

## Observer Report

### D65 Board of Education: New School – Community Forum November 16, 2011

**Observer:** Kate Julian

**Board Members:** All present except Weaver

**Media Present:** Larry Gavin was there. I am not sure about the rest

**Citizen Comment:** The purpose of this meeting was to gather citizen comment.

Twenty citizens addressed the board. All, but one, were in support of the proposed 5<sup>th</sup> ward school.

Reasons for support of the new school included the following (not a representative sample):

- Students in the 5<sup>th</sup> ward have to take the bus vs. other parts of town where students can walk
- Not all students are currently being served
- School will stabilize the neighborhood
- If not now, when?
- Churches and schools anchor communities
- Neighborhood school with teachers of same demographic profile will benefit the students
- Should not have a neighborhood schools for all neighborhood except for one neighborhood
- Black males are mistreated in D65
- All other wards have schools
- Critical race theory – racism is institutionalized
- Churches and school service as cornerstone of a community
- People of color should have their choice
- This is a social justice and moral issue – not a financial issue
- Since students in the 5<sup>th</sup> ward are bussed, don't know what it is like to walk a child to school
- Foster did more for me than bussing would have
- Bussed students and parents are not welcome in D65 schools
- 5<sup>th</sup> Ward school will do more for all of Evanston
- Kids need teachers/administrators that care about them
- Should do this if serious about embracing the whole community
- K-8 model was recommended because it will help heal a fracture community.
- Decision should focus on social justice
- Give families the same privileges and rights as the rest of the district
- We have taken choice away from families.
- School will present enhanced educational opportunity BOE should be aware that taxpayers are unhappy
- BOE should explain what is going to happen to the rest of the schools
- Chances of passing referendum are small

- Students love seeing parents at school
- Neighborhood school allows positive relationships between parents, teachers, and students
- Don't know people in the neighborhood because there is no neighborhood school
- BOE has the opportunity to do something phenomenal – we can make history
- Bussed students don't have ownership

**Meeting began:** 7:00 pm (on time)

**Meeting Ended:** All citizens had spoken by 9 p.m. but I'm not sure when the meeting itself ended. I left at 9:00 pm – when it was scheduled to end

**Discussion, Action:** This was the second of three scheduled forums. Another citizen comment period is planned for Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup> 6:00-7:00pm before the scheduled board meeting. The BOE allows those who do not want to speak in front of the group to complete “comment cards” to be read out loud by the BOE President. This seems like a good idea to me.