

\*\* Alderman \*\*  
**Michele Smith**  
Chicago's 43rd Ward



## New Addition to Lincoln Elementary To Be Built on Current School Site

Dear Friends,

The overcrowding at Lincoln Elementary has been a serious concern for our community for many years. **I am proud and happy to share with you that Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today that we have received funding for a new addition to Abraham Lincoln Elementary School.** This addition will not only eliminate the current overcrowding at the school but will also anticipate the growing needs of our community.

The new addition **will be built on the site of the current Lincoln Elementary School.** It will accommodate approximately 500 additional children and **keep all grades at Lincoln Elementary under one roof**, unified. The additional space will allow Lincoln Elementary to offer planned pre-K programming, full day kindergarten and to provide adequate facilities for its full range of educational programming. **The current building will also receive significant upgrades.** The entire community will benefit from this addition as well, as the design anticipates space for community use when school is not in session.

CPS has provided [conceptual plans](#) which you can view on our website. However, these plans are subject to change as we review them further and receive input from parents. Some key parts of the plan:

- The addition is on the current site, allowing all grades to be in one building;
- A new ground level playground will be built;
- A new open-air play level will be built on the roof, with plenty of space for soccer and basketball. Best-practices designs such as those incorporated at the British School and Catherine Cook School will be incorporated;
- Nineteen new classrooms will be built, allowing for the full educational program of Lincoln Elementary to thrive, including the IG (International Gifted) program, EFAC (Ecole Franco-Americaine de Chicago), ESL

(English as a Second Language) and band;

- A new lunchroom/multipurpose room will be built in the annex, providing modern space for dining and flexibility to use the space for gym, recess, and other activities for younger students;
- Electrical upgrades to the existing 1874-era building will allow for window AC units to be installed;
- The entire school will be ADA-compliant with the installation of an elevator that can stop at all of the many levels of the old school.

This dream could not have come true without the passionate commitment of Lincoln Elementary parents and community members. Over 1,300 Lincoln parents and community members wrote, called, e-mailed, met, and testified in support of expanding Lincoln Elementary. The Lincoln Local School Council engaged in a rigorous analysis of the various options to handle the overcrowding which guided our decision-making. Ward residents contacted our office with a variety of solutions. The enormous amount of input that we received is what allowed us to make an informed decision and vet all of our options accurately before arriving at this solution.

I want to thank Mayor Emanuel, Chicago Public Schools CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett, and all the elected officials who listened to our community over the past two years, and who helped us to find the money from other existing state revenues that resulted in several schools receiving funding. Thank you as well to DePaul University, who offered space in their new College of Education Building to help ease the overcrowding this year.

**This is a victory for all the children in Lincoln Park and Old Town.** Our schools are the foundation of our neighborhood and the reason why people choose to live here. The new addition to Lincoln Elementary ensures that it will remain, along with elementary schools Alcott, Oscar Mayer, Newberry, and LaSalle, and Lincoln Park High School, a place where children receive a top-notch public education right in their own neighborhood.

### **What's Next?**

Look forward to **further planning meetings** as we finalize plans for the school. CPS tells us that we can count on having the addition ready for school opening in Fall, 2015 - just one full school year away. In the meantime, we'll be continuing our work to **find a temporary solution** to the overcrowding for one more year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Michele".

Michele Smith  
43rd Ward Alderman

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Alderman Michele Smith | Alderman Michele Smith | 2523 N. Halsted | Chicago | IL | 60614