



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2021-382, Version: 1

RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING LEGISLATURE & GOVERNOR TO CREATE AN ELECTED CHICAGO SCHOOL BOARD

WHEREAS, In a non-binding referendum conducted in conjunction with this city's February 24, 2015 Municipal election, the voters of the 37 wards that were allowed to vote on the matter overwhelmingly supported the creation of an elected Chicago Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, 86% of those voting from Northwest Side neighborhoods of Ukrainian Village, Humboldt Park, Logan Square and Wicker Park decisively favored electing a school board who would be more responsive to their needs; and

WHEREAS, West side neighborhoods stretching from River North and West Loop to Austin polled more than 90% for an elected Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, In the South Side neighborhoods of Chatham, Auburn/Grisham, Englewood and Washington Park, the "Yes" votes for an elected school board in District 299 tallied at more than 92%; and

WHEREAS, None of the totals in the 37 wards voting in the referendum fell below an 82% approval rating. In fact, approval for an elected Chicago Board of Education polled higher than the total votes for the top two Aldermanic candidates in those wards in which the referendum was placed on the ballot. Even in two uncontested Aldermanic races, the approval for an elected school board outpolled the votes garnered by the incumbent candidates; and

WHEREAS, The demand of the taxpayers for an elected representative school board has grown even stronger since voters in 327 precincts approved a similar advisory referendum in the November, 2012 General Election by a very wide margin; and

WHEREAS, Under the guise of "reform", the currently appointed Board of Education has allowed class size to increase. Art, music, physical education and after-school activities have been diminished or eliminated altogether while senseless so-called "high-stakes" testing eats up more classroom learning time. The developmental models for preschool and kindergarten curricula has been radically eroded and has drifted back to the Prussian models of rote learning and testing; and

WHEREAS, More and more parents and concerned citizens are questioning the sagacity of this direction and are demanding a role in the decision-making process at the ballot box. They only ask that they be accorded the

same rights as every other taxpayer in Illinois outside Chicago's city limits. All other Illinois school districts are governed by locally-elected school boards, who hire a superintendent that hire administrators who must be approved by that board; and

WHEREAS, 90% of U.S. school districts have elected school boards; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has created education disparities along racial and economic lines that make it more critical than ever for Chicago's school board to be accountable to voters, not to the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the Illinois legislature and the governor to accede to this modest demand by the Chicago taxpayer to be vested with the same right as the rest of their constituents; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the undersigned members of the City of Chicago City Council hereby memorialize the Illinois State Legislature to expeditiously promulgate and enact statutes that replace the currently appointed Chicago Board of Education through the establishment of an elected representative school board for District 299 as it has done for all other Illinois school districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That Governor J.B. Pritzker sign without delay such legislation into law.

Byron Sigcho-Lopez

Alderman, 25th Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Honorable Chris Welch, Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, the Honorable Don Harmon, President of the Illinois Senate and the Honorable J.B. Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois.

BYRON SICHCHO-LOPEZ ALIVERMAN, 25TH WARD

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March 23, 2021

The following list of aldermen have requested their names to be included in the record as co-sponsors on the proposed RESOLUTION ON MEMORIALIZING LEGISLATURE & GOVERNOR TO CREATE AND ELECTED CHICAGO SCHOOL BOARD attached hereto regarding to enact statutes that replace the currently appointed Chicago Board of Education through the establishment of an elected representative school board for District 299 as it has done for all other Illinois school districts which is hereby submitted for introduction at the City Council meeting of 03/24/2021 and referral to the Committee on Education .

Daniel LaSpata	(1)
Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez	(33)
Carlos Ramirez-Rosa	(35)
Jeanette Taylor	(20)
Silvana Tabores	(23)

Roberto Maldonado (26)

Maria Hadden (49_)

Andre Vasquez (40)

David Moore (17)
Byron Sigcho-Lopez, (Ward 25)

Very truly yours,