



**THE REPORT OF THE ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S
CHICAGO EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES TASK FORCE**

2012-2013

**Findings and Recommendations Regarding
The Implementation of IL P.A. 97-0474 and
Planning for the Future of Chicago's Public Schools**

Executive Summary

June 2014

CAPITOL OFFICE

288-S Stratton Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706
(217) 782-0150 (Office)
(217) 557-7210 (Fax)



CYNTHIA SOTO

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

4th DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICE:

1341 W. Grand Avenue

COMMITTEES:

- Energy – Chairperson
- Appropriations Higher Education Vice Chairperson
- Appropriations Elementary & Secondary Education
- Health Care Availability & Accessibility
- Human Services

June 23, 2014

TO: State Representative Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the House
 State Senator John J. Cullerton, Senate President
 Governor Patrick Quinn
 Mayor Rahm Emanuel
 David Vitale, President, Chicago Board of Education
 Chicago Public Schools CEO Barbara Byrd Bennett

RE: CEFTF Annual Report

Pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-18.43(m), I am pleased to present the most recent Annual Report of the General Assembly’s Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force concerning the Chicago Board of Education’s School Actions and Master Facility Planning during the 2012 and 2013 school years.

This report is the product of numerous public hearings, the ongoing work and meetings of the CEFTF’s Master Planning and School Actions standing committees, and countless hours of research. It reflects the findings and recommendations of the majority of CEFTF members and incorporates CPS’ feedback and responses. I believe this report provides a detailed and comprehensive review and analysis of recent CPS facilities-related decisions and actions, and will be tremendously useful as we consider additional recommendations and reforms that will allow CPS to better manage its school facilities while protecting the interests and values of the children it serves.

Sincerely,

State Representative Cynthia Soto
Co-Chair, General Assembly Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force

CC: Sen. William Delgado, Chair, Senate Education Committee
 Rep. Linda Chapa La Via, Chair, House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee
 Rep. Will Davis, Chair, House Elementary and Secondary Education Appropriations Committee
 Sen. Don Luechtefeld, Minority Chair, Senate Education Committee
 Rep. Sandy Pihos, Minority Chair, House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee
 All Members, Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force

Acknowledgments	2
Members of Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force 2013	3
Preface	4
Why this Report?	5
Major Concerns	6
The CEFTF’s Findings on the Chicago Educational Facilities Master Plan	7
The CEFTF’s Findings on Chicago Public School Actions & School Closings	9
CEFTF Recommendations	12
Build District and Public Capacity for Sound Long-Range, Comprehensive Planning	12
Ensure Cost-Effective, Fiscally Responsible Management	13
Ensure Safe and Educationally Successful Transitions for Students Following School Actions	14
Improve Transparency and Accountability.....	15

Acknowledgments

The Task Force wishes to thank the hundreds of Chicago Public School parents, educators, and Chicago community residents who gave input to the CEFTF; and the staff teams from the Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Teachers Union and Chicago Principals and Administrators’ Association for the data they provided to the CEFTF, their expertise, and their willingness to engage in dialogue. Thanks also go to John Keigher, pro bono Legal and Legislative Advisor; and Jacqueline Leavy, pro bono facilitator and researcher who provided vital support to the CEFTF. Thanks are also due to the Illinois State Board of Education for supporting a webpage dedicated to the CEFTF’s work and proceedings. We also acknowledge and commend the work of dozens of Chicago-area academics and investigative journalists too numerous to list here, who contribute to the ongoing public discourse and analysis of public education issues in Chicago. The CEFTF also thanks our pro bono Advisor Mary Filardo, Executive Director of the 21st Century School Fund (Washington, DC) and founder of the “Building Educational Success Together” national collaborative, for sharing her extensive knowledge with us. Ms. Filardo is a nationally-recognized expert on educational facilities planning and management and urban education issues.

