



Block Grant Listening Session December 2023

A close-up photograph of children's hands reaching into a cardboard box filled with colorful crayons. The box is open, and the crayons are arranged in rows. The children are wearing casual clothing, including a striped shirt and a blue t-shirt with a yellow wristband. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the hands and the crayons.

Welcome

As you join us, please share your **name**,
organization, and a **cherished holiday tradition** in
the chat ?



Today's Agenda

- **Opening**
- **Block Grant Overview: Current Administration + Impact of Change**
- **Clarifying Questions**
- **Breakout Groups**
- **Next Steps**
- **Closing**



City of Chicago Equity Statement

EQUITY DEFINITION

An outcome and a process that results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive.

EQUITABLE PROCESSES

Requires a new way of doing business that,

1. Prioritizes access and opportunities for groups who have the greatest need
2. Methodically evaluates benefits and burdens produced by seemingly neutral systems and practices
3. Engages those most impacted by the problems we seek to address as experts in their own experiences, strategists in co-creating solutions, and evaluators of success

Purpose of Today

- ✓ Gather insights from experts with diverse backgrounds to assist in decision-making related to the Early Childhood Block Grant. This is expected to be completed by January 2024.
- ✓ Through this comprehensive conversation, we hope to gain an understanding of the needs of all providers. **Our priority is to ensure that Smart Start Illinois Investment is allocated equitably.**





Listening Session Timeline

Action	Timeline
* Host 1st community engagement listening sessions	Dec 12 - 13
Synthesize insights	Dec 14 - Jan 10
Share insights with ECRC Exec Committee	Jan 11
Host 2nd community engagement listening sessions (share insights & gather additional feedback)	Week of Jan 17 - 19
Final insights report	Jan 24
Discussions to share final recommendations insight report with ECRC Exec. Committee	Jan 25 - 26
Finalize Decision for strategy planning	Jan 31



About the Early Childhood Block Grant

Preschool for All (PFA) and Preschool for All Expansion (PFAE)

- Provides early education opportunities for children between the ages of 3-5
- Priority given to children from low-income families and those who are determined to be socially or academically “at risk” due to other family or community factors
- Offers high-quality comprehensive services including:
 - High-quality Instructional programming to support children's' language, literacy, math, physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development
 - Connections to health, mental health, dental, and social services
 - Intensive parent engagement services
 - Targeted supports for positive behavioral and social emotional development
 - Intentional physical activity opportunities
 - Early Childhood expertise in supporting culturally, linguistically, and ability-diverse children
 - Ongoing professional development and support for educator





About the Early Childhood Block Grant

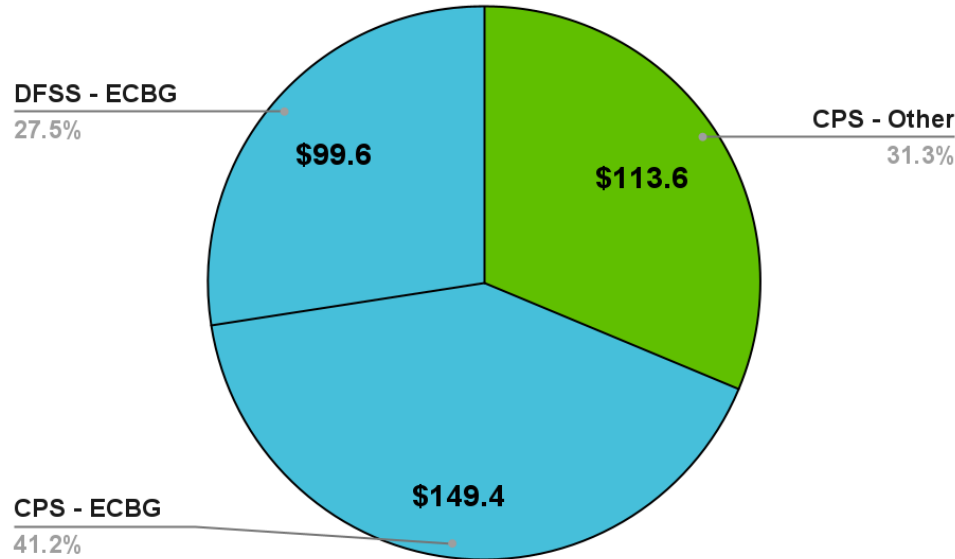


Prevention Initiative (PI)

- Provides coordinated services to at-risk children and their families through a network of child and family service providers
- Promotes the development of at-risk infants and toddlers up to age 3



FY24 CPS ECBG PreK Budget (\$363M)



