Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) Orientation & Training

Evaluating New School Proposals for Chicago Communities

October 19, 2013
Today’s Agenda

- 8:30am – 9:00am  Registration and Breakfast
- 9:00am – 10:00am Welcome and Vision Setting
- 10:00am – 10:40am Workshop 1 (Economic Soundness)
- 10:40am – 11:20am Workshop 2 (Academic Capacity)
- 11:30am – 12:10pm Workshop 3 (Operational Capacity)
- 12:10pm – 12:40pm Lunch
- 12:50pm – 1:30pm Workshop 4 (Parent Engagement)
- 1:30pm – 2:10pm Workshop 5 (NAC Roles & Responsibilities)
- 2:10pm – 2:30pm Closing
Grounding Ourselves In The Work
Today, we will provide an overview of the following topics:

1. Chicago Board of Education’s Role as Authorizer
2. Guiding Principles of the 2013 New Schools Request for Proposal (RFP) process
3. RFP and Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) Processes
4. Roles & Responsibilities for NAC Members
5. NAC Norms/Code of Conduct
6. NAC Expectations and Desired Outcome(s)
7. Next Steps re the RFP/NAC processes
As the authorizer, Chicago’s Board of Education (BOE) is legally obligated to accept charter school applications (annually) and to vote on proposals within 75 days of submission – 105 ILCS 5/27A-8

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RFP is one of several district strategies for increasing access to quality educational options for students and families in the city of Chicago.

The 2013 RFP requires each applicant to involve and engage parents and communities in an authentic way during the proposal development and evaluation process.

Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NAC) are the core mechanism for our grassroots parent and community engagement.

Moving forward, the NAC members must be committed to reviewing proposal materials and openly engaging with operators on behalf of their communities.
The ONS has developed and will continue to conduct a transparent new school evaluation process that authorizes and replicates only high performing schools.

To achieve this goal, we will follow four guiding principles:

1. Set clear guidelines and criteria for opening or replicating high-quality school models

2. Grant new schools only to applicants who meet all evaluation standards and can demonstrate a proven track record of success in increasing student outcomes

3. Engage parents and communities in a meaningful and authentic way

4. Open new schools in geographic priority areas/communities where additional capacity is required to help alleviate overcrowding
The 2013 RFP will solicit proposals from applicants wishing to open a new school or replicate an existing school under the following model:

**Charter Schools (New or Replicator)**

- Governed by Charter Board
- Managed independently, and authorized by BOE under Charter Law
- Operated under five-year contractual agreement
- Per pupil funding consistent with SBB formula
- Teacher certification % must adhere to Charter Law
We are committed to increasing the number of quality options offered to Chicago students by opening schools that help address programmatic gaps.

The 2013 RFP will consider the following to be programmatic priorities:

1. Next Generation School Models
2. Arts-integration
3. Dual-language
4. Humanities (e.g., Classical Schools)
Parents and communities are **essential partners** in developing new schools in the city of Chicago.

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in partnership with New Schools for Chicago (NSC), is facilitating the formation and training of NAC in identified priority communities.

NAC members serve as liaisons between CPS, their communities, and the applicants to ensure that new school proposals offer high quality educational options.

While the primary role of the NACs is an advisory function, NACs are critical in reporting to CPS on the match between a proposed new school and the needs and preferences of the community.
The 2013 RFP highly encouraged applicants to submit proposals to open new schools in overcrowded communities that need additional capacity.

