

S U C C E S S 2 0 2 9

TOGETHER WE RISE



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Dear Chicago Public Schools Families, Staff, and Supporters,

On behalf of the Chicago Board of Education, I would like to thank everyone who has helped us develop this new five-year strategic plan for Chicago Public Schools. This plan is the result of years of collaboration, dozens of engagement sessions, and thousands of hours of work. It is also rooted in the work of so many who have come before us—those who have pushed for a school district that better meets the needs of Chicago's children.

This plan acknowledges and honors the recent gains that have been made by our students and staff. CPS' graduation rate has doubled since 2001. Students are earning more scholarship awards and postsecondary credentials than ever before. Investments in more teachers, interventionists, counselors, and social workers have guided the District's impressive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. These investments have translated into tremendous growth for our students and formed a strong foundation that we will build on over the next five years.

But we know this progress has not been felt equally across our city, and it has not been nearly enough to outweigh the structural and historical inequities that continue to hold students back from achieving their full potential. Opportunity and achievement gaps have persisted, especially for Black students, Latinx students, English learners, and students with disabilities.

If we want our system to make bold and transformational changes in our students' lives, then we have to make bold and transformational changes to our system. This strategic plan outlines how we can meet the challenge of this moment.

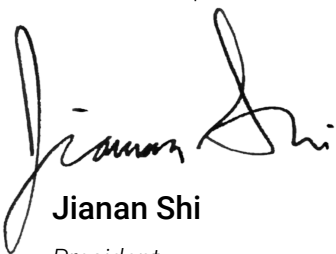
Our approach is focused on three priorities:

- 1. A rigorous, joyful, and equitable learning experience for every student.** The daily student experience must include a high-quality, anti-racist, and culturally responsive curriculum, coupled with enrichment opportunities that challenge students academically while affirming their unique identities and meeting their social and emotional needs. This daily experience will be the standard for every student, and we will focus on closing opportunity gaps that persist for those students who have historically been furthest from opportunity.
- 2. Resources and conditions for success in every school.** Every school will offer students a safe, well-maintained learning environment that is fully staffed with exceptional teachers, administrators, and support personnel who reflect the diversity and lived experiences of the students they serve. Through a new funding approach based primarily on student need, we will address the inequities of the past and ensure a high-quality experience in every school, no matter its type, size, or location.
- 3. Inclusive and collaborative partnerships in every community.** We must acknowledge the decades of structural racism and community disinvestment that have eroded trust between CPS and many of our school communities. We will strengthen preschool to high school pathways in every community and leverage our District's many partnerships to transform neighborhood schools in under-resourced areas into anchors for their communities. Sustainable Community Schools will expand, with wraparound academic, health, and social support for our students, fostering strong collaborative partnerships and robust supports for the whole child.

We invite parents, educators, students, staff, and members of the public to view this plan in detail and get involved in helping us implement it. We understand that the true challenge and measure of success is not in our written word but in our actions. And the urgency for action could not be greater.

Let us use this plan as our guide, and get to work building a better District, where every student in Chicago can be their greatest self and live up to their full potential.

In Partnership,



Jianan Shi

*President
Chicago Board of Education*

Dear CPS Friends, Colleagues, and Supporters,

It is our distinct privilege to be leading Chicago Public Schools at such an exciting time for the District. The new five-year strategic plan is the start of a new journey for our city’s children—a journey through which they will have the tools, resources, and support they need to excel both in and out of the classroom.

While the details of this strategic plan are new, its foundation remains rooted in our District’s core values. These include our commitments to academic and operational excellence, and our mission to build and strengthen trusting relationships between CPS and members of our school communities. The strategic plan is also anchored by an overarching commitment to equity, and by our sincere belief that every child, regardless of race, zip code, or country of origin, should have access to a rigorous and joyful education that prepares them for success.

This plan starts with continuing the work of helping CPS students recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of both academic growth and social-emotional development. Beyond that immediate need, the plan identifies several key priorities and presents strategies to address challenging questions like these:

How do we build upon the transformative shifts we have made as a District over the past few years that are grounded in equity and prioritize practices that support a strong Instructional Core?

How do we create a consistent, high-quality student experience across all CPS schools?

How do we close the opportunity gaps that continue to impact our Black and Brown students, our students with disabilities, our English learners, and other children who are furthest from opportunity?

What steps must be taken to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse pool of exceptional educators and staff, and what investments must be made to ensure that high-quality school and program models exist equitably across our city?

This plan presents an ambitious, optimistic outlook of what CPS can be, while also acknowledging the unique challenges facing our District. It is the result of nearly a year of community engagement, and therefore reflects the voices of all stakeholders, from our teachers and school leaders, to our students, parents, and valued community partners.

We thank everyone who helped shape this strategic plan and will continue to keep robust community engagement at the core of our District’s mission. We are at our best when all of us—students, educators, families, and partners—are working together toward the shared goal of providing every student from every community in Chicago with a high-quality, culturally responsive learning experience that prepares them for success. We remain inspired and humbled by this challenge, and look forward to seeing how our new strategic plan will help guide us in our pursuit of that goal.

Sincerely,



Pedro Martinez

*Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools*



Bogdana Chkoumbova

*Chief Education Officer
Chicago Public Schools*

Who We **Are**

Our **Vision** for the Future

Every student will experience high-quality, culturally responsive learning; develop the competencies of the CPS Graduate Profile; and be prepared for postsecondary success.

Our Continued **Mission** to Serve Every Child

We remain committed to our mission of providing a high-quality public education for every child, in every neighborhood, that prepares each for success in college, career, and civic life.

Graduate Profile

Our graduate profile outlines the holistic competencies that our students need to thrive after they graduate from high school and our vision for their postsecondary success.



- **Ethical and Collaborative Leaders:** Demonstrate a commitment to the growth and development of themselves and others. Consider multiple perspectives when making decisions. Willing to speak boldly, take on challenges, and step up for the betterment of others.
- **Inquisitive Learners:** Possess the knowledge, skills, and confidence to successfully pursue personal, professional, and civic goals.
- **Engaged Community Members:** Engage publicly and collaboratively in pursuit of the common good. Imagine new possibilities and take justice-oriented actions aimed at strengthening our communities and our democracy.

- **Empowered Decision Makers:** Reflect on personal strengths and interests to shape their paths. Actively seek out information and resources to inform career and education planning and decision-making. Seek out and respect others’ opinions. Are creative and visionary in setting and achieving goals.
- **Adaptable and Independent Thinkers:** Cultivate a sense of self to persevere through challenges, take ownership and responsibility for actions, and remain flexible in changing circumstances. Critically analyze and synthesize information to thoughtfully question or challenge harmful ideas or systems.

Core Values

Our core values guide the work we do every day for our students. By grounding ourselves in these values, we strengthen coherence and find common ground as we work together across the District to implement programs, services and initiatives.



Student Centered



Whole Child



Equity



Academic Excellence



Community Partnership



Continuous Learning

- **Student Centered:** We place our students at the center of everything we do.
- **Whole Child:** We support our students so they are healthy, safe, engaged, and academically challenged.
- **Equity:** We eliminate barriers to success and ensure equitable opportunities for all students.
- **Academic Excellence:** We provide diverse curricula and programs with high academic standards to prepare students for future success.
- **Community Partnership:** We rely on families, communities, and partners in every neighborhood to shape and support our shared mission.
- **Continuous Learning:** We promote an environment of continuous learning throughout CPS for students, teachers, leaders, and District staff.

What **We Believe** and **Our Goals**

As we embark on our new strategic plan, we believe it is important to reflect on our past and understand our current state. Our plan is centered on the historical and present conditions that our students, families, and communities face, and works to create anti-racist solutions that address systemic disinvestment. It is imperative that the voices of our students, families, and communities are present in this plan—not only in its development but also as we implement it over the next five years. We gathered extensive feedback from our students, families, staff, and community members to help us transform our approach to this work.

Moving forward, we will continue to center student voices in the work of the District and ensure students are engaged in decisions that impact them. At the same time, we are prioritizing collaboration with critical community partners, especially those historically disenfranchised from the decision-making process.

Our Challenge

We cannot achieve our vision without addressing the significant challenges that persist in Chicago's education system. While we have made progress toward providing a high-quality public education for every child in every neighborhood, we continue to face long-standing challenges and opportunity gaps, particularly for Black students, Latinx students, students with disabilities, students in temporary living situations, and English learners.

These challenges and gaps, driven by deep-rooted structural racism and socio-economic inequality, persist despite many education reforms in Chicago over the past 30 years. They were unintentionally made worse by our current competitive enrollment policies and previous accountability policy, which pitted schools against each other and sorted students based on academic performance in an under-resourced system, reinforcing cycles of inequity.

We formally acknowledged these inequities in our CPS Equity Framework developed in 2019. The CPS Equity Framework is based on the principle of Targeted Universalism, which recognizes that systems and structures play a critical role in students' everyday experiences, and the way students interact with those systems and structures differs depending on identity and life circumstances—both of which can affect their experiences and performance in school.

Guided by feedback from many years of community engagement, we have already begun implementing new policies and practices intended to undo the harm that has resulted from past missteps. However, our progress is hindered by funding challenges on numerous fronts, including inadequate funding from the State, an expansive and aging facility infrastructure requiring capital improvements to support healthy green schools, and declining student enrollment. Our current funding falls short of keeping up with the needs of our students with disabilities and fully funding early childhood programming.

