

# *Press Release...*

*...from State Representative La Shawn K. Ford*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 23, 2013

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford

Phone: 773-378-5902

## **Ford Visits CPS Schools Scheduled to Close**

**CHICAGO** – State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago today plans to visit Chicago Public Schools scheduled to close, after the Chicago Board of Education voted to close 49 elementary schools and one high school yesterday, and Ford issues the following statement:

“I am disappointed to find that the cries of our communities have fallen on deaf ears. All students deserve equal access to quality education; these closings take us further from our achievement goals, and disproportionately impact African-American and minority communities. By closing 50 schools, we are also putting our children at risk when their route to school is extended across busy streets and through rival gang boundaries. The aim of the visits to the schools today is to gain additional input from families on the transitions and determine how I can be of most help.

“Although we face many challenges with the closing of our local schools, we cannot let this decision slow our efforts to improve our education system. I will continue to push House Resolution 253 to urge the Illinois State Board of Education, Chicago Teachers Union, Illinois Education Association, Illinois Federation of Teachers, elected officials, and parents to work with Chicago Public Schools to reconsider the closures and do what is in the best interest of all of Chicago’s children.

“I plan to look at all options to urge the Chicago Board of Education to reconsider these closings, including withholding state funding.”

“But we also have to be mindful of the challenges of overturning the Board’s unanimous vote to close these schools, and fight on both fronts. We must continue the fight to overturn the decision and we must also fight to make sure every community is safe and every school that is open provides an education that meets the goals of Article X of our state's Constitution.

“A fundamental goal of the people of the state is the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capacities: ‘The State shall provide for an efficient system of high quality public educational institutions and services. Education in public schools through the secondary level shall be free.’

For more information, contact one of Ford’s constituent service offices: 816 S. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park at 708-445-3673, 5104 W. Chicago Avenue in Chicago at 773-378-5902 or in the Stratton Office Building in Springfield at 217-782-5962.

###