### Overcrowded Communities
- Albany Park/Irving Park
- Ashburn
- Belmont Cragin (North of Grand Ave.)
- Chicago Lawn (West of Kedzie Ave.)
- McKinley Park
- Midway
- Little Village/Pilsen
- Reed - Dunning
- Sauganash (Forest Glen)
Clear Guidelines & Criteria: Priority Communities

These communities are primarily on the Northwest and Southwest sides of the city.
RFP & NAC Overview
The RFP requires applicants to submit plans that address four primary aspects of opening and managing a new high-quality school:

**Community Engagement**
- Plan for engaging the community in the development of the proposal
- Evidence of building partnerships necessary for the school’s success
- Description of need for the school
- Evidence of community support and demand

**Academic Capacity**
- Mission, vision and culture
- College Readiness
- Social emotional supports
- Behavior and Safety
- Parent Involvement
- Proven track record in driving academic success
- Academic goals and assessment plan
- Curriculum and instruction
- Talent management

**Operational Capacity**
- Demonstrated track record in achieving operational excellence
- Student recruitment
- General operations
- Governance model
- ADA Compliance
- Education management organizations

**Economic Soundness**
- School budget
- Financial controls
- Facilities

Throughout the evaluation process, NACs will seek to determine whether the applicant has:

- Engaged the community and demonstrated its support
- A well-established educational plan
- Established organizational capacity
- Developed a sound financial plan
The 2013 RFP asks applicants to demonstrate a proven track record of success of improving student outcomes. The track record of success criteria is as follows:

- **New operators** are assessed on the individual track records of their Design Team members and/or founding Board members with academic expertise, as well as their proposed instructional leader(s) (if applicable). (p. 18 of the RFP)

- **Existing Chicago operators** must meet replication criteria that include both historical data and academic performance components. (pp. 16-18 of the RFP)

- **Existing national operators** must demonstrate a track record of driving academic gains with similar student populations on metrics aligned with the recently approved School Quality Rating Policy. (pp. 9-11 of the RFP’s corresponding Answer Manual)
The 2013 RFP asks applicants to submit proposals in two “Tiers”

| Tier One: (Tier 1 Proposals Due Sept. 30) | Applicants submitted responses to all major sections (Community Engagement, Academic Capacity, Operational Capacity and Economic Soundness) of the RFP. CPS internal and external expert evaluators will also conduct capacity interviews and seek more in-depth responses to questions from Tier 1 of the RFP. |
| Tier Two: (Tier 2 Proposals Due Dec. 3) | Applicants will be required to provide further evidence of parental involvement and community support as well as key operational updates. Submission of Tier 2 will allow applicants additional time to engage key stakeholders. Proposals are considered “final” and “complete” in accordance with the Illinois Charter Schools Law upon submission of the Tier 2 proposal. |

The NACs will be required to evaluate both the Tier 1 and 2 proposals prior to developing a recommendation that will advise CPS on the fit between the proposed operator and the community.
## 2013 RFP Overview: Timeline

<table>
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<tr>
<th>AUG</th>
<th>SEP</th>
<th>OCT</th>
<th>NOV</th>
<th>DEC</th>
<th>JAN</th>
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<tr>
<td>8/12 – Release RFP</td>
<td>8/19 – Host webinar for applicants</td>
<td>9/30 – Tier One of proposals due</td>
<td>Mid-Oct – CPS Capacity Interviews</td>
<td>Mid-Nov – CPS Releases Tier Two questions</td>
<td>12/3 – Tier Two responses due</td>
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<td>Indicates major milestone</td>
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<td>Mid-Dec – Final CPS Comprehensive Evaluation Team Meeting</td>
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<td>End of Dec/Early Jan - Final recs shared with Board Members</td>
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<td>1/6 – Public Hearing</td>
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<td>1/22 - Board vote</td>
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Dates are subject to minor modifications.
What Is a NAC

- NACs are a central component of parent and community engagement in the 2013 RFP to open new schools in priority communities.

Role of a NAC Member

- To review proposals for its community – including by soliciting input from the broader community – and to develop recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer on which proposal best meets the needs and preferences of the community.