We must now build on our existing foundation and make active changes to disrupt the cycles of inequity and close existing opportunity gaps while vigorously seeking additional funding to meet the urgent needs of our students.

Our Transformed Philosophy to Achieve Our Vision

We have intentionally and strategically changed how we operate as a District to address our ongoing challenges and opportunity gaps. By utilizing the CPS Equity Framework, we remain committed to providing a high-quality public education for every child, in every neighborhood, and we have significantly shifted our philosophy in four critical areas to achieve this goal:

1. How We Define Student Success

For too long, student success has been connected to a narrow set of lagging data points, such as standardized test scores, that do not promote the belief that every student can achieve and succeed. The CPS Graduate Profile identifies the robust goals we have for student success. We want our students to be ethical and collaborative leaders, inquisitive learners, empowered decision-makers, engaged community members, and adaptable and independent thinkers. Going forward, we define student success and student achievement by a set of robust and holistic measures connected to our students' daily learning experiences.



2. Our Approach to Accountability and How We Support Schools

Previous accountability systems in CPS ranked and labeled schools, which adversely encouraged families to select schools with the highest rankings, increasing their enrollment. Schools were provided resources based on the number of students enrolled, resulting in disinvestment in neighborhood schools. We will no longer engage in the harmful approach of ranking and labeling schools. Instead, we are embracing a shared ownership of student success between the District and our schools. The District will provide equitable resources and ongoing support to schools, so schools can create the necessary conditions to produce rigorous, joyful, equitable, and antiracist learning experiences, which will result in better student outcomes.

3. How We Invest in Schools and Communities

CPS faced significant challenges in the early 2000s, with more students dropping out of school than graduating. At that time, decisions were made to open a significant number of new schools to address system failures. Over time, the infusion of new schools fostered a culture in which schools compete for students and resources with the unintended consequence of disinvestment in neighborhood schools. Going forward, we will strive for every community to be anchored by high-quality neighborhood schools, with an intentional focus on disinvested communities. This commitment includes a focus on resource equity, which means consistently prioritizing and allocating people, time, and money to align with levels of need and opportunity. Based on the principle of Targeted Universalism, we recognize

that providing the same amount of resources to students and schools with different lived experiences, assets, and challenges will maintain the status quo of unequal achievement, and we are dedicated to ensuring that our investments reflect the diverse needs of our students and communities. At the same time, we will also continue to invest in successful schools across all models, including neighborhood, selective enrollment, magnet, charter, and alternative school options.

To support schools as community hubs, we will engage students, parents, schools, and community partners in the process of expanding the Sustainable Community Schools (SCS) model, designed to provide wraparound academic, health, and social support for the entire community beyond the traditional school day.



4. How We Make Major Decisions

Historically, CPS and City leadership made major decisions, such as closing schools or changing the school funding model, with limited, inconsistent, and inauthentic stakeholder engagement. These decisions impacted students, families, and communities without giving them a voice in the process. We are no longer approaching decision-making in this way. We are committed to authentic collaboration with advocates and champions for our students. For every major decision, we will engage stakeholders by centering [CPS' spectrum of inclusive partnerships](#), prioritizing the voices of those most impacted by structural inequity, to design and implement a more equitable school district and learning environment. We will ensure our students, their families, staff, and their communities are represented in our decision-making and are engaged in the design of policy and practices. We are committed to centering our students' voices in the decision-making process by ensuring every high school has a student voice committee and by using our student voice survey, cultivate, to drive District decisions.

| TRANSFORMED PHILOSOPHY | PAST APPROACH | OUR APPROACH |
|--|---|---|
| <p>STUDENTS</p> <p>How We Define Student Success</p> | <p>Student success was defined by a narrow set of metrics.</p> | <p>Student success and achievement are defined by robust and holistic measures of learning and well-being.</p> |
| <p>SCHOOLS</p> <p>Our Approach to Accountability and How We Support Schools</p> | <p>Our accountability system ranked and labeled schools, adversely encouraging families to select schools with the highest ratings; school resources were based on the number of students enrolled.</p> | <p>Schools are not ranked. Accountability for student success is shared between the District and schools.</p> <p>The District provides equitable resources and ongoing support to schools, so schools can create the necessary conditions to improve student learning experiences.</p> |
| <p>COMMUNITY</p> <p>How We Invest in Schools and Communities</p> <p>How We Make Major Decisions</p> | <p>System failures were addressed by creating new schools, which led to a culture of schools competing for students and resources.</p> | <p>Every community will be anchored by high-quality pathways from preschool to high school in neighborhood schools while ensuring equitable access to a range of programmatic offerings across different school types, which is supported by targeted investments in disinvested communities.</p> |
| | <p>Unilateral decisions were made by CPS and city leadership.</p> | <p>Decisions are informed through robust stakeholder engagement; students, families, staff, and communities are engaged in the design of policies and practices.</p> |

Our Theory of Action

The changes in how we operate as a District keep us centered on our students’ daily learning experiences and will result in thriving students at every point of the educational continuum. Aligned with our transformed philosophy, we are steadfastly focused on ensuring that the District provides resources equitably to support every student, every school, and every community. We believe:

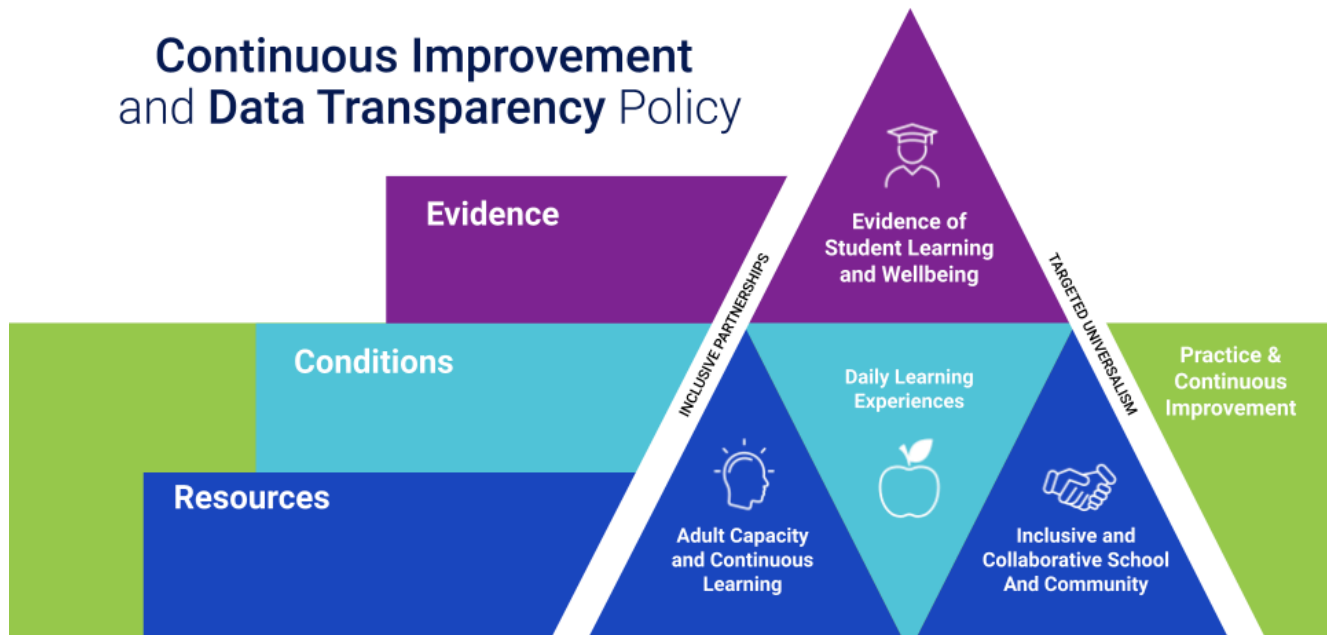
If CPS Ensures:

- **Every student** is heard, valued, and affirmed and engages in decisions impacting their school and the District;
- **Every school** creates the conditions and implements the practices to drive continuous improvement of student learning and well-being through an equity lens;
- **The District** provides equitable resources and supports to each school;
- **Every community**, especially those that have experienced historical disinvestments due to structural racism, is engaged as a partner to envision high-quality schools and programmatic options;

Then:

- The **daily student experience** will be rigorous, joyful, and equitable; and
- **Student learning and well-being** will improve, providing students with the skills and competencies they need to thrive, obtain family-sustaining jobs, achieve upward economic and social mobility, and contribute to thriving communities.

Changing Our Systems to Focus on the Daily Student Experience



To actualize our Theory of Action, we must have a system that ensures every student's needs are met through a rigorous, joyful, equitable, and affirming experience that promotes their learning and well-being. This system must holistically support schools through a lens of continuous improvement with an emphasis on the inputs that schools need for their students to experience high-quality, culturally responsive learning. CPS has committed to this focus on continuous improvement by replacing the previous School Quality Rating Policy with a transformative new policy, our Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency (CIDT) policy. This policy is centered on the daily student experience and informs our approach to all school models, including neighborhood, selective enrollment, magnet, charter, and alternative school options.

This new approach focuses on the conditions, supports, and resources needed for a school to provide students with high-quality learning experiences. It expects the District to be responsive to the needs of school communities and involve communities in deciding what resources and support are needed from the District to improve a school's conditions. Communities will be provided with the information they need to fully understand their schools' needs and strengths to clarify the path forward, digging deeply into the many factors contributing to high-quality student learning experiences.

