

"F" for transparency- Local School Council Advisory Board (LSCAB)

Below is the spoken statement and the supplemental handout materials provided to the CPS Board of Education on November 20, 2019, by Marguerite Baran, elected parent representative of the Hitch Elementary LSC as well as the elected representative for the Northwest Region for the Local School Council Advisory Board, or LSCAB.

I first want to thank Board Member Dr. Todd-Breland for attending our LSCAB meeting this past Monday. I appreciate your commitment to your role and your interest in LSC relations!

As a newly elected member of the LSCAB, I have some observations and questions about how this body is being organized and managed, as well as leveraged by the Board and CPS.

In the past two years, there has been a lot of talk of the Elected Representative School Board for Chicago, which I support. However, none of these conversations include or address the existence of the Advisory Board, which is a body of six elected representative LSC Members and nine appointed LSC Members. This could be a missed opportunity for incubating what an ERSB could look like and accomplish.

Also, since being elected to the LSCAB, I have been surprised at the lack of transparency around the organization, even for elected members. In the supplemental handout I am providing, you can see that the LSCAB website lists members from 2017, not even including appointed mid-term replacements, and has not been updated for 2019. The Board Appointed Chair has not changed since the inception of the LSCAB over 20 years ago. The website does not have posted agendas or minutes. [The LSCAB received an "F" grade from City Bureau for transparency.](#)

My request of the new Board is to examine the Local School Council Advisory Board and see how to make it a thriving, relevant resource for parent and community engagement in improving our schools.

Thank you in advance for reviewing the materials I am providing, and I look forward to an update in the future.

Supplemental Handout Materials

What is the Local School Council Advisory Board?

State law created a Local School Council Advisory Board (LSCAB) to provide input to the Board of Education on LSC issues. The LSCAB meets once a month, usually just prior to the Board meeting.

The LSCAB has fifteen members who must be current LSC members. Six are elected by LSC members (one per region or cluster). The other nine members are appointed by the Board, which also appoints the LSCAB chair.

Screenshot of the [LSC Advisory Board website](#), November 19, 2019:

Local School Council Advisory Board (LSCAB)

Pursuant to the Illinois School Code, in 1996, the Chicago Board of Education established a Local School Council Advisory Board (LSCAB) comprised of both elected and appointed currently-serving LSC members. The role of the LSCAB is to advise the Board on issues related to Local School Council elections, operations, powers and duties, and school improvement plans. The LSCAB also serves as liaison between Local School Council members and senior staff and advises the Board of Education on other issues regarding the school district, as requested.

The LSCAB conducts public meetings monthly at the Garfield Center, 2651 West Washington at 4:00. Below is the meeting calendar for 2018:

- Monday, Jan. 22
- Monday, February 26
- Monday, March 19
- Monday, April 16
- Monday, May 21
- Monday, June 18

LSCAB Members for the 2017-2019 Term

Mr. Thomas E. Gray, Chair, (Chicago Military Academy: Community Representative) has served as the Chairperson of the LSCAB since its inception in 1989. At the time he served on the Douglas Elementary School Local School Council as a Community Representative. He currently serves as a Community Representative on the Local School Council at the Chicago Military Academy at Bronzeville. Mr. Gray is the Program Director of Permits and Neighborhoods Affairs for Special Events for the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs. Mr. Gray holds a Master's Degree in Computer



Questions for the Board of Education:

