



Support HB5721: Improve CPS Long-Term Facilities Planning

CPS continues to make decisions about opening and closing schools without adhering to a long-term facilities plan or engaging with communities. This bill requires public input and more transparency for capital spending. It reduces the need for school actions through increased supports for under enrolled schools. And it provides additional assistance to students and school communities subjected to school actions.

Why is this legislation important?

- **Accountability:** Under current school code CPS is expected to create and implement a 10-year facilities plan. They have failed to do so. Instead, the capital improvement process is not transparent, lacks community input, and drives inefficient and disruptive school closings in response to under-enrollment.
- **Public Participation:** HB5721 requires robust public input so that those most impacted can influence policy and fiscal decisions.
- **Student Impact:** HB5721 supports academic success by requiring the district to support under-enrolled schools by prioritizing steps that avoid disruptive transitions over closings.

What does the bill specify?

- **Inclusion of all school types:** Adds charter and turnaround schools to the list of schools included in requirements for school closures or mergers.
- **Planning Requirements:** Requires the 10-year master plan to include space sensitive programs (eg. special, early childhood, career, and technical education). Requires the district to provide data on enrollment and demographics with a timeline to address critical facility needs.
- **Planning Input:** In addition to students, staff, and parents, requires inclusion of Community Action Councils, Local School Councils (LSCs), the Chicago Teachers Union, and the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association.
- **Public Participation:** A draft master plan must be presented to LSCs and to the public in regional hearings. A record of both the public input and the process used to gather it must be included in the draft report.
- **Ongoing Transparency:** Requires yearly regional capital budget hearings describing that year's projects along with the 5-year budget and master facilities plan.
- **Support for Under-enrolled Schools:** Based on data from the master plan, the district must, for all under-enrolled schools:
 - a. Create an RFP for joint use of a school with an intergovernmental rental or other outside entity rental.
 - b. Cease plans for any school expansion, including charters, that may negatively impact enrollment at the under-enrolled school.
 - c. Redo attendance boundaries to maximize enrollment of additional students.
 - d. Work with under-enrolled schools to increase enrollment and lower costs through joint use agreements.
- **Transition Support and Review:** Requires annual review by the LSC of an affected school in the event of a school closure or merger. Adds the following to existing transition plan requirements:
 - a. The departments responsible for oversight of the transition;
 - b. Five years of financial support for receiving schools to implement plans;
 - c. Tracking of each affected student and a report that details where students are enrolled.