

CIVIC COMMITTEE
of The Commercial Club of Chicago

21 South Clark Street
Suite 3120
Chicago, Illinois 60603-2006
312.853.1200
312.853.1209 (FAX)
www.civiccommittee.org

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 5 P.M. June 30, 2009

Contact: R. Eden Martin
Civic Committee
312.853.1205

**New Civic Committee Report shows that Chicago Schoolchildren are
“Still Left Behind”**

**Report finds that Chicago students have made little progress over the last several
years; calls for rigorous national test, independent auditor and expanded school
options for families**

CHICAGO – June 30, 2009 – The Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago released a new report today, *Still Left Behind*, which evaluates student learning in Chicago Public Schools. The report updates the Civic Committee’s 2003 *Left Behind* report.

The new report finds that Chicago’s public schools have made little progress over the last several years in raising student achievement. In Chicago’s elementary and middle schools, substantial gains on the ISAT over the past few years are mainly the result of changes in the test and testing procedures, with only modest improvement in real student performance. The report uses the National Assessment of Educational Progress (known as the “Nation’s Report Card”), as well as other measures, to benchmark Chicago’s elementary school performance.

High school performance on the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) has also remained low, with over 70% of high school juniors failing to meet State standards, and even fewer achieving “college-readiness” on the ACT exam in math, reading and science.



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“It is clear that the vast majority of Chicago’s elementary and high schools do not prepare their students for success in college and beyond,” said R. Eden Martin, President of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago.

The report urges the Chicago Board of Education to designate an independent auditor to ensure the credibility and usefulness of published reports on student achievement in CPS.

Noting that charter and contract schools in Chicago have been shown to generally outperform their traditional neighborhood schools, the report also calls for expanded innovation and choice in the public school system.

“Until all Chicago’s families have high quality school choices that include more innovative charter and contract schools, ‘equal opportunity’ for those families will be only a slogan,” said Eden Martin. “We look forward to working with CPS CEO Ron Huberman and the citizens of Chicago as we enter the next stage in Chicago school reform.”

The Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago is a non-profit organization comprised of senior executives from the Chicago region’s leading corporations, professional firms and universities. The mission of the Civic Committee is to improve the economic and social well-being of the Chicago region. The Civic Committee has been deeply involved in Chicago school reform including the 1988 and 1995 Chicago School Reform Laws, charter schools, the 1997 school funding and reform law, and teacher and principal quality initiatives, and has been a strong supporter of Mayor Daley’s new school initiative, Renaissance 2010. Its Renaissance Schools Fund has helped raise over \$70 million for new schools start-up costs.