



GET TO KNOW NTA

NATIONAL TEACHERS ACADEMY • 55 W. CERMAK ROAD • 773-534-9970

NATIONAL TEACHERS ACADEMY is a **public, neighborhood, Level 1+, Title I, preK-8** school that opened in 2002. We are also the home of a **Regional Gifted Center** (currently K-5, adding a grade a year as the RGC phases out of South Loop Elementary). Our thriving community is eager to participate in a productive discussion about education in the South Loop/Near South Side.

WHAT WE WANT

To keep NTA's current attendance boundaries, and for CPS to engage all parties equally in creating a comprehensive, equitable plan for K-12 education in our area.

'BUT I'VE HEARD ...' NTA MYTHS VS. FACTS

MYTH: NTA is an AUSL turnaround school (or a charter school).

FACT: NTA is an AUSL teacher-training academy, where CPS master teachers train newer teachers. The teacher-trainee situation sometimes results in classrooms with one master teacher and at least one trainee.

MYTH: NTA lacks the programming families want for their kids.

FACT: All NTA children take Spanish, drama, music, gym, art, and swimming. The curriculum is further enriched through partnerships with Hubbard Street Dance, Sit Stay Read, and Purple Asparagus. After-school, paid programming includes chess, Spanish, martial arts, and theater. Our athletes participate in fast-pitch baseball and tackle football (girls play both; we have a girl on each team), track, cross-country, basketball for girls and boys, girls' volleyball, and boys' wrestling.

MYTH: NTA houses two schools within one school, and the neighborhood program and RGC program are separated.

FACT: All NTA children do activities together by grade level: lunch, recess, school performances, field trips, etc. At NTA, all students are part of a wider community.

MYTH: NTA's test scores might be improving, but the RGC scores artificially inflate the scores for the rest of the school.

FACT: PARCC testing only begins in 3rd grade. The RGC goes up to 5th grade. Higher grades, with their improving scores, are made up entirely of neighborhood children.

MYTH: If attendance boundaries remain as-is, NTA students will be denied the opportunity to attend a brand-new school.

FACT: NTA families are happy at NTA, and want to avoid disrupting their children's education by sending them to a "brand-new" school.

MYTH: The new SLES could absorb all of NTA's children.

FACT: Not for long. The new SLES has a planned capacity of 2,000, split over three campuses. It would be the largest elementary school in CPS. In 2016, 768 were enrolled at SLES. 684 students were enrolled at NTA, for a total of 1,452. Given the pace of development in the South Loop, it is likely to need two elementary schools. Closing one of them now would be a big mistake.

MYTH: With its newer building and location, NTA would make a great high school for South Loop, Chinatown, and Bridgeport.

FACT: NTA has a program capacity of 840. It is simply not large enough to house the students from this wide area.

MYTH: The South Loop needs a high school, and retrofitting all NTA's classrooms and fixtures for older kids is the only option.

FACT: South Loop has a high school. It is Phillips Academy, at 244 E. Pershing Road (down the street from the Bronzeville Mariano's). It is vastly underutilized and has ample space for SLES and NTA students who choose not to pursue selective enrollment options. Alternative ideas for building a new high school include constructing a school on the developing land at Riverline, the Related Midwest riverfront acreage between Chinatown and Roosevelt, or the Michael Reese site. Maybe there could be a new campaign to persuade Jones College Prep to open more spaces for neighborhood kids. This is just a start; there are many options to explore that don't involve eradicating a successful elementary school and a thriving community.

Want more info? The best way to learn about NTA is to see us in person! Please call to schedule a tour or ask about an upcoming open house. We look forward to meeting you!