Members of Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force 2013

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY CHICAGO EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES TASK FORCE

Members Appointed from the General Assembly

Rep. CYNTHIA SOTO (D) – Co-Chair

Sen. HEATHER STEANS (D) – Co-Chair

Rep. ESTHER GOLAR (D)

Sen. IRIS MARTINEZ (D)

Rep. BOB PRITCHARD (R)

(Three unfilled vacancies: 1 Republican State Representative, and 2 Republican State Senators)

Appointees from School/Community Groups

BLOCKS TOGETHER - CECILE CARROLL (Chairperson, Master Planning Committee)

CHICAGO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS - LAURENE "RENE" HEYBACH

DESIGNS FOR CHANGE - VALENCIA RIAS-WINSTEAD (Chairperson, School Actions Committee)

INSTITUTE FOR POSITIVE LIVING - MARRICE COVERSON

Other Appointees, As Per Statute

CHICAGO PRINCIPALS and ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION: DR. CLARICE BERRY

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS: BARBARA BYRD BENNETT (or Designee)

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION: KAREN LEWIS (or Designee)

Preface

In 2009, the Illinois General Assembly passed a law creating the “Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force,” or, “CEFTF.” The CEFTF was created to examine educational facilities decisions being made by Chicago Public Schools. The Task Force is made up of state lawmakers of both political parties and both chambers of the state legislature; representatives of non-profit organizations; and has representation from Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association (CPAA), and the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). State law charged the Task Force to review CPS’ facility-related decisions, examine national best practices, and seek out widespread public input about Chicago’s schools.

The law also mandates that the CEFTF issue at least one report every year. In 2011, the CEFTF issued findings and recommendations for transforming CPS’ approach to its facilities decision making. Many of the Task Force’s recommendations were enacted in a 2011 reform law in Springfield, aimed at creating greater transparency and accountability about CPS’ facility-related decisions; and which required CPS to follow a specified process before taking “School Actions, and create a 10-Year “Educational Facilities Master Plan” for the school district. In early 2012, the CEFTF issued Findings and Recommendations regarding CPS’ early implementation of the state reforms, focused on the shortcomings of the School Actions public input process and CPS’ then-newly released and controversial formula for assessing “efficient” use of Chicago’s existing schools.

The Task Force’s 2013 Report was prepared and produced at no expense to the taxpayers of Illinois. As with past CEFTF Reports, this document is based on the work of the CEFTF members themselves, in this case as led by the Subcommittees on Master Planning and School Actions. The appointed members of the CEFTF volunteer their time to this endeavor, and tap the expertise of several *pro bono* Advisors who also contributed to this work. The Report’s conclusions are based on the Subcommittees’ diligent research on best practices used by other major urban public school districts; analysis of data provided by the school district and other independent outside sources; and information from public testimonies gathered in 2012 and 2013 in dozens of open meetings and several community hearings. The Report will be delivered to the Governor, the General Assembly leaders, the Mayor of the City of Chicago, and the Chicago Board of Education. On May 12, 2014, the CEFTF voted to accept and adopt this Report with consideration of additional feedback from Chicago Public Schools (CPS). CPS’ feedback is cited throughout the Report, and can also be found in Appendix F to the Report.

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

Why this Report?

Since the Illinois General Assembly granted Mayoral Control over Chicago's public school district in 1995, there has been a concentration of decision making about the nature and direction of public education in Illinois' largest city, and the nation's 3rd largest school system. These decisions have had substantial and sometimes drastic immediate and long standing effects on students, families, neighborhoods and the city. Once former Mayor Richard M. Daley announced his "Renaissance 2010" initiative in 2003 to create 100 new schools by 2010, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has not only opened new schools (mainly charters); the district has also been closing neighborhood public schools and drastically reconfiguring the public school system in other ways. Since 2008 alone, four different CPS administrations with average tenures of less than 3 years made far-reaching changes and decisions that Chicagoans will live with for generations. These decisions have determined which students get to go to which schools; how to maintain school facilities; what the district's capital spending priorities should be; and determined how and when to spend hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on school repairs, renovations, and new construction. Yet Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has been making these decisions without adequate educational facilities planning or public input. These decisions are impacting the condition and operation of Chicago's public school buildings and the access that 400,000 students have to schools across the city.

