adults feel physically, socially, intellectually, and emotionally safe throughout the school,” yet the safety of the current CPS Reopening Plan has not been clear and there are many unanswered logistical issues that are left with no direction.

**CIWP:** Our School Excellence Framework requires us to assess the Leadership and Structure for Continuous Improvement

This requires assessment of the ability to “*Empower others to make or influence significant decisions*” as well as “*Collaborate, value transparency and inform and engage stakeholders*” Teachers have expressed that they do not feel supported, nor that their voices are heard by the district. Educators are interested in having the school reopen - they miss their students, but they have valid concerns. The district has not notified teachers or principals in a timely manner the status of the accommodations that they requested. Using the same reopening plan across all CPS schools prevents local principals from creating learning models that work best for their respective communities.

**CIWP:** Our School Excellence Framework requires us to assess the Structure for Continuous Improvement

This requires assessment of the ability to “Strategically hire, assign and *retain teachers* to create balanced grade/content teams with a variety of strengths to ensure all students have equitable access to high quality teachers.” Teachers have had to reconstruct and rebuild curriculums they have been using for years to be suitable for platforms a lot of them have never used. As one person put it so eloquently “They have been building the ship as they have sailed it.” Moving to simultaneously teach both in-person and virtually is altogether another challenge. Teachers will need to completely rethink and rebuild how to teach while being provided very little guidance on how to do it and what it should look like. Teachers have expressed their mental and emotional health have been pushed to the brinks. If the district does not collaborate with their stakeholders, specifically teachers, then the school will not be able to *hire* nor *retain* the high caliber educators required to meet the students’ needs.

Since reopening plans have been communicated to the community, the number of students moving into the hybrid model has decreased, and in our public meetings we have heard growing concerns about the safety and curricular soundness of the current plan, which we also recognize.

All Cleveland families, teachers, and students deserve a safe, rigorous education supported by empowered educators. Our teachers have done an amazing job providing such an education despite all of the challenges of the pandemic. Without addressing the concerns above we are worried they will not continue to be able to do so. However, these concerns cannot be solved by our teachers. **We need CPS to address these concerns to allow us to successfully return to school.**

In conclusion, we hope that CPS CEO Janice Jackson and the CPS Board of Education will delay their current Reopening Plan, recognizing that the elected, representative bodies of the LSCs offer an opportunity for listening to students, families, teachers, and the community. This can only strengthen the CPS community, both within individual schools and across the city.

Respectfully,

The Grover Cleveland Elementary School Local School Council  
3121 W Byron St  
Chicago, IL 60618

Cc: State Representative Ann M. Williams  
State Representative Jaime Andrade  
State Senator Sara Feigenholtz  
33<sup>rd</sup> Ward Alderwoman Rossana Rodriguez