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## District 95 Responds to Chicago's SEIU Local 1 Union Propaganda Campaign

Right: Isaac Fox students are forced to walk through two columns of shouting strangers from SEIU Local 1 as they try to walk safely home, while Principal **Jill Brooks** (center) does her best to ensure that the students get safely across busy Cuba Road.

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1, a Chicago-based union, has been making unsupported statements and



district property, to move their protest to the easement next to Cuba Road and off school district property. Oddly, Chicago's SEIU Local 1 chose not to stage their

spreading misleading information via a flyer and a protest about the current facility for May Whitney School, a facility formerly known as the Annex; in one incident, even approaching children who were trying to walk safely home from school.

Right: Protestors from SEIU Local 1 try to hand out propaganda flyers to students and parents across from the Isaac Fox/Middle School South facility.

Unfortunately for the parents and community, the statements made in the flyer and by the SEIU Local 1 protestors do not come close to matching the facts about either May Whitney Elementary School or Community Unit School District 95.



On Monday, April 7, Chicago's SEIU Local 1 dispatched

more than 20 protestors to the Isaac Fox/Middle School South school facility, where they disrupted the end of school by shouting through bullhorns, chanting and shaking containers full of rocks or other noise making material, all while trying to hand out propaganda flyers to young students who were trying to safely cross busy Cuba Road.

Isaac Fox Principal **Jill Brooks**, Middle School South Assistant Principal **Chad May**, and **Jim Jennings**, Communications Director for CUSD 95, kept a close watch over the demonstration in order to ensure the safety of students. They also directed the protestors, who were trespassing on school

protest in front of May Whitney School, the subject of their propaganda, but instead chose the Isaac Fox Elementary School/Middle School South facility which lies along heavily traveled Cuba Road.

"I understand they (SEIU Local 1) are advocating for their cause," said Brooks. "However, to stand on our sidewalk, right at the crosswalk, handing flyers to children who were minding their own business and trying to safely cross the street, was ridiculous and created a potentially

dangerous situation for our children and their parents."

The propaganda flyer, entitled: *'New Information Surfaces on Potential Mold Problems in "New May Whitney" Elementary School'* cited testimony from **Gustavo Gomez**, an Aramark custodian, who, at a March 27 legislative hearing of the Illinois House of Representatives Elementary and Secondary Education committee, claimed to have found what he thought was mold while cleaning the Annex building which now houses May Whitney School.

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### Correction

The April 4 story entitled "May Whitney Fifth Graders 'Electrify' Classmates" incorrectly stated that fifth graders developed the exhibits. In fact, the exhibitors were fourth grade students. I regret the error. --Jim Jennings, Publisher

## District 95 Responds to SEIU Union Propaganda *cont.*



The flyer quotes Gomez' as saying: "When I arrived at the building, the first thing I noticed was a strong bad smell. When I removed the tiles, I saw that they were very old, and they were covered in what appeared to be yellow and green mold."

### **Alleged Mold Never Reported**

Interestingly, while the readying of the Annex for the staff and students of May Whitney School took place in late August and early September of 2007, the district has no record of Gomez ever informing District 95 staff or its administration of this alleged mold.

In fact, the district only learned about Gomez' statement from area news media reports well after the hearing had concluded.

CUSD95 can find nothing to indicate that

Gomez ever notified anyone at the school or within the school district about the alleged mold at the new May Whitney School building. However, on March 21, Gomez did make the same statement to **Mary Kalou**, Assistant Superintendent of Business & Operations, of finding yellow and green mold, but he stated that he found it while working at the new Middle School North (MSN) facility, not the Annex/May Whitney School building. An examination of MSN showed no mold and nothing that could substantiate the claim made by Gomez.

"If Mr. Gomez, or any employee had found something of concern, such as mold,

we would expect them to notify a supervisor or district administrator or staff member immediately," said Jennings. "Since the preparation of the Annex for occupancy by May Whitney School was done back in August and September of 2007, it really makes me question why someone would wait seven months or more to bring this issue forward. And even when it was brought forward to a school district administrator, the alleged mold was said to have been found in a completely different building than May Whitney School."

Air quality sampling of the Annex last fall, as well as in February and as recently as March 21 show air quality levels within the school to be well within the levels that

are safe and appropriate for a school.