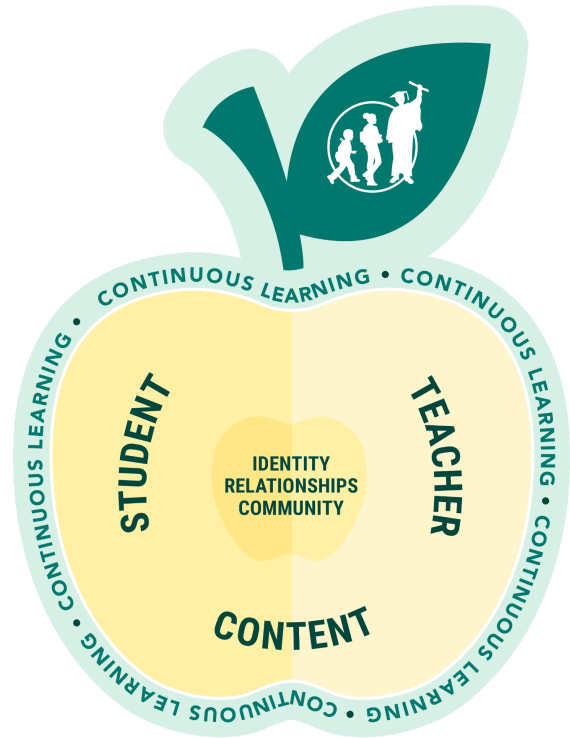
We believe if we provide schools with the resources and supports they need to create the conditions to improve the daily student experience, students will be successful in school and in life.

- **Conditions:** The culture and climate within a school community and school practices and structures.

- **Supports:** Engaging, empowering, and developing the adults that work within the District—those who are responsible for educating and supporting students.
- **Resources:** The facilities, curricula, and supplies necessary to provide students with quality learning experiences; the technology and data systems needed to run school operations; and the funding and budgeting processes for schools to hire staff and purchase what they need.

At the center of the CIDT policy is the daily learning experience, which is cultivated through the CPS Instructional Core—our vision for the quality of the content students learn, the quality of teacher practice, and the level of student engagement in the learning process. The CPS Instructional Core is centered on each student’s identity, community, and relationships. Students must experience core instruction that empowers them to connect, imagine, and act as ethical, critical actors who shape the world. When we create the conditions for student success, our students will be engaged, empowered, and prepared, allowing them to access grade-level content, complete high-quality tasks, and thrive in school and life.

To learn more about CIDT, including implementation timelines and available resources, please visit cps.edu/CIDT.



Universal Five-Year Goals

The table below represents the elements of the daily student experience that should be standard in all classrooms and schools, the practice goals the District is committed to supporting, and the outcome goals we expect to meet based on our commitment to these practices.

| THEORY OF ACTION FOCUS | UNIVERSAL PRACTICE GOALS | EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING AND WELL-BEING |
|---|---|---|
| <p>EVERY STUDENT has a rigorous, joyful, and equitable daily learning experience</p> | <p>100% of students will have access to high-quality instructional materials (curriculum) that are grade-level aligned and culturally responsive in all content areas across all classroom settings. Teachers will be equipped to authentically engage students through these high-quality curricula.</p> | <p>Increase by 20% the number of 3rd-8th graders who meet or exceed proficiency levels on the state’s IAR assessment for English language arts and math. This will be achieved by accelerating growth for students who are Black, Latinx, English learners, students with disabilities, and students in temporary living situations.</p> |
| <p>EVERY SCHOOL creates the conditions and implements the practices to drive continuous improvement through an equity lens</p> | <p>100% of schools will implement an equity-based Multi-Tiered System of Supports and fully integrate social-emotional learning practices into daily student experiences.</p> | <p>Decrease the overall District rate for chronic absenteeism by at least 15%. This will be achieved by accelerating a reduction for students who are Black, Latinx, English learners, students with disabilities, and students in temporary living situations.</p> <p>Increase the percentage of schools rated as “strong” or “very strong” on the Supportive Environment Essential on the 5Essentials survey to at least 25%. This will represent students feeling safe, supported, and engaged in school. Additional survey tools will be used to support the District’s understanding in this area.</p> |
| | <p>All middle and high school students will have equitable access to high-quality postsecondary opportunities through college and career readiness instruction, advanced coursework, and career and technical education.</p> | <p>70% of CPS graduates will have earned the equivalent of a semester of college credit or an advanced career credential. We will prioritize accelerated growth for students who are Black, Latinx, English learners, students with disabilities, and students in temporary living situations.</p> |
| <p>THE DISTRICT provides equitable resources and supports to each school</p> | <p>Every year, the District will continue to equitably deliver resources and support to schools to strengthen the practices and conditions outlined in the CIDT policy.</p> | <p>All schools will demonstrate annual growth on school-based CIDT measures, resulting in achieving the goals in their Continuous Improvement Work Plans.</p> |

| THEORY OF ACTION FOCUS | UNIVERSAL PRACTICE GOALS | EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING AND WELL-BEING |
|---|---|--|
| <p>EVERY COMMUNITY has inclusive and collaborative partnerships for thriving schools</p> | <p>Partner with our communities to strongly advocate for full, fair, and equitable school funding across all levels of government, leverage philanthropic investments, and strengthen collaborative partnerships in every community.</p> <p>Align the Chicago Board of Education's annual legislative agenda to advance the values and goals of the District and community and to strengthen advocacy for full, fair, and equitable school funding.</p> | <p>The District will reach at least 90% funding adequacy, based on the state's funding adequacy assessment, so schools have the resources they need to ensure a high-quality and equitable student experience, regardless of the size of the school or the unique needs of the student population.</p> |

The Foundation of Our Strategic Plan

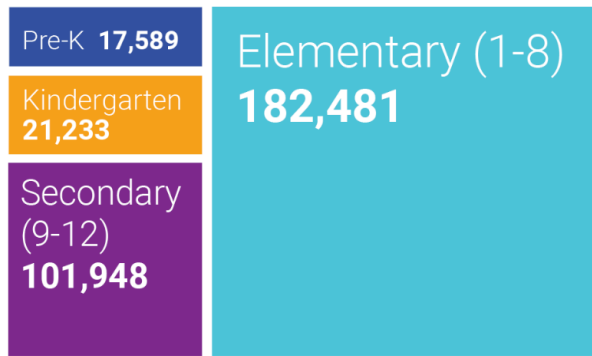
Our strategic plan is built on a foundation of steady growth in many areas. Our District is exceeding pre-pandemic levels in literacy proficiency and has continued steady gains in math for our elementary students. Our graduation rate has doubled since 2001, and our students are earning more scholarship awards and postsecondary credentials than ever before.

District Overview

Student Enrollment

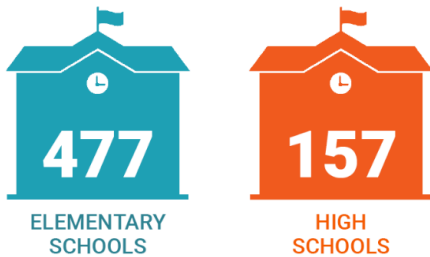
2023-2024 20th Day Enrollment - Total and by Grade

Total Students Enrolled **323,251**

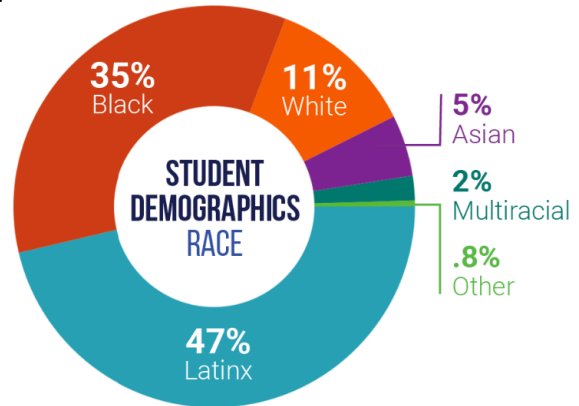
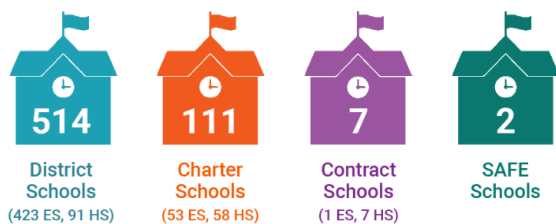


182 Number of Languages Spoken

Number of Schools **634 total**



Number of schools broken out by governance type



Demographics on Student Enrollment PRIORITY GROUPS

2023-2024 20th Day Enrollment Number of Students by Priority Group

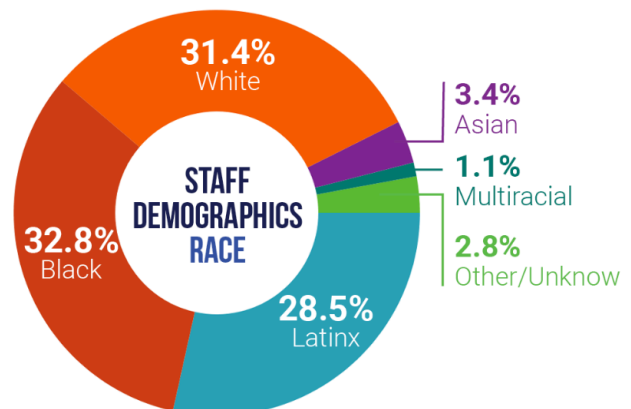
- Economically Disadvantaged **228,466**
- English Learners **79,833**
- Students with Disabilities **51,910**
- Students in Temporary Living Situations **11,931**

