

Chicago parents ask you to vote YES on HB 363

Why do we need an independent task force to improve the CPS school closing process?

The Chicago Public Schools facilities planning process has been *broken* for years.

- Two years ago, Rep. Cynthia Soto proposed legislation to call for a timeout on CPS school closings until CPS created a more responsible policy. Rep. Soto pulled that bill after CPS promised to rewrite its school closings policy to include a more open process, better communication with the public, and more consideration for public input, and to report annually on the effects of school closings, consolidations and phase-outs on children. ***CPS has broken all of those promises.***
- As a consequence, thousands of children have been ***displaced*** from their neighborhood schools, hundreds of experienced, qualified teachers have been ***fired***, and some communities no longer have a nearby neighborhood school. Instead, parents ***have to apply*** to a mixed bag of privately managed schools in order to access a public education for their children.
- An ***unfair share*** of resources are given to the replacement, so-called Renaissance 2010 schools: A 2007 Catalyst analysis showed that “Nearly \$50 million of \$265 million in renovations now underway are being done in Renaissance and charter schools, according to April reports from area offices. That’s about 19 percent of renovations taking place in buildings that house just 4 percent of students.”

The new schools have not been worth the *cost or disruption to children.*

CPS claims that they are doing all of this for the children, that they are saving the children from spending one more minute in a bad school. If that were actually true, then maybe the bad process they are using wouldn't matter that much. CPS promised “dramatically better” schools. But research shows that **the new schools are performing no better than the supposedly “failing” schools they replaced.**

- In 2008, the Rand Corporation found that Chicago charters perform about as well as traditional schools. This year, SRI International found that students in Renaissance 2010 schools are “performing at ***statistically similar levels*** to their matched peers from their former schools.”
- Charter advocates are now bragging that 50% of their schools made adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act last year, which is better than CPS's numbers. But that means that ***50% of CPS charters did NOT make adequate yearly progress.*** Yet they serve fewer low-income, special education, and limited English speaking children than traditional schools. Shouldn't they be a lot better?
- So why is CPS spending scarce school funds on expensive start-ups? Why are they firing experienced teachers when the cost of replacing teachers already costs CPS as much as \$86 million per year? Why are they disrupting stable school communities? And why are they moving children around like chess pieces when research shows that ***children lose significant academic progress when they are moved?***

CPS has lost the public's trust – with your help, HB 363 will rebuild it

CPS keeps saying, “trust us!” and “we're improving.” But the fact is that CPS failed to keep the promises it made two years ago to be more careful and accountable. HB 363 will ***rebuild trust*** in the way capital and facilities decisions are made in CPS. HB 363 will set up an ***independent panel*** to prepare a process for school closings that is responsible, fair, cost-effective, and in the best interests of children, families, communities, and our city.

Find more information including references to the research referred to above on our website.

Parents United for Responsible Education

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