Responsibilities

- Organize and conduct elections for NAC officers
- Work with community partners, parents, and school staff to disseminate information on the work of the NAC and solicit input from stakeholders
- Attend an orientation, professional development planning meetings, community forums, and a two-day retreat to analyze and synthesize individual notes, expert reviews, and community feedback
- Develop a recommendation
The following individuals may serve as NAC members:

1. **Families/Parents** - Includes, in addition to a natural parent, a legal guardian or other person who acts as the primary caregiver with whom the child resides (such as a grandparent or step-parent, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare)

2. **Community Members** - Individuals who have an interest in the educational options available in the community

3. **Political Representatives** – Includes aldermen, Chicago Teacher’s Union staff, Local School Councils (LSC) and state representatives who represent the community
Since September 2013, CPS staff has been actively recruiting key stakeholders to serve on NACs in the priority communities listed in the 2013 RFP. CPS has conducted outreach through a variety of mediums including: email, Facebook, Twitter, CPS robocall, flyering, and contacting community-based and faith-based organizations.

To date, ONS received 62 applications to serve on a NAC. Listed below is a composition breakdown of the NAC applications received.

- 36 Parents
- 1 CTU Member
- 5 LSC members (4 are also parents)
- 2 Elected official reps
- 1 Business Owner
- 4 CBO/FBO reps
- 5 Educators
- 8 Community Residents
Four NACs will be formed in priority communities where CPS received proposals to open new schools. NACs and proposed applicants are listed below:

**Ashburn:** TBD

**Chicago Lawn:**
- Curtis-Sharif STEM Academy Charter School (K-8), Arts-Integration
- STEAM Academy (K-8), Humanities-Focused
- Concept Schools (K-12), Next Generation

**McKinley Park:**
- Be the Change (K-8), Humanities-Focused

**Northwest Side:**
- Intrinsic Schools (7-12)
- Noble Street (9-12), Northwest Side (Belmont Cragin)
In order for NACs to be successful, every individual participating in the process must agree to the following:

1. Remain objective; base findings on evidence, not personal opinion.
2. Be transparent and keep your thoughts and perceptions toward school type/governance structure out of the NAC process.
3. Be prepared to ask questions to establish whether a view is based on opinion or evidence.
4. Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
5. Bring an open mind to NAC planning meetings to ensure a fair review.
6. Refrain from introducing “hearsay” as evidence.
7. Evaluate proposals according to the evaluation criteria.
8. Ensure evaluation ratings are fully supported by evidence and defensible.
2013 NAC Overview: NAC Norms/Code of Conduct

• Carry out work with integrity.
• Focus on the content of the application.
• Be firm and persistent, but be respectful.
• Treat all those on the team with courtesy and sensitivity.
• Demonstrate mutual respect and valuing opinions.
• Focus attention and questions on topics that will reveal how well the school has met expectations.

Most importantly, we must maintain a level of confidentiality.
Evaluation Process Protocol
A new school approval should not come as a result of an application review that feels right.

A new school approval should come as a result of an application review that evidences the multiple ways the applicant has satisfied the criteria required in the RFP.

Our job is to prepare you for the latter.
When evaluating new school proposals, NACs will refer to specific evaluation criteria identified within the 2013 RFP that are aligned with the requirements of the Illinois Charter School Law.

For each evaluation criterion, the NAC will determine whether the proposal response meets or does not meet the evaluation criterion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meets the Standard</th>
<th>Does Not Meet the Standard</th>
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<td>The response:</td>
<td>The response:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and demonstrates the design team's <strong>capacity</strong> to implement their plan.</td>
<td>• Demonstrates that the design team <strong>does not possess capacity</strong> to implement their plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Addresses the topic with <strong>specific</strong> and <strong>accurate</strong> information</td>
<td>• Is significantly <strong>incomplete</strong>, <strong>lacks meaningful detail</strong> or otherwise raises significant <strong>concerns</strong> about the viability of the plan or the applicant’s ability to carry it out.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Aligns</strong> with the mission and goals of the school, and</td>
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<td>• Presents a clear, <strong>realistic picture</strong> of how the school expects to operate.</td>
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Application Review Preparation

Possible Questions for Analysis:

- Does the application provide **complete responses** to evaluation criteria?

