

May 14, 2013

Ms. Barbara Byrd Bennett- CEO
Chicago Public Schools
125 S Clark St
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Ms. Bennett:

On behalf of the 7,000 members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), I am writing to you regarding the planned closings and consolidations of 54 Chicago Public Schools. As the plan for this change unfolds, it should be pointed out the impact this will have on students and the importance of having the sufficient and acceptable number of school social workers, to not only manage this situation, but also support the rest of the CPS system.

School social workers not only provide direct services to children who require basic needs or exhibit challenging behavior, but they are also responsible for improving student outcomes through building the capacity of family members, other school staff, and community agencies.

Moreover, the *NASW Standards for School Social Work Services* note:

“The local education agency should establish and implement a school social worker-to-student population ratio to ensure reasonable workload expectations. The local education agency should provide school social work services at a level that is sufficient to address the nature and extent of student needs. Appropriate ratios for school social work staff to students depend on the characteristics and needs of the student population to be served, as well as other resources in the local education agency and community available to address these needs. Each local or state education agency should establish adequate levels and types of school social work services on the basis of comprehensive needs assessment data. School social work services should be provided at a ratio of one school social worker to each school building serving up to 250 general education students, or a ratio of 1:250 students. When a school social worker is providing services to students with intensive needs, a lower ratio, such as 1:50, is suggested.”

We urge the CPS to consider these standards as it continues to serve, strengthen and support students throughout the system.

Thank you for attention and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Joel L. Rubin, MSW, CAE
Executive Director

Cc: Yolanda Jordan, LCSW
President