Prospect Park Special Board and Community Meeting on the Minneapolis Public Schools proposal to close Pratt Community School: September 28, 2026, 7:00pm. This meeting was held in-person & virtually (hybrid) at PPUMC

Board Members Present: Eric Amel, Issac Bandy, Steve Brackett, Luke Connelly, Arthur Herbert, Gabby Metzger, ShugE Mississippi, Donna Schneider, Jerry Stein, Mitchell Toft, Sofia Valdes and Ryan Woldt.

Community Members: Patrick Roche, Carly Hanson, Susan Larson-Fleming, Craig Philips, Mandy Ellerton, Pam Harris, Joe Ring, David Frank, Christianne Lind, Melissa Hodne, Cathy Fitch, Meredith McNab, James Purple, Eric Lind, Kathy Kahn, Josiah Jackson, Kate Needleman, Elaine May, Ginnia Klamecki, Caleb Munce, Jessica Askew, Vera Marshall, Mary Legris, Lian Warren, Emma-Ceclia Moran, Shannon Doyle, Jere Purple, Ben Nyberg, Kevin Loecke, Martha Walsh, Bridget Mathie, Jean Emmons, John Wilke, Sue Warner, George Hansen, and Lynn Von Korff (Volunteer Financial Officer),

Guests: Robin Wonsley, Ward 2 Council Member

Staff: Liza Davitch

Call Committee Meeting to Order: Eric Amel called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. A quorum was present. The agenda was approved.

Motion to Approve the Letter of Support for Pratt Community School (letter attached).
Arther Herbert moved the motion to approve the letter. *Gabby Metzger* seconded. Copies of the draft letter of support for Pratt School were made available to all attendees.

Mandy Ellerton presented key elements of the proposed Minneapolis Public School (MPS) Transformation Plan (https://www.mpschools.org/about-mps/school-transformation), questions and concerns about the Plan, and the implications of closing of Pratt. Attendees were strongly encouraged to submit feedback to MPS by the October 16th, 2026 deadline to: https://my.thoughtexchange.com/participate/226363058.

A lengthy discussion followed on the importance of Pratt School to students, parents, and the entire community. Examples of comments included:

- ***What is the MPS plan to increase enrollment?*** How do they plan to bring families back to public schools? Six years ago, the district enacted what they called the "Comprehensive District Design changing school enrollment boundaries and pathways and up to 18% of families left MPS after the plan was implemented.
- ***MPS needs to restore trust***. Many expressed concerns that this plan will further undermine trust and enrollment will decline again.
- ***The timeline is too short***. MPS is only giving families and student one month to absorb these proposals and provide input.
- ***What are the assumptions informing their enrollment?***

- ***Why is MPS closing the last neighborhood elementary school in Southeast?*** Our area is projected to increases population over ten years--and MPHA is expanding public housing in Prospect Park.
- ***Although the community engagement process engaged thousands of caregivers, focus groups and surveys were vague, and participants were not asked for input on school closures***.
- ***Families want choice***, they want the opportunity to send children to a smaller neighborhood community school like Pratt.
- ***There were <u>many</u> heartfelt comments about Pratt's central role in our communit***y.

Members agreed to make the following additions to the letter:

- Southeast neighborhoods will no longer have neighborhood schools if the plan is implemented because Pratt is the last remaining community elementary school in Southeast.
- Pratt Community School serves as the spiritual center of the community.
- In addition to submitting the letter as a public comment to the MPS Transformation Plan at https://my.thoughtexchange.com/participate/226363058 and emailing it to MPS School Board Members, it will also be copied to Ward 2 Council Member Robin Wonsley and Mayor Frey.

With these changes, the motion to approve the letter passed unanimously by PPA's Board of Directors with no abstentions.

Additional actions:

- Arthur Herbert volunteered to make it possible for community members to add their names to a second copy of the letter to be submitted to MPS as feedback on the Plan.
- Attendees were invited to use parts of PPA's letter and/or another letter written by Mandy Ellerton, Cathy Fitch & others, to help them write their own comments.
- Christianne Lind invited everyone to read the inspiring "Love Stories to Pratt" on the Pratt School fence and to write & post their own stories. Families and students at Pratt have told Christianne that they find the proposed closure very disruptive, especially after the experience of "Operation Metro Surge.' Examples of love letter include:
  - ***"Please don't close Pratt!"***
  - ***"I've been here for six years, and this is the only school I know, and I love Pratt so much!"***
  - ***"Pratt brings everyone from diverse backgrounds together to build a community in which I felt deeply loved."***
- Council Member Robin Wansley encouraged people to visit the Minneapolis Families for Public Schools website at https://takeactionminnesota.org/minnesota-families-for-public-schools or https://stopthetransformation.com to learn more about plan's drawbacks and to take action.

Steve Brackett proposed adjourning the meeting. Sofia Vaides seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.

PPA's next Board and Community Meeting will be held at 7pm Monday, October 26th at PPUMC. All are welcome!

See also "PPA's Letter to MPS Directors in Response to Proposed School Transformation Plan, approved by PPA's Board of Directors 9-28-26."