2023-24 School Year

Out-of-School Time, Community Schools Initiative, Sustainable Community Schools

- 440,000** Hours of Programming at 521 Schools
- 118,000** Unique Student Participants
(42% participation rate, up from 38% participation rate in 2022-23)

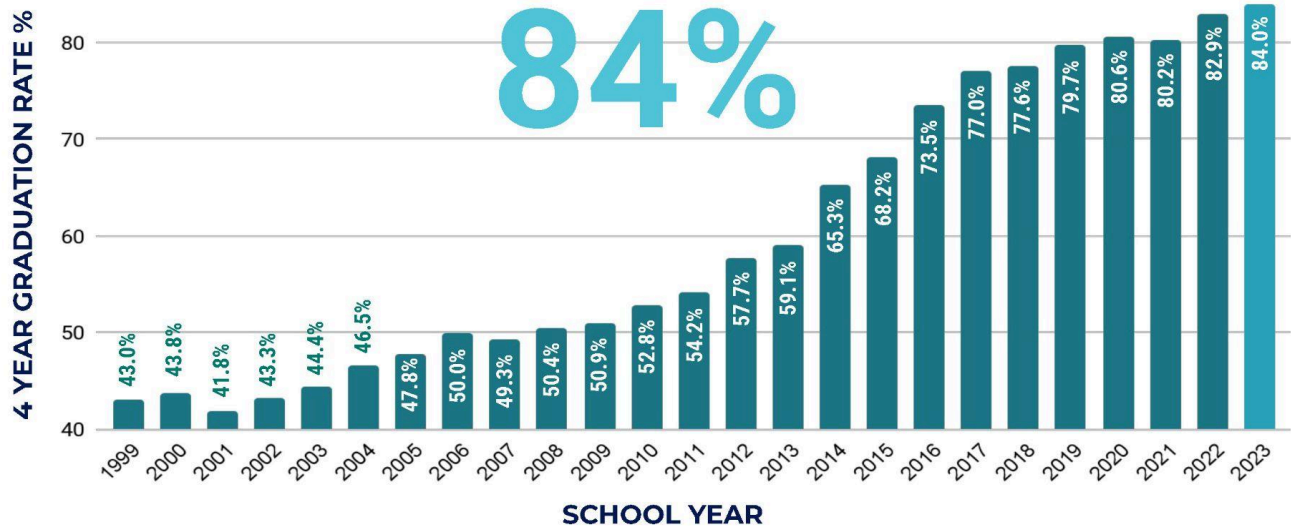
41,500+ Employees



Celebrating Our Progress

Our foundational investments to bring us out of the pandemic and into recovery have translated into considerable success for our students. These efforts to expand opportunities and target supports for students have formed a strong foundation of student success that we will strengthen and build on over the next five years.

2023 Four-year Graduation Rate

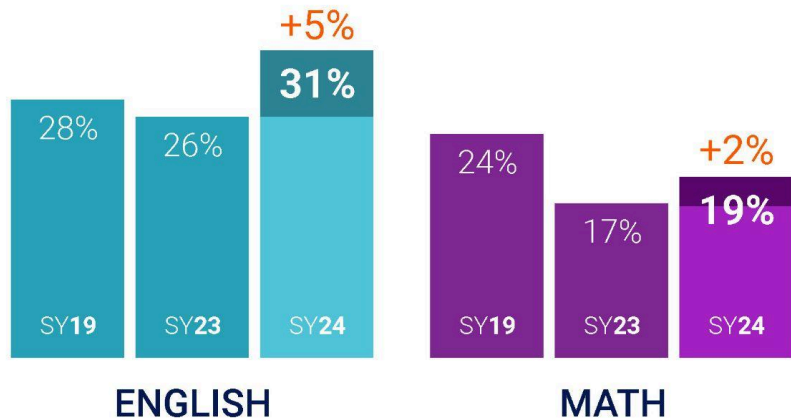


Post-Pandemic Reading and Math

- #1** READING GROWTH
2022 TO 2023
- #1** READING GAINS
2019 TO 2023
- #3** COMBINED READING AND MATH GROWTH
2022 TO 2023

of the **40 urban districts** included in the Education Recovery Scorecard

English and Math Proficiency Rates



Met or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4 and 5)

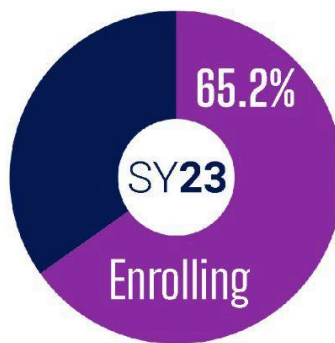
Access to **Postsecondary** Opportunities



Freshmen **On-Track to Graduate** in Four Years



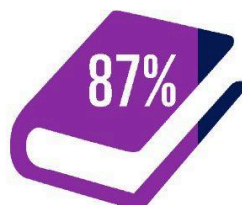
College **Enrollment** and **Persistence**



The percent of graduates enrolling in college has **increased by 22 points** since 2004.



More than half of our schools were rated **Organized** or **Well Organized** on the **5Essentials** survey of school culture and climate.



87% of all content area-grade bands are using **high-quality curriculum** in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies



76 of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods expanded the number of seats for **free full-day preschool.**



+98% of CPS elementary schools now offer Algebra. An **increase of approximately 20%** in the past two years.

Process for Developing the Strategic Plan

This strategic plan was developed with input and feedback from students, families, educators, and members of the community. We began gathering input for the strategic plan in Fall 2023, but the foundation of the plan was drawn from the District’s Three-Year Blueprint established in Fall 2022 and the District’s accountability redesign that spanned from 2020 to 2023.

| STAGE | ENGAGEMENT PROCESS | CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN |
|---|---|--|
| FOUNDATIONAL INPUTS OVER 20,000 INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED | | |
| <p>ACCOUNTABILITY REDESIGN STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>Fall 2020–Spring 2023</p> | <p>Recognizing that stakeholders with different identities, perspectives, and backgrounds bring invaluable knowledge, talents, and insights to the redesign of our accountability policy, we collaborated with labor partners, community-based organizations, researchers, students, staff, and others to engage more than 20,000 stakeholders in the redesign of our approach to accountability.</p> <p>To learn more about the accountability redesign, including implementation timelines and available resources, please visit cps.edu/CIDT.</p> | <p>Defined what we want to be true for every student, in every school, in every community across Chicago, which became our Theory of Action for the strategic plan.</p> <p>Defined the roles of the District and schools in the new model of shared ownership for student success.</p> <p>Identified a shared vision, with community, of what practices and conditions make a good school—including ensuring equitable distribution of resources (based on school need) and access to high-quality curriculum.</p> |
| <p>BUILDING A BRIDGE TO THE NEXT STRATEGIC PLAN: CPS BLUEPRINT</p> <p>Fall 2022</p> | <p>Held conversations with students, families, educators, community members, and other stakeholders to understand the priorities of the CPS community coming out of the pandemic.</p> | <p>Identified strategies to immediately support students academically, socially, and emotionally as we recovered from the pandemic.</p> <p>Identified areas to reimagine current work to incorporate into the strategic planning process.</p> |

| STAGE | ENGAGEMENT PROCESS | CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN |
|---|---|---|
| STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS OVER 14,000 INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED | | |
| ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT STATE Fall/Winter 2023 | Included a large city-wide survey, student voice events, and state of the District roundtables. Launched the strategic planning website for stakeholders to find information on the strategic planning process and provide feedback. | Identified the most pressing challenges to address and areas of transformational opportunity. Guided the development of strategies to address the identified challenges. |
| UNDERSTANDING TARGETED AREAS Winter/Spring 2024 | Engaged stakeholders to ask specific questions about challenges within a topic area, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Budget community roundtable sessions ● School leader budget survey ● Educational Facilities Master Plan community roundtable sessions ● Black Student Success Working Group and community roundtables ● Capital planning community engagement | Provided information to develop the strategies included in the strategic plan. Identified gaps where new strategies needed to be developed. |
| DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIES Spring 2024 | Hosted eight public forums, held targeted focus groups, engaged principals and central office staff, and briefed our community, labor, and elected partners. | Revised and refined the strategies in the strategic plan to best reflect the needs of our students, schools, and communities. |

To read the specific feedback provided through the community engagement sessions, [GO TO WEBSITE >](#)

Overview of Our Plan

Our strategic plan is organized to prioritize the most critical challenges and opportunities identified through robust engagement with students, families, principals, school-based staff, and community members. We will continue to implement the proven programs, student supports, practices, and policies that have resulted in student success in the past. However, we have also identified targeted priorities that reflect the new approaches we believe will disrupt the cycles of inequity in our District.

