

Ms Kathryn Ellis
Office of Access and Enrollment
125 S Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60603

June 21, 2013

Dear Ms. Kathryn Ellis,

I am a parent of a Sayre Language Academy student, as well as **a tax payer and a voter**. I am very concerned about the budget that has been allocated to my community's school. We are losing at least three teacher positions which will impact students in the following ways.

Traditionally, Sayre **Language** Academy has offered four languages. However, in the last few years the school has only been able to offer one language, Spanish. For the current school year (2012-2013) students have Spanish class 2 days a week. With the new budget, the principal is forced to eliminate 2 of the Spanish teacher positions, **reducing student exposure to language, at a language academy, to 1 language 1 day a week**. Other language academies, Jackson and LaSalle, have 5 languages taught at their schools. Children on the west side would like the same robust exposure to world languages as the children on the north side and in the west loop. The Sayre community asks that Sayre Language Academy truly be a language academy. School offerings are often a reason families move into a community.

In addition to losing at least 2 language teachers, the principal is must make the difficult choice between losing an art or a music teacher. Sayre parents believe that early exposure to art and music gives students a competitive advantage when applying to high schools. We want our students to have that advantage. We want our sons and daughters to be whole children. **For many, art and music are why they stay in school**, why they get out of bed in the morning. It is the hook to other opportunities. Losing an art or a music teacher is detrimental to our children.

This school has been a foundational element of our community. Families have moved to our diverse, middle-class neighborhood because of this school. There are very few places in Chicago where one can say that about a neighborhood. The Galewood-Montclare neighborhood wants to reclaim that uniqueness. **We believe strong communities mean strong schools and vice versa**. The city of Chicago has lost sight of that ideal.

Parents are confused about how our public officials could lengthen the school day and then take away the very teachers that would make that longer day meaningful. While offering so little to our schools and at the same time using public monies to build collegiate athletic facilities is outrageous. It has an immediate impact on the quality of our city schools. **I have made a commitment to public education. We want you to do the same.**

The uniqueness of schools like Sayre draws homeowners to our city. **We are asking for your help in maintaining the three teacher positions that we are losing.**

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Signature _____ Print Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Cc: Rahm Emanuel; Barbara Byrd Bennett; David Vitale, Annette Gurley