

YOU THINK REAL CHICAGO VOICES

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2009
CHICAGO SUN-TIMES**COMMENTARY****Fight violence with education**

Over the long term, one of the best solutions we have to curb violence is giving children access to a high-quality education. Currently, 65 percent of Chicago Public Schools high school students are not proficient in reading, and 73 percent are not proficient in math.

As you mention in your recent editorial ["Altgeld kids deserve a school near home," Oct. 12], we should support efforts to create quality schools in communities that need them the most.

Just this summer, Chicago International Charter Schools opened a new elementary school in the Altgeld Gardens community. Chicago International Lloyd Bond campus serves 350 K-8 students and is the network's 13th campus. Chicago International Charter Schools reports an average four-year high school graduation rate in 2009 of 81 percent, and according to preliminary results, 72.2 percent of its elementary students met or exceeded state standards on the 2008-09 Illinois Standards Achievement Test, both higher than the CPS average.

A new nonselective high school is under consideration by CPS to open in Altgeld Gardens next fall. It would serve many of the same students who attend Fenger today.

There are some who would use the recent horrific tragedies as an excuse to stop the opening of great schools, but our solution should be to redouble these efforts. We must continue to create great new schools so that every child in every neighborhood across the city receives the high-quality education they deserve.

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