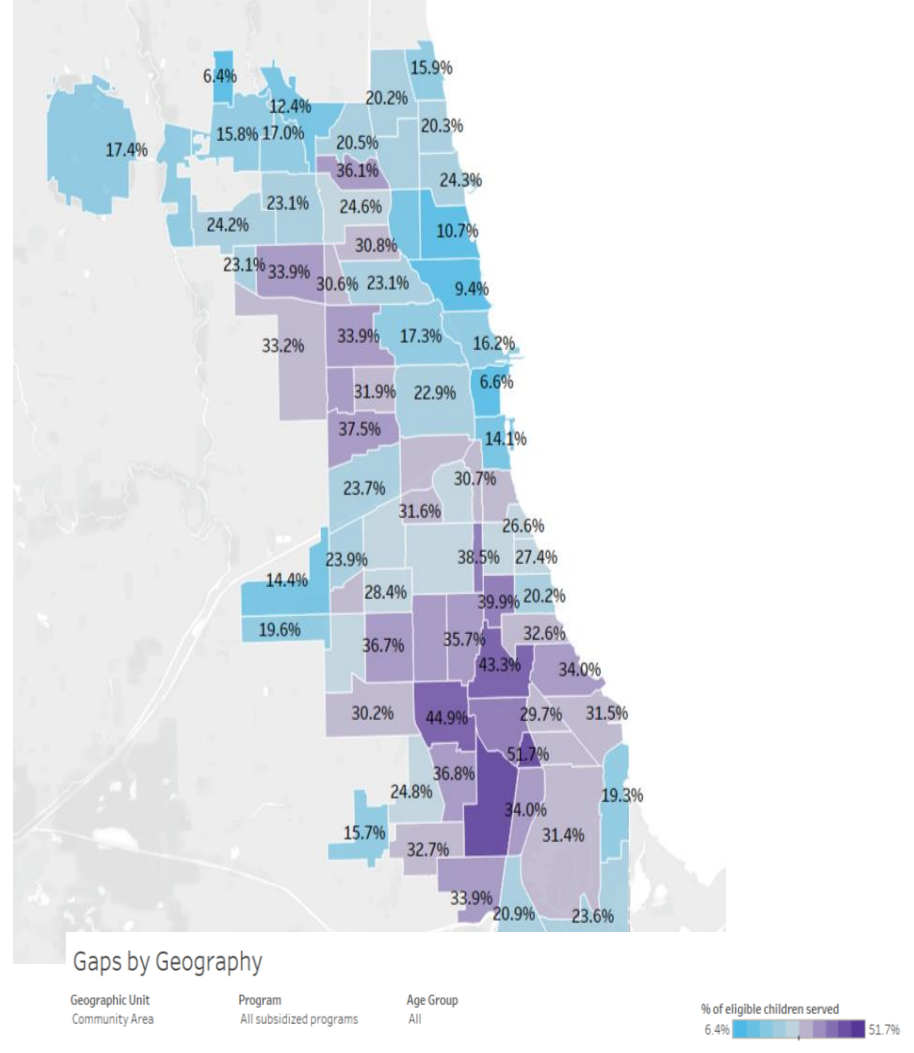
- By statute, CPS receives **37% of the state's Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG)** - currently \$249M
- The **\$100M** in ECBG allocated to DFSS from CPS includes:
 - \$49M for PFA (ages 3 to 5)
 - \$49M for PI (prenatal to age 3)
 - \$1.5M for scholarships
- CPS utilizes **\$114M** in local/other funds to supplement preschool programming



Population Served

Table 1. Number of PFA/PI Eligible Children Birth - Five

Number of Children Eligible Prevention Initiative	82,412
Number of Children Eligible for Preschool for All	41,940
Total Number of Children Eligible for PFA/PI	124,352