In each of these areas, we focus on the conditions, supports, and resources that schools need to continuously improve over the next five years to ensure every student receives the daily learning experience they deserve.

| FOCUS OF OUR THEORY OF ACTION | CURRENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT | TARGETED PRIORITIES DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES |
|---|--|---|
| <p>EVERY STUDENT has a rigorous, joyful, and equitable learning experience</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily learning experiences vary widely across schools. Every student should have a rigorous, joyful, and equitable learning experience that affirms their identities. • Opportunity gaps exist across a broad range of indicators, especially for Black students, students with disabilities, and English learners. Targeted strategies are needed to address these gaps. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Student Success: Develop and implement a plan to improve the daily learning experiences for Black students and eliminate opportunity gaps. • Multilingual Pathways: Offer multiple pathways for students to become proficient in more than one language. • Students With Disabilities: Ensure the rightful presence of every student with disabilities so they can fully engage in high-quality instruction at their grade level. • Early Learning: Create high-quality and comprehensive learning experiences for students in preschool through second grade that are aligned to their future learning. • Postsecondary Success: Increase opportunities for students to earn college credit and advanced certifications in high school. |

| <p>FOCUS OF OUR THEORY OF ACTION</p> | <p>CURRENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> | <p>TARGETED STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES</p> |
|---|---|---|
| <p>EVERY SCHOOL creates the conditions for success, and the District provides equitable resources for schools</p> | <p>Opportunity gaps are driven by staff vacancies for critical positions across communities, driven by an inadequate supply of teachers. Every school should be fully staffed with excellent teachers and staff.</p> <p>Facilities needs and structural deficits continue to grow as enrollment and overall state funding declines. Every school should offer a safe and modern learning environment for our students and staff.</p> <p>The previous CPS approach to resourcing schools based on enrollment led to inequities across communities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connectedness and Well-being: Create robust support systems and align resources to meet students’ diverse needs, ensuring a safe and supportive school community. ● Exceptional and Diverse Talent: Recruit, retain, support, and develop exceptional and diverse talent at all levels of the District. ● 21st Century Learning Environments: Co-design the Educational Facilities Master Plan with input from the community to create the conditions for 21st-century learning and support healthy green schools. ● Modernization of Technology and Systems: Modernize existing technology and systems using feedback from students, educators, and families to enhance daily learning experiences. ● Equitable Funding Model: Refine the funding model to prioritize and allocate resources based on need to create a quality experience for all students. |
| <p>EVERY COMMUNITY has inclusive and collaborative partnerships for thriving schools</p> | <p>Historical decisions and missteps have prevented strategic investments to improve the quality of neighborhood schools, leading to a lack of trust between communities and CPS. Investments need to be made in neighborhood high schools.</p> <p>Societal structural racism and socio-economic inequality has resulted in inequitable access to quality daily learning experiences. We need to focus on disinvested communities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Schools: Provide the resources and support needed to transform schools to be the anchors of their neighborhood through community schools models, including the expansion of Sustainable Community Schools. ● Preschool to High School Pathways in Neighborhood Schools: Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for improving preschool to high school graduation pathways in neighborhoods across the city. |

Every Student Has a Rigorous, Joyful, and Equitable Learning Experience

Every student deserves a learning experience that is rigorous, joyful, and equitable. Challenging, culturally responsive curricula and enrichment opportunities that promote daily growth are basic necessities for our students. Unfortunately, due to systemic issues such as inequitable funding, bias, and exclusionary educational policies, opportunity gaps continue to exist across certain segments of our student population. The priorities in this section of the plan are designed to ensure that all students receive the opportunities and resources that meet their unique needs and aspirations, prioritizing those most harmed by the past.



Accelerating Proven Practices

In our unwavering focus on the daily student experience, over the next five years we will accelerate our current practices that are improving outcomes for all students and closing gaps:

Instructional Core: Ensure instruction is focused on students and their needs, as well as improving connectedness, belonging, and well-being. We are focused on five areas:

- **High-Quality Curriculum:** Increase the number of schools implementing high-quality curriculum in all courses and all grades by SY2026. Schools can achieve this by improving their existing curriculum or through adopting Skyline, the fully digital, high-quality, culturally responsive curriculum that is available to all CPS educators and continuously improved through the feedback of teachers and school staff.
- **Meaningful Assessments:** Expand the use of meaningful classroom-level assessments, and provide greater access to meaningful data to inform high-quality instruction.
- **Student-Focused Instruction:** Ensure teachers have the capacity to facilitate instruction that honors students' identities, prioritizes relationships, and fosters community to facilitate deep engagement with students.
- **Accelerated Practices:** Increase the number of students meeting grade-level standards through practices that recognize their strengths and inspire joy.
- **Academic and Social-Emotional Interventions:** Expand the use of tiered academic and social-emotional interventions to supplement core instruction when needed to help students meet grade-level standards.

Empowered Educators: Provide support for instructional leadership teams, lead coaches, team directors, program coordinators, mentors, and teacher leaders to create strong, school-based culturally responsive professional learning plans that empower educators to collaborate and improve together, focus on anti-racism and anti-bias practices, use data, center the lived experiences of students and families, and celebrate diversity and promote equity for students. Professional learning will focus on content and instructional capabilities as well as on shifting mindsets, which includes developing a growth mindset; understanding equity, healing-centered approaches, and anti-racist methodologies; and operating from an asset-based perspective.

Universal Full-Day Preschool: Expand access to universal full-day preschool programs for early learners in all neighborhoods, including programs for three-year-olds, four-year-olds, and blended programs. Invest in foundational early literacy programming and resources that help children become confident readers at an early age.

Equitable Acceleration Pathways: Continue to expand high school algebra access to middle school students in predominantly Black and lower income neighborhoods on the South and West sides, increasing the number of schools offering middle grade algebra from 94% to 100% by SY2029. Develop

opportunities for acceleration for students in 4th through 12th grades within their current schools.

Tutor Corps: Invest in a sustainable Tutor Corps model to accelerate academic progress for more students through targeted, high-dosage tutoring at schools with the largest opportunity gaps on the South and West sides. Continue to analyze specific school needs, monitor student academic progress, and engage with schools to effectively tailor the implementation of Tutor Corps to maximize student success.

High School Opportunities: Expand access to advanced coursework, including Advanced Placement classes, International Baccalaureate programming, dual credit and dual enrollment opportunities, military academies, job shadowing, and work-based learning opportunities.

Transportation: Continue optimizing travel routes to reduce student travel times, specifically focusing on supporting our students with disabilities.

Resources for Students in Temporary Living Situations: Expand resources for students in temporary living situations, adding more counselors in the schools with the greatest need, and providing professional learning for staff that focuses on inclusivity and targeted supports for students and families. Partner with citywide and community-based efforts to support homeless students by connecting schools with community partners that can address student needs.

Student Voice: Expand opportunities for students to meaningfully engage in decision-making in their schools and across the District. We are focused on five areas:

- **Cultivate Survey:** Continue to administer the Cultivate survey, which is designed to gather students' perspectives on their educational experience and overall sense of belonging. CPS is the largest school district in the country to administer this survey.
- **Board of Education Engagement:** Continue to collaborate with the Chicago Board of Education to inform policy and practice, share feedback on youth experiences, and roll out the District's strategic plan.
- **District Student Voice Committee:** Engage in a full year of District-level student voice committee programming focused on building students' capacity to lead.
- **School Student Voice Committees:** Expand student voice committees to every high school and strengthen the quality of program implementation across the schools that currently have student voice committees (more than 120).
- **District-Wide Convenings:** Continue convenings for student voice committee members across the District to help students build community, strengthen connections, and foster leadership development.

Targeted Priorities

Based on feedback from our community engagement process, we identified targeted priorities that will improve the daily learning experience for specific student groups where significant opportunity gaps exist: Black students, English learners, and students with disabilities. We also identified strategies that target the critical educational transitions for students: early learning and postsecondary success. Combined with the acceleration of our current practices, these strategies will ensure all students, especially those furthest from opportunity, have a rigorous, joyful, and equitable experience.

Black Student Success

Priority

Develop and integrate a Black Student Success Plan that improves daily learning experiences and life outcomes for Black students and eliminates opportunity gaps.

Visionary Goal

Every Black student will have access to high-quality educational opportunities within their school and neighborhood, where they receive the necessary support to excel academically, socially, and emotionally; where they are prepared for college and family-sustaining careers; where they are empowered and affirmed in their identity; and where Black students, families, and communities feel valued, supported, and heard; while also ensuring that Black leaders and educators are increasingly supported and empowered with the resources and professional growth opportunities needed to drive positive change.

Why It Matters

We are committed to addressing long-standing racial inequities in Chicago. While the District is making progress, Black students continue to suffer from historic and persistent gaps in educational opportunities and outcomes. Disparities between Black students and their counterparts in academic achievement, graduation rates, and postsecondary opportunities are the result of historical and ongoing discrimination in the United States applied uniquely to Black people: unfair housing practices, segregation, lack of access to resources, and many other policies, laws, and practices. Today, systemic issues, such as unequal funding, disproportionate disciplinary actions, and biased educational policies, continue to contribute to the challenges faced by our Black students. We will continue advocating for adequate and equitable school funding across all levels of government to ensure we have the necessary resources to support the success of our Black students.

Strategies

- The District will create a Black Student Success Plan with strategies and goals informed by the [Recommendations from the Black Student Success Working Group](#). The plan will include:
 - Implementing culturally responsive practices, instruction, and professional learning that combats anti-Blackness; honors Black students' and communities' experiences, histories, and contributions; and affirms Black students' sense of identity, purpose, and direction.

- Ensuring that resource allocation within our District reflects the needs of Black students, providing comprehensive resources and services to address the academic, social-emotional, and mental health needs of Black students, fostering growth and well-being.
- Creating and supporting pipelines and retention initiatives to increase the number of Black educators and leaders by partnering with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Black-serving institutions, and community organizations to create a robust recruitment pipeline.
- Ensuring continuous, meaningful engagement with Black students and their families and strengthening partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and government agencies to support the integration of the Black Student Success Plan.
- Share the Black Student Success Plan in SY2025 that includes targeted specific short-term and long-term goals.
- Develop a clear implementation plan with strategies, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms to achieve goals and make necessary data-informed adjustments.
- Regularly report on the progress and impact of the Black Student Success Plan to stakeholders and the community, ensuring accountability and transparency. Reporting and progress monitoring at the Board level will be aligned with Illinois Public Act 103-0584 (Chicago Board of Education Black Student Achievement Committee).