In 2009, the General Assembly created the "Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force" (CEFTF) because the public was increasingly concerned about their lack of input into these crucial decisions. The state legislature tasked the CEFTF with examining recent major changes CPS had made, including closing schools and reconfiguring them; and its decisions about when, how and where to invest in school facilities. The Task Force was to assess CPS' facility-related decisions, seek out broad public input, and explore model approaches used by other school districts (best practices). In 2011 the legislature enacted changes in state law to address the concerns the CEFTF documented in its first year of inquiries. The 2011 reforms sought to make CPS decision making more transparent and accountable; required structured opportunities for public input from families, residents and front line educators into CPS' facility decisions and plans; assured basic protections and support services for students affected by major changes like school closings; and required CPS to develop a long-range facilities plan based on the district's educational goals which the district had never done before. The 2011 state reform law also charged the CEFTF with monitoring and evaluating the school district's implementation of these reforms.

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

This report is the CEFTF's evaluation of how CPS carried out the 2011 reforms in 2012 and 2013, and will be shared with the public, Illinois lawmakers, and Chicago education policy makers and elected officials. The report includes an analysis of School Actions taken by the school board in 2012, and CPS' 2013 school actions which include the decision to close 49 schools – the largest downsizing of Chicago's public school system ever undertaken. The report also documents CPS' long-range planning efforts and assesses the resulting 10-Year Educational Facilities Master Plan that the school board approved in September 2013. The Findings in this report are based on data about and from CPS, additional independent research, and extensive public input gathered by the CEFTF in open meetings and hearings held around the City. This report also offers recommendations to the General Assembly, the Governor, the school district, the Mayor of Chicago and other policy makers on how to improve the planning for equitable, cost-effective management of Chicago's public school facilities for the future of Chicago's families and neighborhoods.

Major Concerns

In 2009, when the General Assembly created the CEFTF, lawmakers were responding to their constituents' concerns about the loss of neighborhood public schools, other aggressive CPS interventions that restructured schools and weakened local control exercised by elected Local School Councils, lack of transparency in CPS' capital spending priorities, overall lack of public input into these decisions, and a growing instability in the CPS system. The CEFTF's 2011 Report and Findings helped spur the legislature to enact reform measures in 2011. Unfortunately, despite some positive steps taken by CPS to implement the changes called for in the reform statute, the public's concerns have not abated. And rather than engaging in a more deliberative and systematic approach to school change, successive CPS administrations escalated major restructuring of the school system without broad public input or consensus to support those changes.

Since 2012 alone, CPS has closed 52 neighborhood public schools, 47 of them at the end of the 2013 school year while phasing out 5 more; and has implemented 15 "Turnarounds" (a restructuring under which the principal and all teachers and adult staff in a school are fired and replaced), with more under consideration. Additionally, since 2011 CPS has rapidly and radically altered other school district policies: restructured the school day; changed curricula content while changing performance measures for principals, teachers, and students; altered attendance boundary areas, and school feeder patterns and grade configurations and thus students' access to schools; and introduced or phased out other educational programs at dozens of other schools.

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

The school district maintains that sweeping changes are needed to improve student outcomes. The public certainly wants better schools for all students. Yet CPS' recent "School Actions" and other major changes have shifted tens of thousands of students to different locations and learning environments without a careful evaluation of whether or how students are benefitting. At the same time, CPS has dramatically expanded the number of charter schools. These steps were taken without establishing a guiding, shared educational vision for the district and before CPS had a facilities master plan in place. There still has not been adequate public input to build consensus in support of such dramatic changes for students, families, teachers, staff and communities.

Chicago can build a world-class, well-managed, inclusive and equitable public education system for all of Chicago's students, but it will not happen without a plan that is well-understood by all stakeholders and has gained their backing for it. It will not happen unless stakeholders are at the table when critical decisions impacting Chicago's school children and public school employees are made. It will not happen unless there is transparency and accountability for capital and operating spending, and a commitment to equitable investment that preserves the option for families to send their children to quality neighborhood public schools.

