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# Chi-RADS

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL'S RADICAL  
YOUTH ALLIANCE



## **Letter of Declaration from Newly Formed, Chicago Public Schools Radical Youth Alliance (CHIRADS):**

*To Mayor Lori Lightfoot, CDPH Commissioner Dr. Arwady, and CPS Executive Pedro Martinez,*

We, the young people of Chicago Public Schools, have conjoined an alliance across a multitude of high schools and neighborhoods throughout our city in the North, South, East, and West sides. As queer Black and Brown youth, we have officially established an organization steered, executed and operated by youth to respond to the outstanding needs of our communities and to advocate the needs and calls of our cities' young people and community members.

We stand on the grounds of supporting our cities educators, parents, and community members, but most of all ourselves and peers. We believe in the reimagining of our education— to make sure that it is not just the condition of what learning should look like in the eyes of American capitalists. Our education and the process of educating young people should be amongst effectiveness, radiating, loving, caring, and liberating, not just in the binary of what we are conditioned to believe.

Therefore, as a new coalition stemming from recent events that jeopardize the health and education of students and teachers and in effort to provide support, we are calling on Chicago's Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Dr. Allison Arwady of the Chicago Department of Public Health, and Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer Pedro Martinez to listen to the youth in the city at this time.

We are demanding that you:

- Publicly acknowledge your mistakes and apologize for statements you made about members of the Chicago Teachers Union. We stand by our teachers as they serve as mentors and loving presences to many students in the district.
- Bring students to the bargaining table and ensure student voice is prioritized and centered in conversations about the COVID-19 safety plan. We do not condone the performative spaces you provide to students as we are often taken advantage of and tokenized.
- End your use of performative language when attempting to fulfill the Mayor's political agenda. In order to genuinely take into account the best interest of students, ask us directly or include us in conversations.
- Release and be fully transparent about COVID-19 data and what is happening at the bargaining table at all times. We demand the city constantly communicate to the public and take proper responsibility for not doing so earlier.
- Stop applying manipulated data by the school district as evidence in press conferences and other conversations about the COVID-19 safety plan. We find it frustrating that the data from CPS and CDPH constantly contradict each other and we demand this be addressed and proper sources be utilized to back up said claims that in-person learning is the best option for all students.
- Continuously and vigorously advocate for the importance of listening to youth while acknowledging the space that young people create, such as our new organization, to execute the significant decisions of our own education, health, safety, and lives.

As people who sit in positions of power, we expect that you will be responsive and transparent when it comes to the lives that you hold in your hands. As you consistently prove yourselves and your leadership to be incompetent, we as Black and Brown young people are the common denominator of being the most harmed and impacted. We are tired, exhausted, and frustrated and as a result, we will ongoingly and actively be acting upon the basis and soil of this letter. Whether it be of service to our communities or in response to the failures of this institution, we will fight, we will build, and we will love, in whichever forms we deem as necessary.

[The People's Response Network to Covid-19](#)

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**Comments**

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