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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **CPS Releases Three RFPs for Schools and Programs, Including State-Mandated Annual RFP For Charter Schools**

*Charter RFP Requires Potential Operators to Demonstrate Community Support and Demand; First-Ever Middle Grades and Early High School Intervention RFP Released*

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) today issued three Requests for Proposals (RFP) for potential charter and contract schools and alternative programs and schools to open in the fall of 2016.

The RFPs include the annual request for new schools that is mandated by Illinois Charter School Law, along with requests for options schools and the first-ever middle grades and early high school intervention programs.

“Providing every child in Chicago with high-quality school options is essential to our mission of ensuring every student is prepared for college, career and life,” said CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett. “We will work with community members to identify proposals that offer high-quality schools for all students, as well as schools dedicated to providing struggling students with educational and social-emotional supports in a nurturing environment to encourage graduation.”

The annual RFP process allows the District to conduct a streamlined and strategic process for evaluating the expansion of academic options in partnership with the Chicago Board of Education.

As part of the New Schools RFP, CPS will again form Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NAC) in communities where CPS receives proposals to open new schools.

NACs will review proposals for new schools in their communities and provide a recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer and Chicago Board of Education. CPS encourages parents and community members to volunteer to participate in a local NAC and contribute their perspective and expertise to the proposal review process.

NAC members will have the opportunity to review proposals, interact with the applicants, engage the broader community in the review process, and make a recommendation. For more information on the NAC community engagement process and instructions for submitting an interest form to join a NAC, please visit [cps.edu/2014NAC](http://cps.edu/2014NAC).

As part of the Education Options Request for Proposal (RFP), applicants will be required to offer a community forum that will be hosted within the communities they plan to serve.

To serve the specific educational needs of more than 10,000 CPS middle grade students and freshman, CPS is releasing its inaugural Middle Grades and High School Early Intervention RFP. This RFP seeks to establish Alternative Learning Opportunity Programs (ALOP) to help struggling students graduate high school.

The programs will serve students who are not accessing or responding to the additional intervention and support offered in their current school and would benefit from more intensive supports that are fully integrated into the school design and offered to all students.

CPS encourages administrators, national education management organizations and nonprofit organizations with strong records of accelerating academic outcomes for similar student populations to respond. CPS anticipates that each site will serve up to 250 students for the Middle Grades program and up to 400 students for the High School program.

The RFP seeks experts with experience serving middle grades students at risk of not completing high school based on several key indicators of academic outcomes (grades, attendance, promotion history) and school engagement (attendance, enrollment status) while in middle school. Based on 2013-14 end-of-school-year data, there are 8,948 middle grades students who would benefit from an intensive intervention program to help prepare them for success in high school.

The RFP will also seek providers who are familiar with educating students who are aging out of elementary school at 15 years of age but not yet prepared for the demands of high school without intentional and intensive support. An estimated 1,986 of these students will not meet 8th grade promotion criteria and will enter high school with a significantly greater risk of being off-track or dropping out of high school.

New school and program operators will have almost a year to incubate and prepare for school opening, ensuring they are ready to provide rigorous, well-rounded instruction for students in a safe and secure environment on day one.

CPS families will also benefit from this timeline, as it better aligns with CPS' existing application and enrollment processes, helping ensure that families can consider all school options for the fall of 2016.

Chicago Public Schools serves 396,000 students in 664 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school district.

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