The CEFTF's Findings on the Chicago Educational Facilities Master Plan

CPS' completion of the 10 Year Master Plan was a major accomplishment for the district. The plan reflects CPS' disclosure of facilities-related data that has begun to create greater transparency and accountability around CPS' plans for its school buildings. While this has been a huge step in the right direction, the EFMP has many limitations that have impacted the viability of the plan. Recent facility investment decisions announced by the Mayor and CPS after the adoption of the EFMP illustrate that additional reforms must be put in place in order to better inform the district's facility decisions to make optimal and beneficial choices that benefit all of CPS' current and future students.

1. CPS did not take steps to involve the public in developing the 10-Year Master Plan for 15 months after the enactment of the state reforms.

The EFMP that the school board adopted in September 2013 lacks important information, disregards many established best practices in long-range educational facilities planning, and was based on minimal public input. Turnover in CPS leadership and repeated internal

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

reorganizations between 2011 and 2013, and reluctance to proactively seek out public input all limited CPS' progress in developing the 10-Year Educational Facilities Master Plan.

- 2. CPS' poor execution of the planning process fell short of full implementation of the General Assembly's 2011 policy reforms of transparency, expanded public input and better facility management, and did not build consensus in support of its EFMP, or a forward-looking vision for the city's public schools.**

The district failed to adhere to the reform law provision to plan for schools in their community context and did not conduct a comprehensive "Community Analysis" of future housing and community development and other community change trends. The school district did not coordinate with all the local governments the law requires. CPS created space utilization standards that did not conform with the statute or meet best practice educational facility planning and management standards. Instead CPS applied its space use formula to focus on and implement mass school closings before developing a long-term facilities plan.

- 3. CPS omitted important requirements for public input when preparing the Master Facilities Plan.**

The CPS CEO did not hold required public hearings on the Draft Plan. Instead, CPS held informal "Community Briefing Sessions" a few weeks before the board adopted the EFMP. The meetings were called public hearings only after the fact. Additionally, CPS did not conduct the needed public input to develop required school-level master facilities plans which were to be developed in collaboration with each local school's stakeholders. The final EFMP does not include school-specific master plans.

- 4. CPS does not have a comprehensive long-range capital plan for Chicago's schools.**

CPS' EFMP does not clearly prioritize its district-wide facility needs, or rank which schools will receive improvements in order of district-wide priorities. The school district and the Mayor continue to make piecemeal decisions on major school construction and facility investment projects. Since the school board adopted CPS' 10-Year Master Plan, the Mayor and the school district have announced over \$163 Million in major school facility investments that were not clearly identified or prioritized in the EFMP.

- 5. CPS' EFMP does not address the effects of its Charter School expansion plans on the overall facilities needs or enrollment trends on the school district, despite the**

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

fact that since 2011 CPS has opened 33 new charter school campuses with 23,368 slots.

CPS' long-range plan argues that the district has too many schools and too much classroom capacity, even as the district is expanding charters and continues to make investments in Charter School facilities.

6. CPS' EFMP does not establish a planning process for repurposing of its closed publicly owned buildings; and lacks an asset management plan for its real property.

The EFMP did not include a full inventory of CPS facilities and real estate holdings, or a process to plan for the future re-use of closed school buildings and other "surplus" real estate assets. CPS has scores of empty school buildings throughout the city. CPS finally announced its school repurposing process 10 months after approving 47 more school closings (with two more to be phased out this year), but details about when the public will have input are not yet determined. The district has recently embraced all the recommendations of a Mayoral-appointed "Advisory Committee for School Repurposing & Community Development" that developed its recommendations after the EFMP was approved, and without ever holding a meeting open to the public.

The CEFTF's Findings on Chicago Public School Actions & School Closings

These findings are based on analysis of data from CPS, the work of other researchers, and testimony from CPS parents, students, and school administrators that Task Force members have analyzed regarding the School Actions approved by CPS in 2012 and 2013. While the district followed many of the 2011 reforms aimed at improving student transitions and community engagement, CPS' implementation of School Actions was flawed in important ways.

7. Final approval of the 2012-13 School Year mass school closings came so late in the School Year that impacted students and their families missed the deadline to apply for Magnet and selective enrollment school options, and with little time to plan for the upcoming school year.

