

About the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference Schools Committee

The mission of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference Schools Committee is to provide community support for the schools and a place where Local School Council members can meet to share information.

The Schools Committee

- Supports our Local School Councils
- Encourages community involvement in our schools
- Organizes forums and events on education issues that matter to the community.
- Provides a variety of resources for schools and families on our web site, www.hydepark.org, including HPKCC Youth Programs Database in www.hydepark.org/schools.

Join us!

We welcome new members. If you are interested in our schools, come give us a try! The Schools Committee meets monthly at the United Church of Hyde Park.

For more information, please contact us at hpkcc@aol.com.
or call Schools Committee Chairman Nancy Baum, 773 288-5464.

More about the Schools Committee - What we do and provide

Community involvement and Local School Council support

- LSC Recognition Ceremony. Prior to each LSC election in April of even years, we host an LSC Recognition Ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of the many volunteers who serve on HPK local school councils and to encourage more of our neighbors to run for their LSC. Our ceremonies and dinners feature speakers on a topic of importance to schools and LSCs and a chance to share stories.
- LSC Chair-Principal Networking Dinner. In the fall after an LSC election, we host an LSC Chair-Principal Networking Dinner.
- Audit LSC meetings. Members of the Schools Committee volunteer to attend LSC meetings at each of our schools to increase communication and share information.
- LSC training. We host occasional LSC training sessions in our community.
- Community issue-awareness. We have helped raise community awareness about issues of concern to LSC's and parents including the Chicago Public Schools' Renaissance 2010 Plan and the threat to LSC principal selection power.

Educational forums and events

- We presented a "State of the Schools" forum in 2005, bringing together CPS Area Officers, local principals and LSC members to share their good news and challenges with each other and the community.
- We convened several meetings about after school programs to provide information and encouragement for service providers and schools to increase programs for our students. The outcome was an afterschool programs database.
- Several of the above programs put schools and LSCs in touch with sources of financial, material and other resources.

Internet resources

- We created a database of after school and other extracurricular and enrichment activities available in our community, which is now available on the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference website, www.hydepark.org. This guide to programs with basic description and contacts, HPKCC Youth Programs Database, can be read and printed directly at www.hydepark.org/schools.
- Our site links to local school web sites including the Illinois Interactive Report Card, which provides school achievement data over time. Our web site pages include school informational directories, Local School Council information and directories, parent resources, and news of schools, with links, and can be accessed from the Schools Committee home page, www.hydepark.org/education/schools.html.

Schools Committee background

The Schools Committee of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference has a long and illustrious history and citywide reputation in the era before elected school councils. Revitalized in 2004 by then-Chair Homer Ashby and carried forward by Chairperson Nancy Baum, the committee monitors developments and progress in our neighborhood's schools, shares information about schools and educational resources and issues (including through the website), seeks collaborations with agencies and local groups, and most of all seeks to foster a conversation about the direction of our schools. A major focus is promoting, growing and helping Local School Councils.

What are Local School Councils (LSCs)?

Local School Councils (LSCs) are elected bodies at nearly every Chicago Public Schools (CPS) elementary, middle and high school. The LSC has 6 parents, 2 community members who are not parents of students at the school, 2 teachers, the principal, and, in high schools, a student member. The parents and community members are elected by the parents and community residents around the school. Teachers are selected by the school staff. These members serve for a two-year term. High school student members serve for one year. By law, the LSC chairperson must be a parent representative.

The LSC's major responsibilities are to approve the school budget and annual strategic plan (called the school improvement plan), to evaluate the principal every year and to decide every four years if the want to renew the principal's contract or hire a new principal. This is the strongest site-management system in the nation. (from www.pureparents.org)

More at the Schools Committee homepage, www.hydepark.org/education/schools.html.