Five-Year Goals

- Double the number of Black male educators hired and improve Black teacher retention from 91% to 93%.
- Accelerate growth and attainment for Black students that closes opportunity gaps from early learning through high school across all core academic areas.
- Reduce disciplinary actions against Black students, ensuring proportionality with their representation in the student population. 40% decrease in the use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for Black students and students with identified disabilities.
- Increase the percentage of classrooms utilizing culturally responsive practices, teaching about Black history and culture, and leveraging the CPS Inner Core Powerful Practices.
- Enhance a strong sense of belonging among Black students, so that students feel valued and included in their school community.

Multilingual Pathways

Priority

Offer multiple pathways for all students to have the opportunity to become proficient in more than one language, allowing them to become multilingual by the time they graduate from high school.

Visionary Goal

Every student will be multilingual when they graduate from high school.

Why It Matters

Learning a language improves brain function, which leads to improved cognitive performance. All CPS students should have an equal chance at this advantage. Currently, there are 238 world language programs in elementary and high schools District-wide, offering instruction in 11 world languages, but the distribution of these programs across the District is not equitable. In addition, English learners (ELs) need to excel in their native language and have an opportunity to achieve English language proficiency through high-quality English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. Currently, 27% of ELs do not reach English language proficiency within six years.

Strategies

- Expand world and dual language programs, prioritizing communities with limited access, specifically Black communities.
- Improve the quality of EL programs and services provided to all ELs, including newcomers and Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE), by strengthening the core content and native language instruction and wraparound services and partnerships.
- Strengthen existing world language programs and Spanish/English dual language programs and expand programs to include more languages spoken by CPS students and families.

Five-Year Goals

- Add three world languages and three dual language programs each year.
- Increase the number of ELs achieving language proficiency by 7%.
- Increase the number of students graduating with the Seal of Biliteracy by at least 15%.

Students With Disabilities

Priority

Ensure the rightful presence of every student with disabilities so they can fully engage in rigorous instruction at their grade level, in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible, and accessing the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers.

Visionary Goal

Every student with a disability will receive rigorous instruction in their least restrictive environment.

Why It Matters

Students with disabilities have the right to reach their full potential while being educated in their least restrictive environment and to be provided with the support needed to engage fully in all aspects of school programming with their general education peers. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, more students have been identified as having a disability, and a disproportionate number of students have been separated from their general education peers for the majority of the school day. In the past, we have had inconsistent practices throughout the District, poor communication with schools and families, and a lack of transparency with stakeholders, which resulted in students with disabilities not receiving the services they needed to be successful. We must protect every student's civil right to be provided the same resources as their general education peers.

Strategies

- Provide robust professional development to special education teachers, Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams, and other staff to engage students with disabilities in high-quality curriculum and instruction in the least restrictive environment with their general education peers.
- Expand access for students with disabilities to joyful and well-rounded experiences, such as out-of-school-time enrichment programs and athletics.
- Ensure every school provides a full continuum of education services for students with disabilities who need greater support outside of the general education classroom, and ensure every community has access to programs that meet the needs of the students who live there. Showcase exemplary practices across all special education settings, including general education, cluster classrooms, and specialty schools, to drive large-scale District-wide implementation of best practices.
- Engage families, school staff, the Office for Students with Disabilities Family Advisory Board, the Special Education Advisory Committee, and community partners to provide input in program allocations.
- Prepare students with disabilities for rigorous course options and placement in high school programs based on IEPs and transition goals.

Five-Year Goals

- 100% of teachers in co-teaching roles and 100% of IEP teams will participate in professional learning on implementing guidelines on making placement decisions about the education of students with disabilities.
- Increase the percentage of high school students with disabilities enrolled in Career and Technical Education, arts, International Baccalaureate programming, selective enrollment, Advanced Placement, early college, and military academies.
- All schools will implement a full continuum of special education services while enforcing students' right to be educated in their least restrictive environment.
- Increase trust with the families of students with disabilities by providing accessible multi-modal parent training, direct support, and consistent two-way communication that includes a variety of ways for families to share their experience and feedback.

Early Learning

Priority

Create high-quality, comprehensive, and aligned learning experiences for students in preschool through second grade focused on building knowledge and foundational academic skills in all content areas (including social-emotional learning), providing support to meet the unique needs of all young learners, and expanding enrichment opportunities.

Visionary Goal

Every student will begin third grade as confident, empowered, and supported learners with a strong foundation of academic and social-emotional skills that will accelerate them to life-long success.

Why It Matters

Alignment within and across the early grades is a critical catalyst toward improved outcomes for students and improvement in student and family experiences. It is important for children and families to have seamless transitions at this critical juncture through increased coordination, cohesion, and collaboration between families and schools. Alignment of these early learning practices with elementary, middle, and high school will ultimately ensure all students graduate with the foundation needed for success in life. Research suggests there is a strong connection between reading proficiency by third grade and increased academic achievement, college retention and career readiness, and a reduction in incarceration and high school drop-out rates.

Strategies

- Provide all preschool through second grade students with a daily experience that includes rigorous and responsive instruction in all content areas, as well as holistic learning opportunities and enrichment activities within and outside of the school day.
- Empower educators, coaches, and school leaders through comprehensive professional learning and coaching opportunities in the early grades, especially for English learners, students with disabilities, and Black and Latinx students.
- Partner with families of young learners to provide resources to support the development and engagement of their students.

Five-Year Goals

- Increase the percentage of Kindergarten through second grade students who demonstrate mid- or above-grade level performance on the end of year i-Ready assessment from 37% to 45% in math and from 42% to 50% in reading.
- Reduce the rate of chronic absenteeism for preschool through second grade students by 15%.

Postsecondary Success

Priority

Increase opportunities for students, especially those from historically underrepresented groups—such as Black students, Latinx students, low-income students, students with disabilities, and English learners—to earn college credit and advanced career credentials while in high school so that they are prepared for sustained success in college and their chosen career pathway.

Visionary Goal

Every student will earn the equivalent of a semester of college credits or an advanced career credential before high school graduation.

Why It Matters

Courses where students can earn college credit or advanced career credentials while still in high school allow students to demonstrate college and career readiness and save students time and money on their postsecondary pathway, positioning students to get a headstart on career pathways aligned with their passions and interests. [Research shows](#) that earning college credits in high school has a positive impact on students' overall academic achievement, completion of high school, and attainment of a college degree. Advanced career credentials can be leveraged as access points to apprenticeships and employment directly from high school and can also be stacked as continued postsecondary education, increasing students' persistence in their selected pathway. Career exposure activities starting in middle school prepare students to participate in advanced courses that connect to their postsecondary career plans. In SY2023, 49% of students graduated with an advanced course credit or a career credential. However, participation is limited based on where students attend school, with some schools not offering any advanced course options. Our Black students have limited access to advanced coursework and career credentials and the preparation needed for success and are earning these at a much lower rate than their counterparts.

Strategies

- Ensure all high school students have access to high-quality advanced course options including AP, IB, early college, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and JROTC by conducting annual equity reviews and helping schools expand offerings that increase the number of students earning credits towards college completion or career.
- Expand access in communities across the city to high-quality, career-connected education pathways that prepare students for careers with family-sustaining wages, including CTE, work-based learning, City Colleges Model Pathways, and citywide career programs. Align CTE programs to the Illinois State Board of Education's College and Career Pathway Endorsements to ensure students in CTE programs can earn advanced career credentials in high-growth, high-wage industries.
- Ensure career advising and exposure begins in middle school so all students in grades 6–12 have access to high-quality advising and career exposure activities.

Five-Year Goals

- Increase the percent of high school graduates earning advanced course credits and career credentials from 49% to 70%.
- 100% of schools serving 6th-12th grade students will use CPS Success Bound advising curriculum which centers on career exploration, high school selection, and postsecondary access to drive completion of Individual Learning Plans in SchoolLinks.
- Develop a middle school strategy and plan by engaging stakeholders and building on the current initiatives like CPS Success Bound, To and Through, algebra hubs, and high school course offerings for middle school students.

Every School Creates the Conditions for Success, and the District Provides Equitable Resources for Schools

To be successful, we must resource every school across the District to meet the necessary conditions for a rigorous, joyful, and equitable learning experience, empowering those most impacted by structural inequity to reach their full potential.



Accelerating Proven Practices

In our unwavering focus on the daily student experience, over the next five years we will accelerate our current practices that ensure schools have the resources and conditions for success:

Healing Centered Framework: Continue to transform CPS into the most trauma-engaged, culturally responsive school district in the country through our Healing Centered Framework.

Universal Student Supports: Strengthen Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) across schools, ensuring academic and social-emotional learning (SEL) supports are universally available to children across the District.

Culture and Climate Teams: Ensure 100% of schools have highly effective culture and climate teams in place that oversee the establishment and implementation of universal supports and strategies centered around collective well-being for students and staff, school-wide climate, and relational trust development as part of student social and emotional development.

Collaboration Around Student Needs: Increase collaboration among teachers, interventionists, and MTSS teams to proactively identify students' academic needs and provide targeted interventions so that all children are accessing grade-level content.

Out-of-School Time Opportunities: Continue the expansion of summer and out-of-school time programs, focusing on students furthest from opportunity.

