

February 16, 2010

Dear Education Committee Members: *Please act NOW on the Renaissance 2010 moratorium!*

Six years ago, the Chicago Public Schools launched an experiment called Renaissance 2010. Since then they have closed dozens of schools, fired hundreds of teachers, and displaced thousands of students. And the results are in: ***Renaissance 2010 did not work.***

We are asking you for two things.

- 1) Sign on to the moratorium resolution sponsored by Aids. Lyle and Dowell.
- 2) Request an Education Committee hearing on the resolution ***before the next Board of Education meeting*** which takes place on Wednesday, February 24. It is critical that a hearing be held before the 24<sup>th</sup>, since the Board is likely to act on 14 more school interventions on that date.

***Why is your action so important?*** Independent research studies have shown that R2010 has not improved education in Chicago, and may harm children, working teachers, and communities:

- “Daley School Plan Fails to Make Grade”  
*Chicago Tribune, January 17, 2010*
- “Because most displaced students transferred from one low-performing school to another, the move did not, on average, significantly affect student achievement.”  
*Consortium on Chicago School Research report, “When Schools Close,” 2009*
- “The overall performance of Chicago's charter schools in raising student test scores is approximately on par with that of traditional public schools in Chicago.”  
*RAND Corporation, 2008*
- Illinois charter schools (most of which are CPS R2010 schools) have poorer results for black, Latino and special education students.  
*Stanford, 2009*

In addition:

- A May 2007 Catalyst analysis showed that “Nearly \$50 million of \$265 million in renovations now underway are being done in Renaissance and charter schools, according to April reports from area offices. That’s about 19 percent of renovations taking place in buildings that house just 4 percent of students.”
- A 2008 PURE report shows two-thirds of the R2010 schools *failed to respond* to Freedom of Information Act requests for basic information about their governing bodies. Information from the schools that did respond showed that *only 5%* of their governing body members were parents.
- Data from ISBE shows that the percentage of African-American teachers has *declined 5%* since the beginning of Renaissance 2010 in 2004, while the percentages of all other racial groups has increased.
- Schools to be closed/etc. have over last 5 years mapped onto areas gentrified or adjacent to gentrified/gentrifying areas, according to the Data and Democracy Report 2008 (*Lipman, UIC*).

Thank you.

Julie Woestehoff, Parents United for Responsible Education