The General Assembly's vote allowing CPS to delay announcement of proposed closings to March 3^{1st}, 2013 recreated the problems for families of CPS students that the 2011 law had sought to remedy by setting a deadline of Dec. 1st annually for announcement of proposed

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

School Closings and other “Actions”. The school board did not take its final vote to close 47 schools and phase out 2 others until May 22, 2013. The Board approved the closings despite widespread, vocal and well-researched objections from an unprecedented number of stakeholders.

8. CPS did not address the analysis by reputable researchers on the negative effects of school closings on class size.

Several Chicago aldermen and some state lawmakers opposed many of the 2013 school closings; while university-based researchers issued studies about the importance of smaller class sizes to improve achievement of low-income students in primary grades. CPS has yet to respond to repeated CEFTF members requests for an analysis of class sizes before and after the closings.

9. CPS rejected the feedback and advice of some of its Independent Hearing Officers when they disagreed with a proposed Action.

In accordance with the 2011 law, CPS hired “Independent Hearing Officers” to preside at the 2012 and 2013 public hearings on proposed School Actions (the two rounds of School Actions since the reform law was passed). However, in both years, CPS rejected Hearing Officers’ findings when they recommended against a proposed School Action, including against proposed Closings. In 2013, CPS agreed to not close and consolidate Manierre with Jenner and Mahalia Jackson with Fort Dearborn, based primarily on safety concerns.

10. CPS’ initial planning for school transitions was weak. Once schools were closed, CPS developed more detailed Transition Plans (July 2013), but failed to publicize them or distribute them to all parents/guardians at the consolidated schools.

Required “Draft School Transition Plans” aimed at ensuring impacted students’ safe and educationally successful Transition to a new school were largely “boiler plate” in 2012 and had little to no local input in their creation. In 2012, the Welcoming Schools that CPS designated to absorb displaced students failed to attract the majority of students from closed schools and did not benefit from detailed final transition plans. Transfers to Welcoming Schools in 2013 were higher and Transition planning became more detailed over the summer, but scores of schools absorbed of student without the benefit of Transition plans or support.

11. CPS still has no defined system or policies in place to evaluate its Actions, or track the student-level impacts and outcomes of school closings and other School Actions (such as attendance boundary changes, phase-outs, and co-locations).

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

In both rounds of School Actions CPS has taken since the reform law was passed, the academic and social/emotional benefits to students have not been substantiated or evaluated. CPS has not published a report tracking where students displaced by closings, consolidations, co-locations, and attendance boundary changes are today. At the insistence of CEFTF members, CPS provided two School Transition reports to the Task Force, which did not address the impacts of School Actions and Closings on Welcoming Schools; or most importantly, document how the impacted students are faring. In “counting” the number of students “impacted” by its School Actions, CPS excludes the number of students enrolled at Welcoming Schools. At the March 26, 2014 school board meeting, CPS’ CEO gave board members a “Mid-Year School Consolidation Report” but it is not available to the public online.

- 12. In both the 2012 and 2013 School Actions and Closings, communities of color and the most vulnerable students, including those experiencing homelessness and those with disabilities, were impacted the most by CPS’ Actions.**

Approximately 90 percent of the students directly impacted by School Actions and Closings in 2012 and 2013 were African American. An estimated 2,615 homeless students attended the Welcoming Schools and the schools that CPS closed in 2013; 2,097 Special Education students (those with disabilities and Individual Education Plans, or IEPs) were impacted.

- 13. CPS has not issued a report on the full costs of, or savings from the 2012 or 2013 School Actions, Closings and Transitions.**

Despite the district’s rationale that the 2013 mass closings would produce savings and thus more resources for remaining schools, CPS cut \$68 million from individual schools’ budgets in the School Year following the closings. CPS has not provided any cost/savings data for the 2012 School Actions. In 2013, CPS more than tripled its FY2013 capital budget --from \$109.7 Million to \$363.7 Million--to upgrade designated Welcoming School buildings and provide them with other amenities. CPS also allocated more than \$155 Million in extra Transition funding to designated and non-designated Welcoming Schools. As a result of the 2013 closings, CPS added 43 more schools to its inventory of empty buildings. CPS’ costs for security and maintenance for these vacant buildings is unknown.

