



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***Statement by Marilyn Stewart, President of the Chicago Teachers Union,
on schools removed from CPS closing list***

CTU President Marilyn Stewart released the following statement late today in reaction to the announcement by Chicago Public Schools removing some schools from the proposed school action list for 2010.

"It is with dismay and mixed feelings that I respond to the Board's decision to remove only five of the fourteen schools from the list for school action. I attended nearly every public hearing for these schools and heard compelling arguments and pleas from staff, students and parents imploring the Board to keep their schools open.

I am particularly disappointed that all of the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) schools were not removed from the list. It is inconceivable that CPS would remove only two of the four TAP schools scheduled for action; this decision is irresponsible and jeopardizes both the results of the program and the chances for another successful federal grant application.

CPS CEO Ron Huberman said in an interview on WBBM News Radio 780 on Wednesday evening that he enjoys the partnership with the Union on the TAP program. I believe it is only a partnership when all of the parties involved are engaged in the final decisions.

I recently called upon the new Board President, Mary Richardson-Lowry, to convene an education summit and to postpone the vote scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 2010. I met with Ms. Lowry and expressed my concerns about the devastating consequences that Renaissance 2010 has had on our schools and communities.

It is encouraging to see that Mr. Huberman is establishing a 'formal unit' designed to get schools on track. Whether you call it a unit or an education summit, CPS needs to bring all the stakeholders to the table to produce real education reform. It should be done with us, not to us!

I ask teachers, parents, students, community leaders, clergy and elected city officials, to call on CPS to stop this vote from going forward. Let's do what is right for our students."

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The Chicago Teachers Union represents 32,000 teachers and educational support personnel working in the Chicago Public Schools. CTU, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers and the Illinois Federation of Teachers, is the third largest union in the country and the largest local union in Illinois.

For further information regarding this press release and current CTU news, please visit our website at www.ctunet.com.

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