

Maldonado Won't Back Down From Plan to Move Military School Into Ames



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Maldonado has [long been pushing](#) for the Marine Math and Science Academy, a high school now on the Near West Side, to move into the Ames building at 1920 N. Hamlin Ave., but parents have continually pushed back against the plan, saying the alderman has left them out of the conversation and that the military school's academic record isn't very impressive.

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Ivy has signed on for at least three more years at the school, which has seen improvement over the years, according to CPS records.

Though it is unclear whether or not the Marine Academy's military school curriculum would impact Ames middle schoolers, parents and teachers fear the school would become overcrowded if the high school moved in.

Test scores at Ames still fall below CPS average in most subjects, but the school has been taken off academic probation and has seen improvement in every subject, including science this year, previously their weakest subject.

The Marine Academy's scores also fall below the CPS average, and like Ames, is at a Level 2 CPS performance rating — Level 1 being best and 3 being worst. Other high schools in the area are Level 3 schools, however.

Maldonado did not come out of his office during the protest, which came during his regular ward night hours. He did speak to parents and students who signed up for ward night time, neighborhood activist Leticia Barrera said, though she said it did not seem to change his mind.

Maldonado told DNAinfo Chicago that moving the Marine Academy into Ames was a good idea that would give area high schoolers more options. He dismissed protesters' claims that he was trying to exclude them from last week's meeting.

"We posted our community meeting, and we had 180 people that came," he said.

As for why he's so insistent that the Marine Academy move into the Ames building, he said it's just about providing more options for kids, particularly in terms of high schools.

All the other area high schools — Clemente, North-Grand and Kelvyn Park — are on academic probation with Level 3 performance ratings.

"It is an additional option," he said. "I don't know any parent that would not want additional options."



Ames Middle School Protest