



MALDEF

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

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Ron Huberman
Chief Executive Office
Chicago Public Schools
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Dear Mr. Huberman:

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Congratulations on your selection as Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools. Providing our children with an education is perhaps one of the most important investments a society can make in our children and our future. As you are no doubt aware, the Chicago Public Schools has far to go to afford equal educational opportunity to all students and has been under a court-ordered consent decree for over 28-years in the case entitled: United States v. Board of Education of the City of Chicago, No. 80-5124.

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Today the CPS student population is nearly 40% Latino. Approximately 14% of Chicago's public school students are English Language Learners (ELL). Although ELL students are required under the law and pursuant to the consent decree to receive effective bilingual educational services, many ELL students are denied those services. On January 22, 2009, the Hon. Charles Kocoras of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois began hearing testimony on whether or not the Chicago Public School system should be freed from court supervision and declared unitary in all respects. The decision of whether or not to declare the Chicago Public School system a unitary system has significant consequences to thousands of Latino children because granting unitary status risks their losing even the inadequate services now afforded them.

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This week, Judge Kocoras will continue hearing testimony regarding the services (or lack thereof) that CPS has provided ELLs. MALDEF encourages you to attend the public hearing in federal court so that you can witness for yourself the issues facing ELLs. MALDEF and the Latino community will work closely with you as CEO and insist that you make certain that all ELLs receive the services they are entitled to receive. MALDEF looks forward to working with you on this and other matters that will set the future of Latino children, the Chicago Public Schools and the future of our city.

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Sincerely,

Ricardo Meza
Regional Counsel

Advancing Latino Civil Rights for 40 Years

www.maldef.org