

Dear Ward Families,

Over the past several months, we've had the pleasure of speaking with many of you about how we can best meet your children's educational needs, from pre-K through high school. To accomplish this goal, CPS is taking an important step toward building a continuum of high quality, diverse neighborhood schools that will serve the children of the near south community.

CPS will recommend to the Board of Education that National Teachers Academy begin transitioning from an elementary school to a neighborhood high school. In the fall of 2019, it would accept its first freshman class, and rising second graders through seventh graders will be able to continue their academic careers there until they graduate. Additionally, boundaries for South Loop elementary school will be moved further south, to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

This proposal has tremendous benefits for your community, if the Board moves forward, as it will dramatically change the way your children think about high school. No longer will they need to travel miles to find a high quality neighborhood school that can prepare them for college and career. Instead, they can stay in their community and attend high school with their peers.

Going forward, community input will continue to play a major role in shaping this decision, particularly on issues such as transportation, after-school programming, and other factors that go into building a dynamic and successful school. The next formal step will be a vote by the Board of Education, which typically happens in February. In the meantime, CPS will hold several additional community meetings, and I encourage you to participate so that we can continue the conversation on how best to serve the students of the near south community. We will also form a steering committee of respected community leaders to provide consistent feedback on the new high school. Finally, we will make a decision on the boundaries of the new school that will be consistent with the planning area that we have shared at meetings, and which can be found at [cps.edu/nearsouth](http://cps.edu/nearsouth).

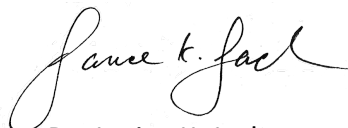
We did not make this decision lightly, and we believe this is in the best interest of the entire community. We also believe it was important to make a decision so that we could move forward together.

We hope that you are as excited about the prospect of this high school for your children as we are, and we look forward to hearing from you in the months to come. Please reach out to your principal with questions, or contact us at [transitions@cps.edu](mailto:transitions@cps.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Forrest Claypool".

Forrest Claypool  
Chief Executive Officer  
Chicago Public Schools

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice K. Jackson".

Dr. Janice K. Jackson  
Chief Education Officer  
Chicago Public Schools