A Vote to Close 5 Schools

Yesterday's vote by CPS to close schools furthers inequity in Chicago education

Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights strongly disagrees with yesterday’s decision by Chicago Public Schools to permanently close Englewood’s four high schools as well as National Teachers Academy (NTA), a top-rated elementary school which serves majority low-income Black students. These unnecessary closures only increase racial inequality in the Chicago school district.

Despite the school district's assertions, this has not been a community-driven decision. Leaders from both communities have highlighted the historic disinvestment by the city and the district and have offered viable alternative options to these closures – with no meaningful engagement or follow-up by CPS. In fact, the district's strategy for community engagement has been so deeply flawed that the residents who are most impacted by these decisions feel unheard, neglected, and disrespected.
Throughout this school actions process, Chicago Lawyers’ Committee has actively supported organizing efforts by the NTA community with our partner Chicago United for Equity (CUE). **We believe this closure places an unfair burden on low-income Black students attending NTA – a burden that is especially inexcusable given that NTA has achieved the highest quality rating possible in CPS.** Meanwhile, the plan to build a new high school in NTA’s place will only ensure the continued disinvestment of the existing neighborhood school, Phillips High School, which is already severely under-utilized and under-resourced.

We are deeply disappointed that instead of meaningful community engagement, CPS invested in fabricated community support and in empty promises to try to sway local opinion. Rather than consider the recommendations of the Racial Equity Assessments produced by communities before making their decision, CPS paid for its own report describing strategies to promote equity after the closures. Equity must never be an afterthought. Continued failure to authentically build solutions with community will only contribute to rising inequity and deepening racial divisions in our education system.

We will continue to fight against these inequitable school closings and ensure that all students in Chicago have the education they deserve.

**Donate now to help us continue the fight for equal education for our children.**

**DONATE NOW**

Sincerely,
Yesterday’s vote by CPS to close schools will further inequity in Chicago education.

Bonnie Allen, Executive Director

Our work on school closures

- Our January 29 Testimony to CPS on NTA Proposal
- Equity Committee Report on NTA Proposal (January 2018)
- Full Community Report on NTA Proposal (January 2018)
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Community members protested outside Chicago Public Schools prior to the vote on February 29, 2018.
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