- 14. The projected “logistical” costs of the 2013 school closings and subsequent consolidations over the Summer of 2013 was more than three times higher than CPS’ original projection.**

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

The contract to empty and board up the buildings went from \$8.9 Million to \$30.9 Million¹.

CEFTF Recommendations

Build District and Public Capacity for Sound Long-Range, Comprehensive Planning

- 1. CPS' 10-Year Master Plan must be substantively revised.** CPS must get broad public input, refine its space utilization formula, correct its population and enrollment projections, and work with its sister agencies and others to analyze current and planned community and housing redevelopment. CPS should re-write the EFMP by July 1, 2015, rather than the current statutory deadline of June 2016. CPS should embrace and adapt some of the best practices for public engagement that have been tested and used in other major cities, and work more closely with its sister agencies to revise the current EFMP.
- 2. The General Assembly should dissolve the State Charter School Authorizing Authority.** No Illinois public school district should have to deal with the “wild card” of having to accept charter expansions decided by a State Authority empowered to overrule the local district. Instead, as part of the state legislature’s own examination of charter school policy, the General Assembly should require CPS and all local public school districts to undertake an open public dialogue about the role of Charters in their respective districts, and then integrate planning for any charter expansion within the school district’s broader, district-wide strategic educational and facilities management plan.
- 3. The General Assembly should study and consider the creation of a State “School Planning & Construction Authority”** to ensure fiscally-sound and equitable capital planning and spending by all Illinois public school districts. The Authority would support and ensure the comprehensive, orderly and cost-effective development of public education facilities that avoids unnecessary duplication and promotes planning and development of school facilities in areas with unmet needs. It would review and approve (or reject) school districts’ plans for new construction; and help districts with financing facilities construction and modernization, information management, educational facilities planning, and public engagement associated with best practice

¹ <http://www.wbez.org/news/more-overruns-cost-empty-out-closed-chicago-schools-now-set-triple-109387>

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

planning similar to the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board that oversees hospital facility expansions².

4. The State of Illinois should increase its funding of public schools' facilities' needs.

As of 2010, Illinois ranked in the “bottom 20” of all 50 states in the percentage it contributes to local public school districts' facility needs³. With expanded and consistent state funding, local public school districts will be able to do better long-range planning, since state capital funding would be more reliable. The State should examine and consider new revenue sources, which could include a “Financial Transaction Tax” to help pay for public school construction, modernization, and other facility needs. The State could also help public school districts gain access to more revenue from their own local property tax base by amending state TIF law to allow school districts to “opt out” of TIF districts; limit use of TIF to rigorously-defined “blighted” areas; and establish clear rules for municipalities to define, declare, and redistribute “TIF Surpluses” to other local taxing bodies.

Ensure Cost-Effective, Fiscally Responsible Management

1. **The General Assembly should mandate conservation of our existing public school buildings whenever feasible. Public schools are public assets for which taxpayers have already paid.** CPS and the Mayor should be required to have an open public process to plan for re-use of closed school buildings that emphasizes use of existing, closed school buildings for community and (non-charter) educational purposes; and for future “re-commissioning” as public schools (in the event that CPS needs to open more schools in the future).

2. **The General Assembly should require CPS to make “Joint Use” of schools by CPS’ “sister agencies”, other local governments, and non-profit partners a high priority.**

There should be State incentives to reward CPS and other public school districts for Joint

² (20 ILCS 3960/) Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act – “promotes, through the process of comprehensive health planning, the orderly and economic development of health care facilities in the State of Illinois that avoids unnecessary duplication of such facilities; (3) that promotes planning for and development of health care facilities needed for comprehensive health care especially in areas where the health planning process has identified unmet needs;”

³ 21CSf/BEST Study on State Funding of School Construction: <http://www.21csf.org/csf-home/Documents/FederalStateSpendingNov2010/StateCapitalSpendingPK-12SchoolFacilitiesReportNov302010.pdf>

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

Use cost-sharing agreements; CPS should be required to seek out Joint Uses before disposing of a public school building.