- Are the applicant’s intentions **clear and specific** rather than obscured by meaningless jargon?

- Are activities outlined in different sections of the application **consistent with each other**?

- Are described activities **consistent with current, accepted knowledge and ideas** in the field?
During the next several months, NAC members will evaluate proposals for applicants proposing new schools within their community, and compile a recommendation to CPS.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Dates in NAC Process*</th>
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<tr>
<td>NAC Week 1 Meeting: Orientation and Training for all communities in centralized location</td>
<td>October 19</td>
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<td>Weekly NAC Training Sessions</td>
<td>Oct. 21 – Nov. 22</td>
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<td>NACs: Meet with operators (Location at CPS)</td>
<td>November 25</td>
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<td>Tier 2 proposals due</td>
<td>December 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAC Final Proposal Review (including review of Tier 2 Questions) and Retreat (Location TBD)</td>
<td>December 7-8</td>
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<td>NACs host community forums</td>
<td>December 9-13</td>
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<td>NACs prepare and deliver final recommendations</td>
<td>December 16</td>
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<td>CPS hosts Community Meeting at 125 S. Clark</td>
<td>December 18</td>
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<td>Public hearing</td>
<td>January 6, 2014</td>
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<td>Board votes on new school authorization</td>
<td>January 22, 2014</td>
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*Dates are subject to changes.
2013 NAC Overview: Expectations and Desired Outcome

Expectations:
- Each NAC will:
  - Review proposal materials against the evaluation criteria
  - Ask applicants probing questions in a face-to-face meeting
  - Rate proposals as “meets” or “does not meet standards” on each criterion
  - Hold a community forum to receive broader community feedback on the proposal
  - Develop a recommendation for CPS that is rooted in the evaluation criteria

Desired Outcomes:
- Neighborhood Advisory Council members become ambassadors of the process in their communities.
- The NAC process becomes a Chicago norm as it relates to authentically engaging the community in the new development of new schools.
Charter Facts
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- ONS receives proposal
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- Charters authorized by the State Commission
  - Count toward the district’s charter cap
  - Act as their own Local Education Agency
  - Are not accountable to CPS performance policy
Charter schools are tuition-free public schools within Chicago Public Schools that are generally governed by a 501(c)3 non-profit board of directors.

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<td><strong>Incorporation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Governance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Student Enrollment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Special Education</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Illinois Teacher Certification</strong></td>
<td>In the first year of operation, 50% of teachers must be certified; by the fourth year of operation, 75% of teachers must be certified; all special needs teachers must be certified</td>
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<td><strong>NCLB Compliance</strong></td>
<td>If Title I funding will be used, teachers in Title I schools are required to meet NCLB standards</td>
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<td><strong>Principal Requirements</strong></td>
<td>No legal requirements for principal certification; however the Charter School Board or sub-contracted management organization must approve the hiring of any principal candidates</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policies for Student Conduct</strong></td>
<td>Policies must comply with Illinois Charter Schools Law and other applicable laws</td>
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<td><strong>School Calendar and Schedule</strong></td>
<td>Must meet applicable Illinois State minimums</td>
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<td><strong>Teacher Pension Fund</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Principals, Teachers and Staff</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Employee Compensation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Chicago Teachers Union</strong></td>
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Questions?
Develop and execute a process that allows parents/community members to have an active voice in the development of new schools.

Ensure that each NAC remains focused on the key objective (e.g., evaluating each school proposal with a level of integrity required.)

Host at least two community meetings to share information with parents, students, and community members about the new school proposals, and to get feedback from those stakeholders.

Working with community partners, parents, and school staff to disseminate information on the work of the NAC and solicit input from stakeholders.

Attending an orientation, four professional development sessions, and a two-day retreat.