What is a NAC?
CPS created Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NACs) in 2013 to provide our parents and community members with an opportunity to review and provide feedback on proposals for new charter and contract schools in their respective communities. NAC members serve as liaisons between CPS and their communities.

What is the role of a NAC member?
NAC members participate in a rigorous, four-month review process and inform CPS as to whether it supports the proposed school opening in its community.

As part of the review process, NAC members are required to:
- Attend an orientation, professional development training sessions, application review sessions, community forums, and a retreat to evaluate the new charter and contract school proposals;
- Solicit input from the broader community to gain a better understanding of the community’s preferences and concerns regarding new proposed schools; and
- Work with community partners to disseminate information on the work of the NAC

Who can join a NAC and what is the process for joining?
We encourage all parents, guardians, community members and political representatives who have an interest in school choices in their communities to volunteer their time by serving on NAC. If a community member would like to learn more about what is required of a NAC member, he or she can contact the Office of Innovation and Incubation, or visit the NAC website.

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NAC Website - http://cps.edu/NewSchools/Pages/NAC2014.aspx

What are the requirements to serve on a NAC?
- Live, or have a demonstrated vested interest, in the community in which the school is being proposed;
- Complete a brief NAC Interest form; and
- Attend a mandatory orientation training session
- Minimum time commitment of 10 hours a month to attend NAC meetings and to host one community forum.

In what communities will NACs be located?
NACs will be sorted into four regions, North Side, West Side, South East, and South West. NACs in these four regions will review up to 7 proposals representing 12 campuses.
Has CPS made any changes since the inaugural NAC process in 2013?
Based on feedback garnered through the 2013 process, CPS has contracted the help of non-biased facilitators to ensure that the District does not influence, or doesn’t have the appearance of influencing, the NAC community engagement process. The District issued a CPOR earlier this year and has contracted with 2 vendors to provide these services.

In addition, in this year’s process, each proposal will be reviewed by a NAC, all logistical details will be provided ahead of time, the work obligation for each NAC member will be reduced, and all questions will be responded to in a timely manner.

What is the role of the independent facilitators?
The role of the independent facilitator is to manage all NAC meetings to ensure that the NAC evaluates each proposal according to the provided rubric, and informs the CEO related to whether it can support the proposed school opening in its community.

What are the criteria NAC members are required to review in the proposals?
NACs review whether an applicant has:
- Engaged the community and demonstrated its support
- Has a true understanding of the community needs and has proposed a school model to meet those needs
- A well-established educational plan
- Organizational capacity
- Developed a sound financial plan

What is the structure of the monthly/weekly NAC meeting?
An independent facilitator will oversee all NAC meetings to ensure that the NAC evaluates each proposal according to the provided rubric, and informs the CEO related to whether it can support the proposed school opening in its community.

How do NACs convey the community voice?
NACs are essential partners in making sure that proposed schools build off the assets present in neighborhoods. Members serve as liaisons between CPS and their communities. Before recommendations are brought forth to CPS, each NAC will host a community forum to review each proposal and to collect community feedback. At forums, the NAC will present their initial review. Attendees can then pose questions to both sides. Forums are then followed by a public hearing, where attendees have an opportunity to submit comment for public record.

NACs are provided a rubric where they rate proposals as “meets” or “does not meet standards” on each standard. They then develop a consensus-based recommendation for CPS, related to whether they can support the proposed school opening in its community.

For existing Chicago operators, NAC members will have the option of attending a half-day tour at an existing school. Because this event occurs during business hours, attendance is not mandatory but is highly encouraged. The facilitator and school operator will lead the tour.
**How do NACs reach consensus?**
NAC members must not have missed more than 3 meetings to be eligible to vote. 2/3 consensus is required to rate each section as “meets” or “does not meet.” A greater than 50% consensus is required to inform the CEO and CPS Board related to whether the NAC can support the proposed school opening in its community.

**What if a NAC does not approve any of the proposals?**
If a NAC does not like any of the existing proposals submitted for their community, during the 2014 RFP process, they will have an opportunity to provide that position to CPS and the Board.

NACs are still encouraged to carefully review all of the proposal components before settling on a final position. NACs can also work with national and local school operators to bring desired schools to their community who will have the opportunity to participate in next year’s process.

**How are recommendations brought forth to the Board?**
All NAC members will be trained on how to evaluate proposals received for their respective communities. They have the unique opportunity to prepare a written report that will be considered by the CEO and the Board of Education as part of the review process.

**How will CPS solicit community feedback from the other two RFPs that were launched in December 2014—the options schools RFP and the Age Cycle 15 RFP?**
All applicants in the 2014 New Schools RFP process were asked to submit evidence of how the design team notified parents and community members of the development proposal; explain how they involved parents and community members in the process and solicited feedback; demonstrate evidence of support from parents and community members and local organizations and layout any proposed community partnerships.

More specifically for the Options Schools RFP, CPS will hold a Community forum, and community public hearing similar to that with the NACs. In addition, CPS will hold a public hearing for the Age Cycle 15 RFP.