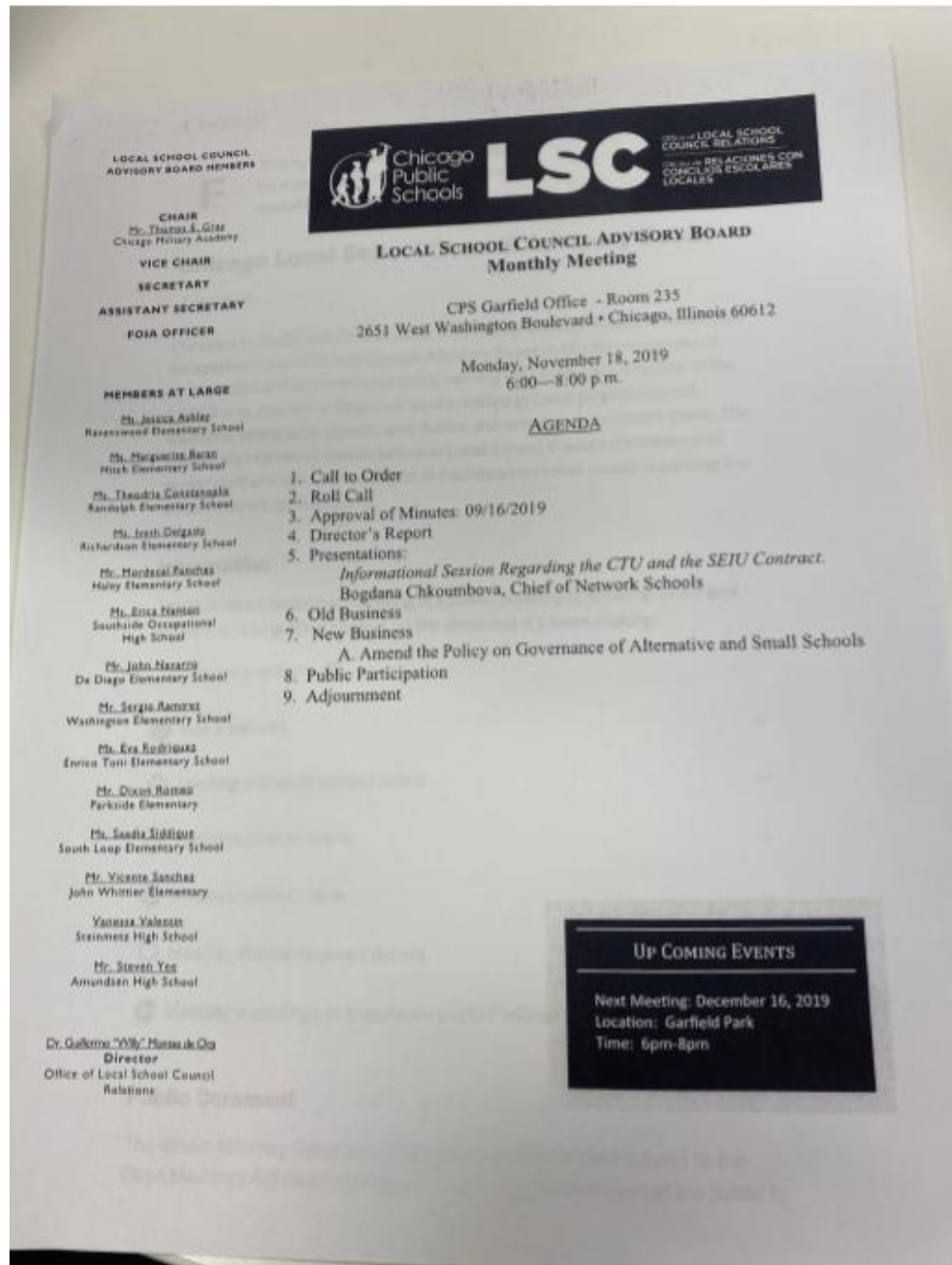
- Why has there only been one Chair of the Local School Council Advisory Board? Why is the Chair appointed instead of elected by LSCAB?
- What is the appointment process for the nine appointed members? Why is there a majority of appointed members instead of elected members?
- Why is a current Board of Education member not an ex officio member of the Advisory Board, with responsibility to attend (much like a school principal is a member of a school's LSC?)
- How can the LSCAB be studied or leveraged as a pilot model for an eventual elected representative school board?

Questions regarding operations and oversight of the Local School Council Advisory Board:

- Why are agenda items not solicited from the LSCAB members prior to publishing the agenda?
- Why are meetings not held at CPS Headquarters, which is closer to public transportation?
- Why is there no discussion of the agenda or approval of the agenda in LSCAB meetings?
- Why are materials not distributed before the meeting for members to review?

- Why are agendas and minutes not posted on the LSCAB website, and why is the information so outdated?
- Why does the LSCAB not have an independent website or subsite of the cpsboe?

Agenda from the Monday, Nov 18, meeting of the LSCAB:



Screenshots from the [City Bureau Open Gov Report Card for the LSCAB](#):

[< Back to List](#)

This agency passes **1 of the 5** categories for a score of **20%**. Information was not available for 6 categories

Chicago Local School Council Advisory Board

Education

Pursuant to the Illinois School Code, in 1996, the Chicago Board of Education established a Local School Council Advisory Board (LSCAB) comprised of both elected and appointed currently-serving LSC members. The role of the LSCAB is to advise the Board on issues related to Local School Council elections, operations, powers and duties, and school improvement plans. The LSCAB also serves as liaison between Local School Council members and senior staff and advises the Board of Education on other issues regarding the school district, as requested.

Grades are based on information from November 2019

Information

The first step toward participating in a public meeting is knowing when and where it is, and getting context on the decisions it's been making.

[See agency website](#)

Has a website	
Meeting schedule posted online	
Agendas posted online	
Minutes posted online	
Minutes include required details	
Meeting recordings or livestream posted online	

Public Comment

The Illinois Attorney General [has said](#) that all public bodies subject to the Open Meetings Act must provide an opportunity for members of the public to address public officials at open meetings. Public comment periods offer an avenue for people to support or oppose policy decisions and provide information that might not otherwise be represented in a meeting.

No public comment policy available

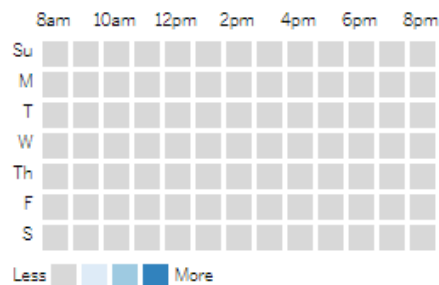
- ☐ Public commenters don't need to register in advance ▼
- ☐ Commenters can discuss anything related to the agency and not just the meeting agenda ▼
- ☐ Total time for public comment period is unlimited or at least one hour ▼

Scheduling

Knowing the time and location of a meeting is one thing, but it doesn't necessarily make getting there any easier. Varying meeting times and locations can reduce barriers for attendees.

- ☐ Meetings are rarely cancelled ▼
- ☐ Meeting times vary to accommodate differing schedules ▼

Meeting Times



Meeting Locations



Detailed meeting information not available

[Find City Bureau's Open Gov Report Card here.](#)