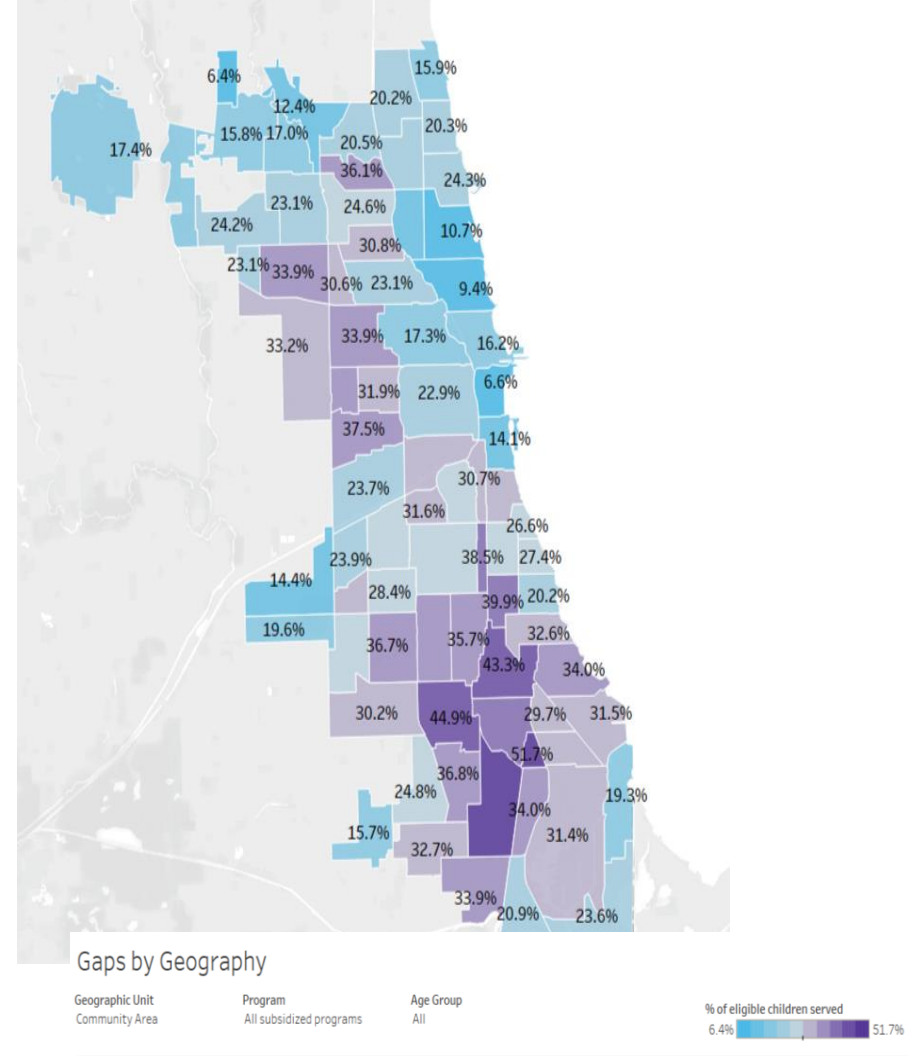
Population Served

Table 2. Number of PFA Eligible Children Birth - Five by Age

	PFA
Infant (0-15 months)	
Preschool-3 years (3 years on Sept. 1)	20,979
Preschool-4 years (4 years on Sept. 1)	20,961
Toddler (15 months-3 years as of Sept. 1)	
Grand Total	41,940

Table 3. Number of Unserved PFA Eligible Children

	PFA
Number of Eligible Children not Served	20,397
Percent Unserved	49%





Population Served

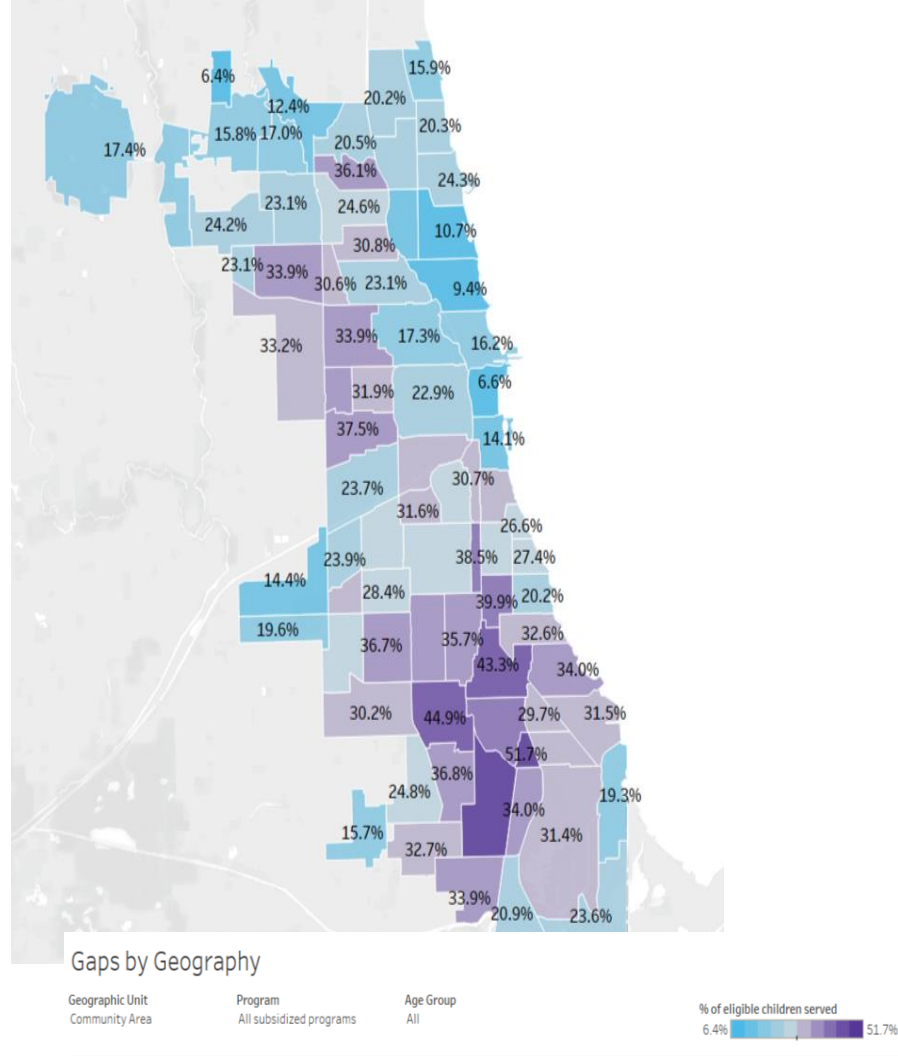
Table 2. Number of PI Eligible Children Birth - Five by Age