Staff Leadership Opportunities: Expand professional development and leadership opportunities for all school staff.

Hard-To-Staff Positions: Prioritize filling vacancies in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas through targeted initiatives like Opportunity Schools and Teach Chicago Tomorrow.

Technology Resources: Provide fast and free high-speed internet for students who need it the most, and provide technology devices and resources to all students.

Business Diversity: Increase contracting with certified minority-owned and woman-owned business enterprises in the Chicagoland area by promoting access to procurement opportunities and establishing aspirational goals of 30% minority-owned business enterprises (MBE) and 7% women-owned business enterprises (WBE).

Targeted Priorities

Based on feedback from our community engagement process, we identified targeted priorities to offset the challenges posed by growing facility needs and structural deficits in CPS at a time when enrollment and overall state funding are declining. These priorities focus on school cultures that foster connectedness and well-being, exceptional and diverse talent, 21st-century learning environments, modernized systems, and refining the equitable funding model that will ensure we provide students with exceptional learning experiences.

Connectedness and Well-being

Priority

Create robust support systems and align resources to meet students' diverse needs, ensuring a safe and supportive school community.

Visionary Goal

Students will feel supported from the moment they begin their educational journey at CPS, reducing the need for critical interventions later in their lives.

Why It Matters

As we emerge from the pandemic, students continue to report feeling less connected to their school communities, raising concern about students' overall well-being. Schools must address these needs to ensure students are poised to advance in school and their daily lives. We must approach student learning by considering the whole child's physical health, mental health, safety, social and emotional needs, and academic needs. It is critical to focus on students' strengths while simultaneously supporting their needs. It is also important for students, families, staff, and communities to play an active role in their wellness.

Strategies

- Empower school-based Behavioral Health Teams to collaboratively approach student behavioral health referrals, assess student needs, assign and monitor progress on interventions, and leverage community partners to support the individualized needs of students through small group interventions or mentoring programs during the school day.
- Ensure schools have Whole School Safety plans that incorporate restorative justice practices and connect staff, students, families, and communities to social-emotional learning and mental health resources that address trauma and promote healing.
- Provide students at every school and grade level with opportunities to participate in a variety of high-interest and responsive enrichment activities outside of the school day, including elementary and high school sporting activities based on student interest.

- Engage families and community partners in developing safe and welcoming physical environments in schools. Provide schools with the resources needed to ensure they are spaces where students and staff feel safe, affirmed, and valued.
- Intentionally and proactively engage families and students who are most likely to become disconnected from their learning community. Increase connection of highest priority students with caring adults or other interventions to reduce high absenteeism.
- Foster health literacy and focus on the physical health of students and families by connecting them to health resources (i.e., providers and health insurance), investing in school nurses and physical education teachers, and enabling students and families to find, understand, and use information needed to make informed health-related decisions.

Five-Year Goals

- 100% of elementary schools and high schools will have a robust Behavioral Health Team.
- 100% of schools will have Whole School Safety Committees and will implement Whole School Safety Plans.
- Increase out-of-school time participation from 42% to 50% of students enrolled in at least one program during the school year, prioritizing students furthest from opportunity.
- Increase the number of schools rated as strong or very strong on the Supportive Environment Essential from the 5Essentials survey from 17% to at least 25%.
- Decrease the chronic absence rate by 15%.

Exceptional and Diverse Talent

Priority

Recruit, retain, support, and develop exceptional and diverse talent at all levels of the District.

Visionary Goal

Students will have a rigorous, joyful, and equitable educational experience facilitated by a fully staffed, highly talented, and diverse workforce at all levels of the District; staff will feel supported, valued, and given opportunities to improve their skills and grow their careers.

Why It Matters

Developing a comprehensive talent strategy is one of the most important initiatives a school district can undertake to create the conditions for students to thrive, particularly those furthest from opportunity. CPS is the largest employer in Illinois. Recruiting a world-class workforce is critical, but nurturing our employees' growth and development is equally important. It is imperative that CPS employees have ample opportunities to grow and develop while working for CPS—all of which will help us retain employees. It is also especially important that school and District staff demographics reflect Chicago's diverse student population and their communities. A diverse workforce offers profound academic and social-emotional benefits for all students, especially students of color.

Strategies

- Continue to invest in the Teach Chicago initiative, CPS' comprehensive strategy to build the highest-quality and most diverse teaching force in the nation.
- Continue to build a diverse workforce at every level of the organization by expanding our teacher pathway initiatives and investing in professional development and leadership development opportunities, especially for employees of color.
- Develop and implement a robust employee experience and retention strategy, including expanding Be Well, our comprehensive employee wellness program, and Lead with CPS, our hub of professional and leadership development opportunities.
- Develop a transition plan to insource select school support services (such as custodial services, technology support, and transportation staff) to elevate service quality, foster greater accountability, and positively change the student experience.
- Continue to monitor, refine, and improve talent strategies. Evaluate the impact of teacher preparation programs on teacher recruitment and retention, and assess employee satisfaction with external partners.

Five-Year Goals

- Reduce teacher vacancies by 25% in majority Black and Latinx schools and be on track to support over 500 CPS graduates to become teachers through the Teach Chicago Tomorrow program, focusing on communities that have historically had understaffed schools (e.g., South

and West sides) and teachers in high-need subject areas (e.g., special education, bilingual education, early childhood).

- Strive to recruit 1,500 more Black and 1,500 more Latinx teachers. Ensure that our executive leadership team is more representative of the students and communities we serve.
- Improve teacher retention from 92% to 94%, resulting in more employees staying in CPS, providing stability to our schools, and progressing into more senior roles. Sustain proportional retention rates of Black and Latinx teachers to the overall District rates.
- Commit to transition 25% of privatized support personnel (e.g., custodial, technology support, and transportation workers) to District employees.

21st Century Learning Environments

Priority

Co-design and implement the Educational Facilities Master Plan (EFMP) with input from the community to create modern, efficient, healthy, green, safe and equitable conditions for 21st-century learning. Ensure every student experiences a well-maintained and joy-inspiring learning environment.

Visionary Goal

A long-term capital and facilities plan that empowers the creation of 21st-century learning environments, with investment guided by each community's unique priorities and a commitment to safety and equity.

Why It Matters

Our schools are the anchors of our communities. Modern buildings are critical for teaching and learning, community health, sustainability, and vibrancy. Maintaining, cleaning, and modernizing our facilities is a monumental challenge. The District manages an expansive and aging infrastructure, with 522 campuses and 803 buildings covering more than 62 million square feet, with an average age of 84 years. Our buildings are grappling with more than \$3 billion in deferred maintenance costs, which will only grow. Despite annual budget allocations for maintenance and capital improvements, our efforts are increasingly insufficient, leaving us struggling to provide equitable facilities for students and staff. Proactive, sustainable planning for long-term capital and facility investment is essential to transforming our schools into spaces that fully support students and a wide array of daily experiences—from athletic fields and science labs to restrooms and cafeterias.

Strategies

- Collaboratively advocate for and continue to seek consistent capital funding from public and private sources to support critical facility needs, program enhancements, healthy green schools, and renewable energy solutions.
- Develop strategic recommendations based on facility assessments and educational considerations to evaluate outdated buildings, decommission independent annexes or branches, and ease building overcrowding.
- Adopt building performance indicators to establish clear decision-making standards for well-resourced, environmentally-friendly, and efficient buildings.
- Ensure engagement with parents and community members through surveys and community meetings while upholding a transparent and publicly accessible up-to-date five-year Education Facilities Master Plan (EFMP).

Five-Year Goals

- Increase facility improvement funding by pursuing public (e.g., local, state, and federal) and private sources, aiming for a 10% increase annually, reaching \$250M.
- Implement energy management systems and sustainable building practices.
- Increase the energy efficiency of school buildings by 20%.
- Promote transparency by monitoring attendance, gathering feedback, and annually improving our EFMP website based on stakeholder input to continuously improve our educational facilities.

Modernization of Technology and Systems

Priority

Modernize existing technology and systems to reduce staff time spent on operational processes and enhance the student learning experience.

Visionary Goal

The District will be supported by a world-class technology infrastructure that reduces the burden of business and school operations, incorporates the latest technology into the daily learning experience, and streamlines how families can access information for their students.

Why It Matters

For schools to thrive, they must have modern technology and systems. Cutting-edge technology enables school staff to engage more meaningfully with students, bolsters students' learning experiences, and creates equity for children with fewer technological resources at home. Our current systems are outdated and in need of critical updates. Modernizing our technology and systems will decrease the time staff spends on operational processes, allowing more time to focus on students and families. These systems will also prevent cybersecurity risks, improve communications, and enable better data-driven decision-making through enhanced analytics and reporting.

Strategies

- Replace central office financial and operational systems (procurement, accounting, budget, human resources, and payroll) with a single Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Cloud Platform, so we can streamline tools for educators, reduce operational burden and increase productivity at schools and central offices, allowing more time focused on engaging with students and families.
- Upgrade to faster internet access at schools and annually assess internet speeds and capacity needs to improve teacher and student experience.
- Leverage innovative tools designed to promote equity in educational learning, bridge the digital divide, and improve administrative decision-making processes.
- Improve data quality with real-time mobile access for students and families in order to facilitate learning and communication among students, teachers, and families.
- Enhance student information systems and digital curriculum to integrate them with other CPS systems.
- Increase partnerships with companies aligned with our modernization and systems to create a pipeline to opportunities to increase student access to technology and enhance learning.

