February 21, 2024,

The Honorable Brandon Johnson,
Mayor of Chicago
City Hall
121 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Mayor Johnson:

You ran on a platform anchored on the principle of inclusive community engagement, professing that “democracy is the best form of governance for our public school system.”

You have championed racial equity and fought hard to undo the past harm of top-down decision-making. As a teacher, advocate, and parent, like many of us, you have deep insights into the needs of our communities, families, and schools – and a unique perspective that few of your predecessors have had.

The December 2023 resolution was crafted with no input from the communities it will impact. This resolution was published during the final week of classes before Chicago Public Schools’ extended holiday break, giving little opportunity for public comment or response. This resolution was crafted and approved by the Board in a top-down and undemocratic manner that contradicts the values you have espoused; how this resolution was developed and adopted disrespects CPS families by rendering them voiceless.

Only by including communities in the creation of this resolution in advance can we live up to the promise of a more racially equitable and just Chicago. Chicago families have much to gain or lose depending on the direction of CPS, and their voices must be central to any process setting that direction.

We ask that you hold your Appointed CPS Board accountable to the values of community inclusion and authentic engagement to do the following:

1. **Postpone the strategic plan until the Elected School Board is in place.**

2. **Use the time between now and January 2025 to authentically engage with critical stakeholders, prioritizing parents and youth.**

We, the undersigned, respectfully urge you to take these steps immediately for the sake of our city and in service to a more racially equitable and just Chicago.

Respectfully,
Apostolic Church of God, Dr. Byron T. Brazier Sr.
Association House of Chicago
BUILD Inc.
31st Ward Alderman Felix Cardona Jr.
Chicago Urban League
Chinese American Service League
Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community
CPS Parents for Buses
Education Community Committee of Belmont-Cragin
Rev. Michael L. Pfleger, Pastor and The Faith Community of Saint Sabina
Hamdard Health Alliance
Hanul Family Alliance
Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative
Indo-American Center
Instituto de Progreso Latino
Kids First Chicago & Kids First Chicago Parent Advisory Board

Little Village Community Council
The Middle Eastern Immigrant and Refugee Alliance
National Parents Union
Noble Schools
Northwest Center
Phalanx Family Services
Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
Pui Tak Center
The Resurrection Project
Something Good in Englewood
Storehouse Church and Storehouse Connect
The Academy Group
Together Chicago
Dwayne Truss, Former CPS BOE Member
36th Ward Alderman Gilbert Villegas
Woodlawn Children’s Promise Community
The Urban Center