	PI
Infant (0-15 months)	26,202
Preschool-3 years (3 years on Sept. 1)	
Preschool-4 years (4 years on Sept. 1)	
Toddler (15 months-3 years as of Sept. 1)	56,210
Grand Total	82,412

Population Not Served

Table 3. Number of Unserved PI Eligible Children

	PI
Number of Eligible Children not Served	60,934
Percent Unserved	74%





Smart Start Priorities

Minimize child care deserts, raise child care wages, address the teacher shortages and expand child care quality the investment in Smart Start contracts, apprenticeships, and scholarships.

Stabilize and support Early Intervention, ensuring that children with delays and disabilities received the services needed for healthy development.

Sustain and expand Home visiting, rooted in innovative funding practices.





Potential Decision Point Based on Feedback

Should the Early Childhood Block Grant stay with its current Administrator, Department of Family Support Services for oversight?

or

Should the Early Childhood Block Grant return to Chicago Public Schools for administration and oversight?



Administration Change Impact

	STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
DFSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decreased administrative workload• Access for CBOs to subject matter experts and support services• An internal system and mechanism that ensures continuous focus on salary parity• Ability for CBO's to see the total cost of operations and cross allocate funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional layer of government administration• Difficulty meeting funder deadlines• Recipients receiving E/HS funds will have to report to two separate agencies• Small agencies require additional administrative supports
CPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single oversight of all ECBG funding for the city of Chicago• Increased opportunity to quickly respond to changing community needs of CBO providers.• Streamlined procurement process allowing• Opportunity to align district resources across schools and CBO providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPS will need to increase staffing and build infrastructure to directly manage PI and PFA within both schools and agencies• Time needed to create and launch an RFP for CBO providers• Agencies will require contracts with more than one entity.



Administration Change Impact: Summary

PROS

- Streamline processes and improve efficiency, leading to increased productivity and enhanced outcomes.
- Manage data more effectively, leading to better reporting and decision-making
- Improve the recipient experience and support better use of funding for services and supports.

CONS

- Requires a mind shifts and necessary training
- Impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of other connected systems
- Migration of data or data collections may impact reporting for measurable outcomes
- Change takes time which is not always on our side, people can be resistant to change which has adverse effects on a system



Community Insights: Practices to Uplift Equity

+ Equitable Distribution and Allocation

+ Collaboration and Transparent Policies

+ Financial Equity and Support for Providers



Community Insights: Shared Experiences

Center the Needs of Families

- Develop a continuum of services to meet the diverse needs of Chicago's children and families
- Expand community-based services available to meet the needs of families
- Acknowledge the diversity of family needs and advocate for flexibility in service delivery

Uplift the Needs of Community Organizations

- Implement more equitable funding strategies to prevent staff losses and center closures
- Emphasize the need for CBOs to have timely access to resources that directly benefit families



Community Insights: Smart Start Funding

1

Equitable Access and Layered Support: Ensure families can access services promptly, irrespective of socioeconomic status or home zip code. Implement a layered support system, prioritizing unhoused and disadvantaged children. Maintain a data-driven approach, ensuring resources are accessible, and families have clear access to available funding.

2

Strategic Advertisement for Inclusivity: Aim to utilize multiple advertisement platforms to reach both families and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). Prioritize strategic timing during the year that aligns with parents' needs, ensuring inclusivity and effectiveness.

3

Sustainable Investments in Small Childcare Programs: Extend funding to prevent closures and maintain accessible care options for working families.



Next Steps

- Share your feedback in the survey shared in the chat
- Be on the lookout for the next Listening Session invite (January 2024)