

**What is the current status of the school project?**

CPS continues to engage with key stakeholders from the region, including parents, partners, faith leaders, community members, and housing residents. In July, the CHA board approved to grant CPS a 99-year lease for the land to build the new school. The CPS Board must approve a few key items in order for this to advance.

**What exactly will you be voting on?**

In September, the district plans to ask our board to approve three items: the purchase of the land on 23rd and Wabash as the replacement site for CHA, the approval for [The Public Building Commission of Chicago](#) to begin its process, and the approval to enter into a 99-year IGA lease with CHA for the land at 24th and State. Later in the year, we will ask the CPS Board to approve the boundary, programs, and other items that involve the actual school plan.

**Has the school board voted on the project? If not, what is causing any delay? and when is it expected to be approved?**

The School Board is set to take a few votes in September. In June, the board considered this proposal as part of the FY23 capital plan, which included the development of the new high school. However, after much consideration, District leadership decided to pull the item so that we could conduct more community engagement work, which is currently underway.

**When did the plans for the new school first come under discussion?**

The plan for a new school is not new. As the population of schoolchildren in the area has grown, advocates from the region have been pushing for a new neighborhood high school for decades. The district began its own due diligence for the viability of a new school in 2019. The proposal from 2019-20 looks very different from the proposal that is being socialized today. The proposal we are recommending took a deep look at various demographic, enrollment, and programmatic trends. The Near South region continues to grow, additionally, the new school would reduce the average distance students have to travel to their assigned school by a mile. For some students, the distance would be reduced by up to 2.5 miles.

**Were other locations considered?**

Many sites were considered, but only three sites were truly viable. Based on our analysis, the location on 24th and State would provide the students with the best high school experience. 24th and State has enough space to accommodate robust programmatic offerings for up to 1,200 students, and is an effective use of existing outdoor resources, including the CPS soccer field with a track and Park District baseball field. The location is accessible via various modes of public transportation, keeps nine elementary school communities whole, is central to the neighborhoods this new school is hoping to serve, and solves a critical need to provide a growing region of the city with a viable, local, neighborhood high school option.

**What is the projected cost of school? Will this include a budget for any anticipated delays?**

The District is anticipating the school, currently programmed for 1,200 students, will cost roughly \$120M to build. This includes \$50M in one-time funding that was allocated from the State in Gov. Pritzker's budget, and \$70M from the District's capital budget.

**What is the contract with CHA regarding the land for the 24th & State location?**

The District is requesting to enter into a 99-year lease with CHA, in exchange for the 99-year lease, which will be broken up into a 50 year lease with an automatic 49 year renewal, CPS is also purchasing two parcels of land adjacent to the property, on 23rd and Wabash. These parcels of land will be part of the agreement and CHA, in partnership with their residents and the broader Southbridge Working Group will decide how to use that property.

**Does the money for the project include leasing land for CHA?** Yes.

**Which neighborhoods will you be serving?**

The Near South region includes parts of the South Loop, Chinatown, and Bridgeport neighborhoods, as well as other portions in Bronzeville.

**With enrollment declining across CPS, and nearby schools underutilized, why is CPS spending valuable resources on a new school instead of improving the schools we already have?**

Overall enrollment in CPS has been declining, the same way birth rates and school enrollment have been declining across the entire Midwest. However, certain areas — like the New South region this school will serve — have a school age population that is growing and in need of additional educational resources. Students in this area travel to 95 different high schools across our city. If we want schools to truly be the centers of community, we cannot ignore the growing population in need of a neighborhood high school. We are confident that CPS has the resources to provide a quality education to every child in every neighborhood in our city.

**Do you expect any delays in the process?**

To date, CPS and CHA have held dozens of meetings with key stakeholders, including housing advocates, parents, community leaders, and other involved groups. With CHA's commitment to build the 244 units families from its waitlists (including those with a Right to Return), the District's purchase of land adjacent to the property, and with an ongoing commitment to engage with stakeholders in a meaningful way, we are seeing less opposition to the plan. When discussing and explaining the plan with parents and CHA residents, there is broad support among those most impacted by the plan.

**Will students be pulled from other schools?**

The District is proposing a new neighborhood high school. Currently, the proposal includes nine potential feeder schools including: Armour, NTA, Drake, Healy, Ward, Holden, Smyth, Haines, and South Loop.

**Is CHA going to actually build housing?**

CHA has committed to build housing, and in fact, they have already built housing with leases opening up this year. They have committed to CHA residents, especially those impacted by the right to return, that they would be able to complete the committed units.

**Is my child going to have a seat at the school?**

CPS is proposing a neighborhood high school depending on the final boundary, families who live in the final boundary will be zoned to the new high school.

**My child does not live in the boundary but attends one of the feeder schools. Will they be able to attend?**

As CPS finalizes the boundary for the new proposed high school, we will work with families and community members to ensure the final boundary represents their voices. There are ways to codify and ensure children who do not live within a boundary but attend school in a feeder school can have a seat at the proposed high school.

**Is this school actually meant to include the Black community?**

Yes. Approximately 30 percent of the potential student body would be Black, with 39 percent Asian students, 16% Latinx students, and 10% white students. This school has the potential to be a first-of-its-kind development. Colocated with CHA housing, and diverse by design, the school can serve as a model for how diverse districts with varying needs can thoughtfully develop a plan for a new school.

**What will CPS do to address potential safety concerns in the area?**

CPS's Office of Safety and Security works with every school in the district to ensure student safety traveling to-and-from school, including our Safe Passage program. CPS will help develop a safety plan that meets the needs of the new high school, and our team in Safety and Security will work with the regional CPD offices and with parents and the community to ensure the safety and well being of our students.

**Transportation is already an issue in the region, how will CPS mitigate transportation with roughly 1,200 new students being picked up and dropped off in the area?**

CPS will work with the department of transportation to conduct a study in the region and ensure that there are clear transportation plans including bus routes, pick up and drop off locations, and other transportation needs.

**How is CPS defining "community"?**

The community is defined as parents, partners, principals, CHA residents, and other stakeholders who have an interest in the proposed high school and live or work in the Near South region, which includes portions of Bridgeport, Chinatown, South Loop, and some parts of Bronzeville.

**When will the CPS school be built?**

We anticipate that the school will be built by 2026.