3. **CPS must have a plan** to maintain, secure, and repurpose a school before it can be closed, including disclosure of costs for “mothballing” and possible demolition costs.
4. **Proceeds from any sale of a closed school** or surplus school district real estate should be prioritized to be spent on the neediest school facilities in low-income neighborhoods.
5. **CPS should be required by State Law to establish and disclose a school-to-school comparison and ranking of its priority capital investments** every year in its Annual Capital Budget, its 5-Year Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs), and 10-Year Master Plan. This will help ensure greater transparency and equity in its capital spending, and good stewardship and conservation of the existing public assets for which taxpayers have already paid. The EFMP should also provide expanded and detailed reporting on charter school facilities, and CPS’ and non-CPS funding of them.

Ensure Safe and Educationally Successful Transitions for Students Following School Actions

1. **Any further School Actions, Turnarounds, and Charter expansions should be put “on hold” until a truly comprehensive long-range plan is developed, and until CPS can provide definitive data that these Actions have benefitted the actual students who were impacted.** Instead CPS should focus on supporting whole school improvement in existing neighborhood public schools.
2. **The Hearing process for Proposed School Actions should be reformed** to clarify when an Independent Hearing Officer may overrule the CPS CEO’s recommendations; enable schools proposed for an Action to offer and then get a written response from the district to an Alternative Plan of Action for school improvement; and require CPS to define specific metrics and any qualitative factors on which each type of proposed School Action is based. Specific metrics are needed to effectively evaluate outcomes.
3. **CPS should be required to provide 5 years of sustained, intensive academic and financial supports to current (and any future) non-Charter “Designated Welcoming Schools” and non-designated welcoming schools** to benefit all impacted students (as more broadly defined to include students in Welcoming Schools). CPS’ budgets for School Transitions should be disclosed as part of the required “Draft School Transition

Executive Summary of the General Assembly's Chicago Educational Facilities Task Force Annual Report

Plans.” Parents’ and Local School Councils’ input should be required in developing Transition Plans, and final detailed Transition Plans should be provided to all parents/guardians at Welcoming Schools. Parents and students should get timely delivery of transition services, including over the intervening summer break between Board approval of Actions and the following school year in which Actions go into effect.

Improve Transparency and Accountability.

- 1. The General Assembly should require CPS to produce an Annual Report tracking student-level impacts** of its past (and any future) School Actions. The school district needs to rigorously evaluate whether its interventions in neighborhood schools have “worked,” i.e., truly improved educational outcomes for children. Such an evaluation must also weigh the effects on “Welcoming Schools” and their students. Moreover, ***the definition of “School Actions” in State Law should be expanded*** to include “Opening of New Schools,” “Charter Expansions” (both adding more grades and campuses of current charter operators and approving new Charter operators), “Turn-Arounds,” “Changes in Academic Focus,” “Grade Restructurings,” and all “Attendance-Area Boundary Changes”.
- 2. CPS’ capital construction Bond Issues should be subject to Voter approval through binding referenda.** State law should not exempt CPS from requirements for voter approval for school construction bonds.
- 3. CPS should be required to hold annual public hearings on its Capital Budget and 5-Year Capital Plan, with at least 14-day advance public notice and advance public disclosure of every school’s Capital Needs Report.** A “State of our School” Report should report facility conditions, needs, and past and planned investments; and be distributed twice a year at CPS’ “Report Card Pick-Up” days.
- 4. The State of ILLINOIS should be more transparent about where State school construction dollars go.** The ILGA, ISBE, and/or the IL Capital Development Board should disclose proposals for state funding for CPS school capital projects from both legislators and CPS. The ILGA should hold public hearings in Chicago to inform the public and get community feedback. Approved state-funded school capital projects, including grants to CPS and “Earmarks” for individual schools should be disclosed to the public and to the proposed individual recipient school and its duly-elected Local School Council or parent advisory body. The revenue sources for State school construction funding should also be disclosed to the public.