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CPS Parents Respond to Latest Proposal on Chicago Elected School Board District Map

Chicago, IL – Kids First Chicago and its CPS Parent-led Elected School Board Task Force have reviewed the second set of proposed district maps released late last night by the Illinois General Assembly. We acknowledge that lawmakers have attempted to adjust district maps for the future Chicago Elected School Board, likely based on public feedback. **While the new maps appear more racially representative of the CPS student population on the surface than the original map did, they still fall short of adequately including Latine voices and continue to over-represent White voices.** We call upon the Senate Special Committee on the Chicago Elected Representative School Board and the House Working Group to return to the drawing board and amend these maps to better represent CPS's students.

We also call upon Mayor Brandon Johnson to prioritize fair racial representation for Chicago's elected school board. Kids First Chicago's deeper analysis of the maps is [available here](#).

The original proposed map released on May 5 featured 20 districts, seven of which were primarily White, seven primarily Black, and six primarily Latine. Swiftly, parent leaders stepped in to raise awareness regarding the discrepancy between the CPS population, where 89% of the students are BIPOC, and a map featuring an outsized voice for White residents. Notably, 47% of Chicago Public Schools students are Latine, while just 11% are White.

Kids First Chicago's review of the newly proposed maps indicates:

1. It increases the number of Latine districts to seven. However, it creates two districts which have razor-thin margins. If you were to only look at the Citizen Voting Age Population, those two districts have White pluralities.
2. The new map still over-represents the White population and under-represents the Latine population, compared to CPS's student body.

"You promised us an elected, representative school board, but you are not delivering on that promise," said Vanessa Espinoza, a CPS parent, in prepared remarks for a May 18 Senate Special Committee Hearing on the Chicago Elected School Board "Representation matters. This map is not representative for the 300,000 CPS students of color and their families.... This looks like a cynical maneuver to quiet the complaints while still maintaining – and possibly growing – the inequities of your first draft."

[Research demonstrates](#) that more diverse school boards result in more equitable, higher-performing schools.

Additionally, non-citizen students and families make up a significant portion of CPS's population. The numbers are higher in Latine communities, meaning a school board that both under-represents Latine community members and does not allow non-citizen participation compounds this issue.

“We need to be inclusive of immigrant families. They need a voting seat at the table – an advisory board is not enough,” said CPS parent and North Lawndale resident Taschaunda Hall in May 5th testimony to the House Working Group. “They deserve a voice in the representation for their students, like all parents do, regardless of immigration status.”

Beyond fair racial representation and non-citizen participation, the Kids First Chicago Elected School Board Task Force has advocated for two additional parent-identified priorities: parent seats on the board, and campaign spending limits. Additionally, board member compensation would help make parent participation and fair racial representation more viable. Collectively, we believe these priorities would lead to a board with deeper knowledge of and investment in the needs of CPS students.

CPS parents are available for questions or comment; please contact Jessica Cañas (773-403-4832 or jcanas@kidsfirstchicago.org) or Sean Schindl (630-624-8116 or sschindl@kidsfirstchicago.org).