Five-Year Goals

- Successfully migrate financial and core operational systems to a single enterprise platform.

- Increase internet bandwidth by 400% in elementary schools and 900% in high schools to reduce outages and concerns about poor and slow network performance and improve teacher and student experiences accessing resources.
- 100% of school-based staff will have on-demand access to the most critical data points needed to drive decision-making and improve student outcomes.

Equitable Funding Model

Priority

Refine, through analysis of strengths and weaknesses, the funding model methodology implemented in SY2025 that aims to prioritize and allocate people, time, and money to align with levels of need and opportunity to create quality experiences for all students, incorporating educator, family, and student voices.

Visionary Goal

Every school will have the resources they need to ensure a high-quality and equitable student experience, regardless of the size of the school or the unique needs of the student population.

Why It Matters

Students and families should expect a high-quality and equitable educational experience regardless of where they live. Schools need the resources to hire staff and implement programs aligned with students' needs. Families and community members must be provided with clear information about their schools' budgets to allow them to engage more deeply in school budget discussions and empower them to advocate for needed changes.

Strategies

- Continue to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the new CPS funding model to improve the distribution of resources in a more equitable and transparent manner.
- Continue advocating for the state of Illinois to fully fund CPS. Work with partners and stakeholders to increase school funding from local, state, federal, and philanthropic sources.
- Continue to provide comprehensive and transparent information to ensure stakeholders understand the District's resourcing strategy and the resources available to each school.

Five-Year Goals

- Decrease class sizes in schools throughout the District, prioritizing smaller class sizes in higher-need schools.
- Increase stability in school staffing and decrease turnover rates. 100% of schools will have the resource capacity to hire full-time arts, physical education, and other holistic/special instructional staff. Reach at least 90% funding adequacy, based on the state's funding adequacy assessment.
- Host at least five yearly community budget roundtables to solicit input into resourcing strategies and provide an Local School Council (LSC) budget informational session prior to the release of school budgets each spring.

Every Community Has Inclusive and Collaborative Partnerships for Thriving Schools

We are committed to strengthening the connections between our schools and our communities to improve the daily learning experience for all students across all school types—neighborhood, magnet, selective enrollment, options, contract, and charter schools. Community partnerships are necessary to transform all schools into community hubs that support students, families, and our broader communities. Every community must be anchored by thriving neighborhood schools if we are to achieve our goal of providing every student with a daily learning experience that is rigorous, joyful, and equitable. Additionally, it is critically important that our students, families, and community members are actively engaged in decision-making throughout the implementation of the strategic plan.



Accelerating Proven Practices

In our unwavering focus on the daily student experience, over the next five years, we will accelerate our current community-focused practices that address ongoing disinvestment and inequitable racial and economic policies:

Student Voice: Significantly grow the number of student voice committees to one in every high school, increasing the number of students engaged.

Community Engagement: Implement a community engagement framework and actively create a variety of opportunities to deepen community engagement and collaboration with stakeholders who reflect the diversity of the CPS student body, especially those historically disenfranchised from the decision-making process and the people most impacted by inequity.

- **District-Wide Planning and Convening:** Continue to lead and co-design a stakeholder engagement process in school buildings across the city related to the CPS budget, the educational facilities master plan, the state of the District, and planning for other major CPS policies and initiatives.
- **Community Action Councils:** Continue to support the leadership of Community Action Councils (CACs) in the South and West sides of Chicago, which bring together families, school administrators, teachers, staff, and community stakeholders to support educational success within their communities.
- **Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), Parent Leadership Network, and Parent Board of Governors:** Continue to support and help accelerate the leadership of parents across the school district to be actively engaged in their children's education and school community.
- **Faith-Based Initiatives:** Continue to partner with faith-based institutions and activate additional support for students in their communities.

Local School Councils: Build trust by ensuring Local School Councils (LSCs) adhere to the state mandate of providing diverse representation, overseeing the governance and improvement of schools and engaging a wide range of members essential for effective educational oversight and progress. Continue to promote diverse representation on LSCs, and establish decision-making roles for students on all LSCs.

Teacher Advisory Council: Promote the Teacher Advisory Council to serve as a forum for direct communication and collaboration between CPS teachers and executive leadership.

School Leader Engagement: Deeply engage school leaders on all key decisions that impact their schools through bi-monthly meetings with the central office leadership, the Principal Advisory Council, and Network Advisory Groups.

Design of Policies: Align stakeholder engagement with policy-making by creating strong systems that directly connect student, parent, and community voices with the shaping of District policies.

Go CPS: Continue to improve the Go CPS application process and socialize across all communities to support smooth enrollment practices for families and schools.

School Models: Continue supporting schools across multiple models, including neighborhood schools, selective enrollment, magnet, charter, and other programming options that meet the needs of our students and their communities.

Equitable Enrollment Processes: Ensure that our enrollment processes are equitable and provide opportunities for all students to access a rigorous and joyful learning experience, with a targeted focus on increasing access to different school models for underrepresented students and students from disinvested communities.

Accountability of School Education Partners: Expand our support and ensure that we hold our educational partners within our CPS ecosystem, including charter, contract, and options schools, accountable by:

- Revisiting the renewal processes and supports given to charter and contract schools once CIDT is fully implemented in SY2026.
- Prioritizing the design of new models for schools with in-house options.
- Collaborating with educational partners to share information, learn from successful practices, and improve communication between the District and charter and contract families.

Targeted Priorities

Our ongoing conversations with community stakeholders have underscored how past District decisions have deepened inequalities in access to quality education, particularly in historically disinvested communities. To address these inequities, we have identified key targeted priorities to expand community schools and strengthen preschool to high school pathways through neighborhood schools.

Community Schools

Priority

Provide the resources and support necessary to transform schools into community hubs, through community school models, including Sustainable Community Schools (SCS), fostering authentic partnerships that enhance students' daily learning experience. The SCS principles are aligned to our District's core values and highlight our commitment to promote community hubs that are designed to provide wraparound academic, health, and social support for the entire community beyond the school day.

Visionary Goal

Every school will become a vibrant community hub where families, students, educators, and community members collaborate and connect to a range of services that meet their academic and social-emotional needs. By prioritizing racial and social justice, restorative practices, and inclusive leadership, community schools will empower and equip all stakeholders to actively participate in creating nurturing and inclusive environments that promote collective well-being.

Why It Matters

Community Schools form partnerships between educators, families, and community members to address both academic and non-academic needs. By collaborating with local institutions and organizations, these schools offer services such as afterschool programs, health care, family engagement, and workforce training. This holistic approach not only supports students' growth but also strengthens local neighborhoods by fostering educated citizens and vibrant communities.

Strategies

- Expand partnerships between schools and community organizations and increase investments that strengthen CPS schools as community hubs, prioritizing our most disinvested communities.
- Develop a plan to expand Sustainable Community Schools across the city through the Sustainable Community Schools Joint Task Force.
- Collaboratively advocate and seek philanthropic, federal, state, and private funding to support community schools across the District.

Five-Year Goals

- Implement, strengthen, and scale proven models for community schools, including, but not limited to, Sustainable Community Schools, Full Service Community Schools Initiative, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

Preschool to High School Pathways in Neighborhood Schools

Priority

Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for improving preschool to high school graduation pathways through neighborhood schools. We will focus on providing high-quality programs with an initial emphasis on historically disinvested communities.

Visionary Goal

Every school across the city and community will provide a quality, engaging, and rigorous learning experience. Every student can rely on their neighborhood school as a strong option for their education journey and will be supported in their transition between schools (e.g., preschool to elementary or elementary to high school).

Why It Matters

Every student in the City should be able to complete their pathway from preschool to high school graduation, knowing they are receiving a high-quality educational experience. When families consider which schools are the best fit for their students, they should be able to weigh many strong options, including their zoned neighborhood school, charter, magnet, selective enrollment, and other high-quality options. Given the history of structural inequities and disinvestments in our city, too many Chicago families have limited access to fully resourced, quality neighborhood schools. We must ensure that every community can provide strong preschool to high school graduation pathways through neighborhood schools, with an intentional focus on disinvested communities. We must provide schools with the resources and support they need to create the conditions for students to be successful in their neighborhoods, regardless of their unique learning needs.

Strategies

- Prioritize investments in neighborhood schools with a focus on the schools and communities most harmed by structural racism and disinvestment. Ensure decisions about schools are aligned with our strategic plan, are not made in isolation, prioritize educational equity, and enrich students' daily learning experiences.
- Authentically engage LSCs, PACs, CACs, and school-wide stakeholders to design and plan programmatic improvements in order to ensure neighborhood schools are able to serve the needs of their students.

Five-Year Goals

- Increase the percentage of students attending schools within their neighborhood or community area as measured by enrollment on the 20th day.
- Reduce the average travel distance between a student's home and school.
- Increase community collaboration as we build a system that guarantees equitable access to high-quality educational programming in every community.

Next Steps

Thank you to the students, families, educators, and community members who provided input and feedback as we developed this strategic plan. Your engagement ensured we developed strategies to address our students' most critical needs.

We expect to develop, iterate, and refine these strategies further over the next five years, with a deep focus on continuously improving schools and our students' experiences. Going forward, we are committed to creating opportunities for deep and authentic community engagement and collaboration with stakeholders who reflect the diversity of the CPS student body, especially those historically disenfranchised from the decision-making process and the most impacted by inequity.

We cannot achieve our vision for students alone, and we are asking our community to continue to work alongside us as we move into the implementation phase of the strategic plan. Please check the CPS website for opportunities to participate.