

# Near South High School Initiative

## What's at stake?

There is an opportunity to build a high achieving, diverse, urban high school to serve the growing school-age population of Chinatown, South Loop, Bridgeport, and Bronzeville. The proposed high school would provide an alternative to the selective enrollment process that many area families feel pressure to participate in. The proposed neighborhood high school would provide families with an incentive to put down roots for the long run, leading to stronger communities and a stronger Near South region.

## What's the timeline?

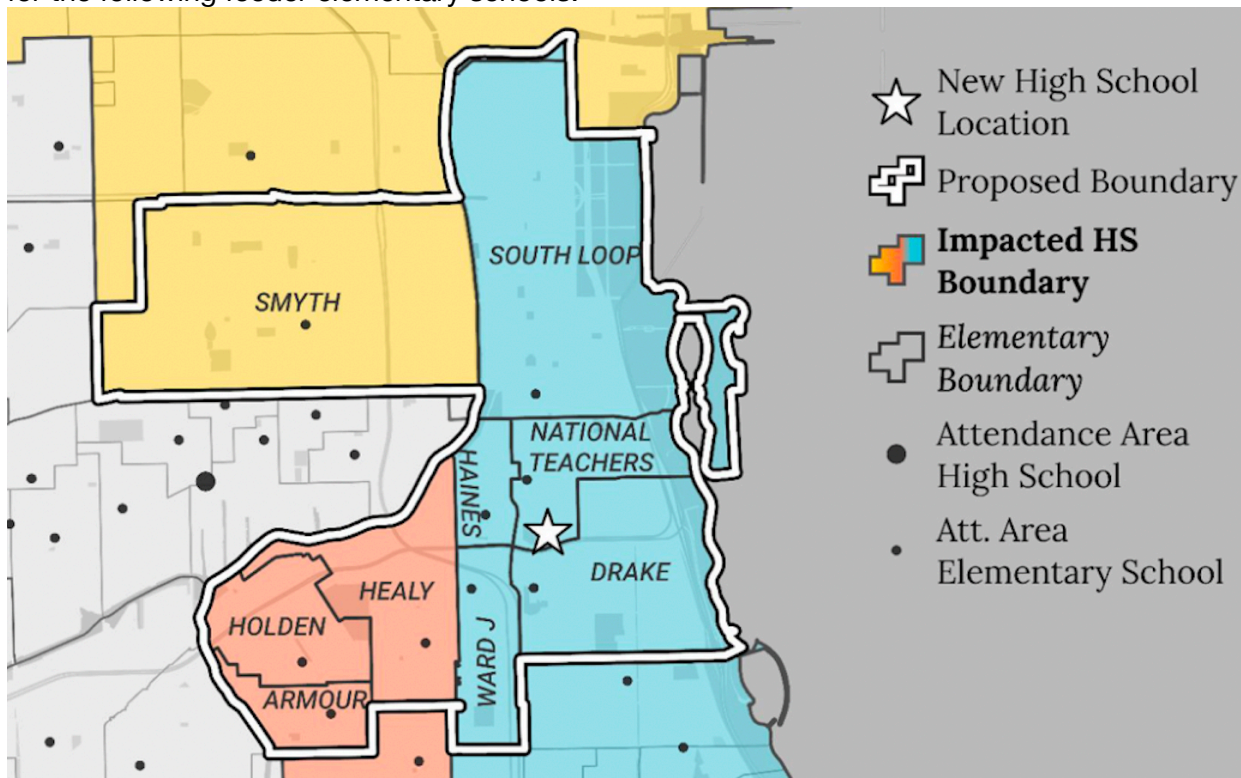
CPS Board of Education is scheduled to vote on capital allocation for the proposed school in **June of 2023**. If approved, the new high school is expected to be built and **ready for student use in 2026**.

## Where would the school be located?

The current proposed location is at 24th and State St.

## Who would attend the school?

Final boundaries have yet to be determined, but the proposed boundary would be based on the boundaries for the following feeder elementary schools:



## Where can I get more information and how can I get involved?

1. Join the **Near South Chicago Families for a Neighborhood High School** group on Facebook for information and how to get involved.
1. Visit [www.nearsouthhighschool.com](http://www.nearsouthhighschool.com)
2. Text **docs** to (312) 313-5676 to receive access to additional documents and information.

## What are concerns that have been raised about this proposal?

There are some common misconceptions about the proposal. See the other side for details →

# Common Misconceptions

## Will this proposal take students away from and hurt existing high schools like Phillips and Tilden?

No, the impact on existing schools is negligible. The proposed boundaries would mean Dunbar, Wells, Phillips, and Tilden would potentially only lose between **3-8 students per grade level** to the new school.

## Will this proposal take away affordable housing units promised to former Ickes Homes residents on CHA land?

No, the CHA land used for the new high school will be fully replaced by a land parcel a couple of blocks farther north on Wabash that will allow a greater number of affordable housing units than originally planned. A total of 877 mixed-income units are planned for the former Ickes site and surrounding properties.

## Isn't this proposal designed to benefit the affluent white demographic in the South Loop neighborhood?

The proposed high school is projected to be **39% Asian, 30% Black, 16% Latino, and 10% White**. South Loop Elementary, which serves the most affluent area of the Near South region, is **40% Black, 26% White, 12% Asian, and 12% Hispanic with 28% Low-Income**. The proposed high school is a rare opportunity to build a truly diverse, high-achieving urban high school in a growing, thriving region.

## Why can't Near South families send their children to existing neighborhood high schools?

Existing high schools were not designed to meet the needs of the Chinatown community and rapidly growing northern sections of the Near South area. Despite overall enrollment declines at CPS, some areas, like Near South, are growing rapidly. Families in these communities currently face long commute times to existing high schools. There are currently 687 Black high school students in the region who attend 95 different schools across the city. There are currently 882 Asian high school students in the area who attend 36 high schools across the city. **86% of the students in the new boundary will travel a shorter distance to this new location than they would to their current assigned high school.**

## Are supporters of the Near South High School against investment in existing neighborhood schools?

No, families who support a new Near South High School also recognize that additional investments in existing high schools are necessary. Meeting the needs of a growing area does not equate to taking resources away from other areas with needs. We believe CPS resources should be utilized to benefit all CPS students, without pitting neighborhoods and families against each other.

## Are there better alternative building sites in the area?

Sixteen different sites were studied using a wide range of criteria, including environmental concerns, air quality, traffic, existing infrastructure, projected commute times, and building timelines. 24th & State is centrally located with public transportation access and existing resources including the CPS soccer field with a track and Park District baseball field.