"We are currently waiting for a written report from Environ (the company who conducted the March 21 testing) providing the results of air and carpet sampling for mold at May

Whitney," said Kalou. "We have been verbally told that results show no mold concerns at May Whitney School.

Superintendent **Dr. Brian Knutson** does not like the schools, staff, children and families of CUSD 95 being used as a political football by any person or group.

"Parents, their children and staff members must be able to feel that their schools are healthy learning environments," said Superintendent Dr. Brian Knutson. "Putting out misleading and inaccurate information, as was done by SEIU Local 1, serves only to undermine the trust that our community has in our schools. That is not fair to our children, their families, or our staff members, who work diligently to keep our facilities clean and our schools healthy, wonderful learning environments. We have always been and always will be committed to providing the best environment possible for our students."

Right: Protestors from SEIU Local 1 congregate outside Isaac Fox/Middle School South.



## Board of Ed Considers Closing Charles Quentin School, Principal Mall Over Two Schools

The Board of Education has been spending much of its time reviewing the report and recommendations of the school district administration regarding a short term and long term plan for the school district's facilities. Part of that administrative recommendation

includes the closing of Charles Quentin Elementary School at the end of the 2008-2009 school year. The Board of Education is expected to vote on this recommendation at its regular April 24 meeting.

The recommendation to close the school is based upon the district's short and long term facilities plan, which examined a number of factors, including:

- Current and projected enrollment figures that show a continued declining student enrollment
- Available student seating capacity within the five other elementary schools
- Age and condition of Charles Quentin School
- The limited financial resources of the school district

With the probability of consolidating from six to five schools after the next school year, along with a



principal vacancy at Sarah Adams School created by the departure of current principal **Chris Finch**, Superintendent **Dr. Brian Knutson** will also recommend the appointment of Charles Quentin School Principal **Claudia Mall** as the principal of both

Sarah Adams School and Charles Quentin School for next school year.

As part of that recommendation, he will also be requesting that the Board of Education approve adding an assistant principals at each of the two schools for next year to assist Mrs. Mall. This recommendation is being made both because of the proposed school consolidation and because Mrs. Mall was judged to be the best qualified candidate for Sarah Adams School.

"Having Claudia Mall as the principal of both schools will give the students at Charles Quentin the stability that is essential for them," said Dr. Knutson. "It will also allow her to make a smooth transition to Sarah Adams School, while also providing both schools with the benefit of an additional school administrator."

Left: Board of Ed. President **Kathy Brown** talks about issues related to the potential closing of Charles Quentin School and the district's Facilities Report and Recommendations during a special Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday, April 7.

## MSS Recycle Club Gets Early Start on Earth Day



Middle School South's Recycling Club is celebrating Earth Day (April 22) a little early by planting two trees on Tuesday, April 15. The trees and supplies were donated to the club by Lake Zurich's Home Depot store. The Home Depot donated both a Pin Oak tree and Norway Maple tree for planting. The

Recycling Club is planting the trees one week early to help remind students and the community about Earth Day.

The Recycling Club has approximately 30 members who actively recycle paper, aluminum, plastic bottles/yogurt containers, cardboard and cell phones. They also currently have a "used gym shoe" recycling effort taking place. The soles of the recycled gym shoes will be sent away, where they will be ground up to make playground matting and running tracks.

## Follow the Yellow Brick Road to the PAC



Tap your heels twice and whisk yourself away to the Performing Arts Center of Lake Zurich's presentation of *The Wizard of Oz* April 23-26, 2008, beginning at 7:30 p.m., and April 26 and 27 at 2:00 p.m. Tickets for this highly anticipated production are only \$10 for adults and only \$8 for seniors, students and children. Call the ticket hotline at 847.540.4740, or order at [www.boxoffice@lz95.org](http://www.boxoffice@lz95.org) and avoid the additional \$2 per ticket at the door.

**THRIVE in 95** is produced by the Community Unit School District 95 Office of Communications & Community Relations for staff and interested community members. Story submissions are greatly encouraged.

**Annette Jacobsen**,  
Editor  
**Jim Jennings**,  
Publisher  
(847) 540-5489  
[jim.jennings@lz95.org](mailto:jim.jennings@lz95.org)  
[www.lz95.org](http://www.lz95.org)

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