

# Chicago Early Learning Enrollment Kick-Off

March 18, 2024



**HIGH-QUALITY  
EARLY LEARNING**  
For Every Child In Chicago



# Agenda

- Welcome
- Update on CEL Application Data
- Intro to Collaborations
- Newcomer Families
- Improved Efforts
- Group Discussion/Q&A
- Closing and Next Steps

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# Welcome & Objective

This gathering aims to inform community stakeholders and partners about the new CEL Application launch and updates as well as to strategize effective ways to disseminate messaging to potential families.

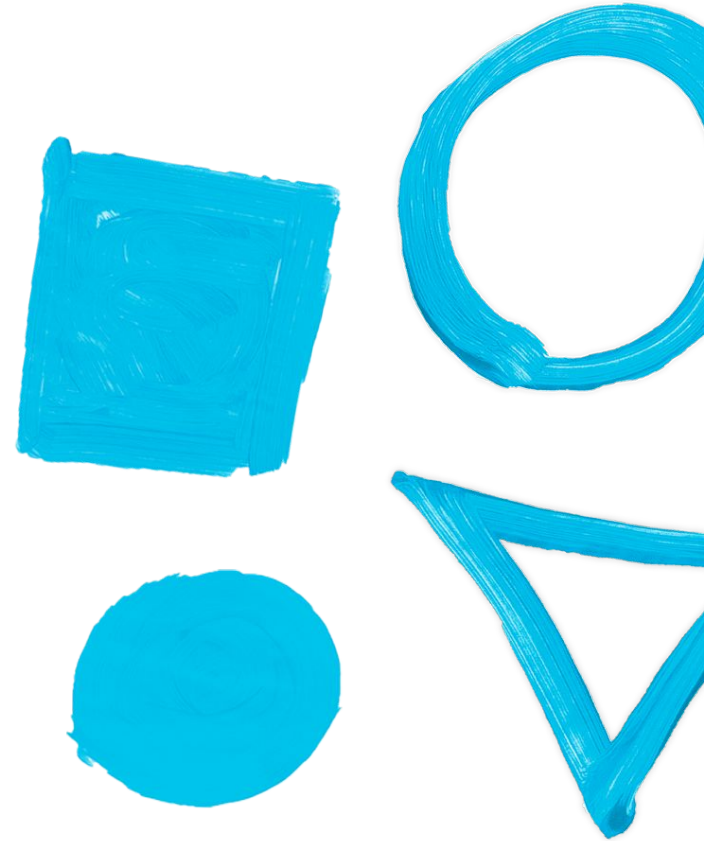


# Why Preschool Matters

## Pre-K applications open citywide April 9th!

When children attend quality Pre-K programs they:

- Experience greater brain development
- Gain a better grasp on language and math
- Develop their social-emotional skills to reduce behavioral problems and improve relationships
- Establish strong attendance patterns for future success
- Achieve future school readiness



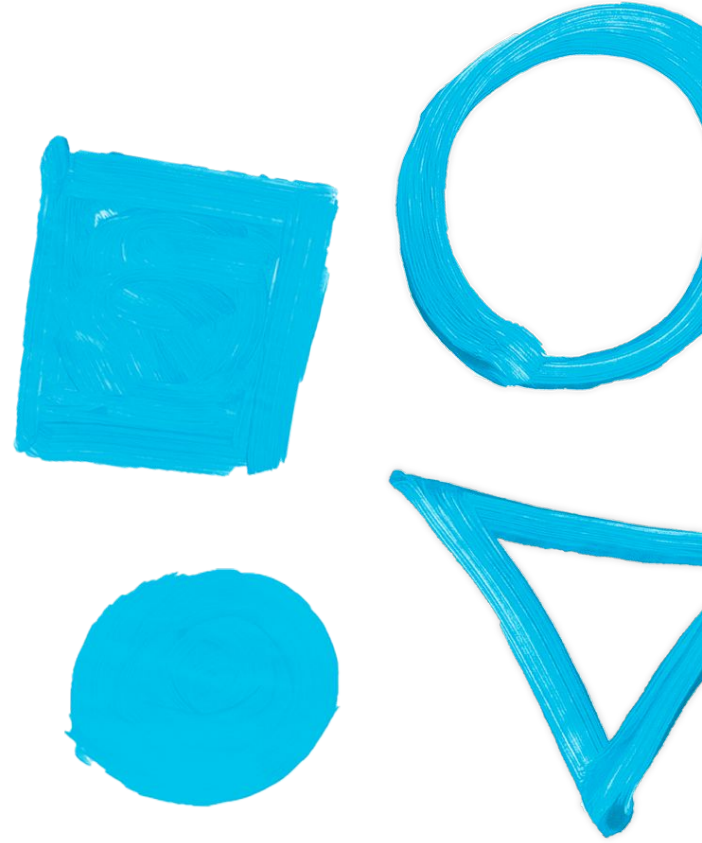
# How to Apply to Preschool



Explore your options and learn more about applying by visiting your preferred program, and online at [ChicagoEarlyLearning.org](https://ChicagoEarlyLearning.org)

## Questions?

Call the Family Support Hotline at (312) 229-1690 (Citywide)

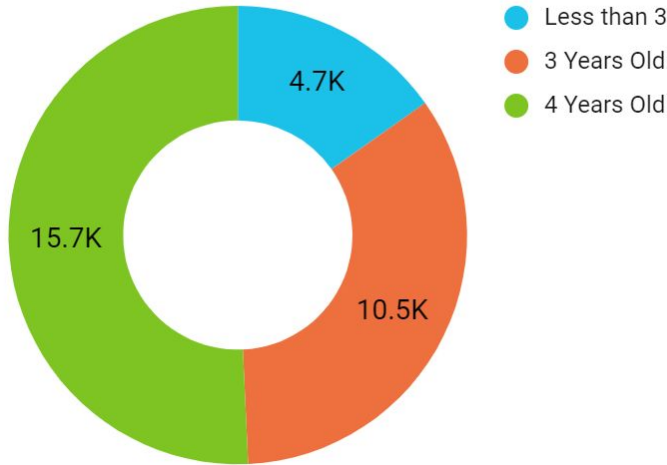


# Update on CEL Application Data

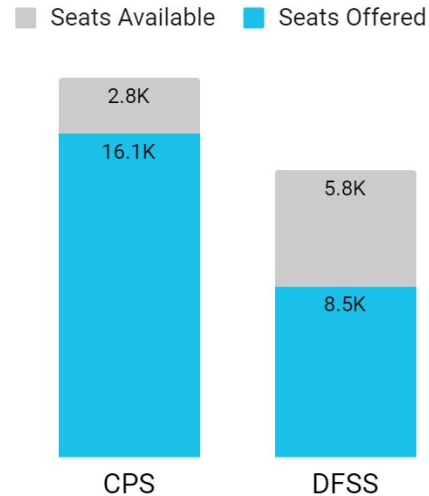


# Over 30,000 applicants have submitted applications for a CEL Program for the current school year, with three-quarters of all seats being offered as of March.

## Applicants by Age



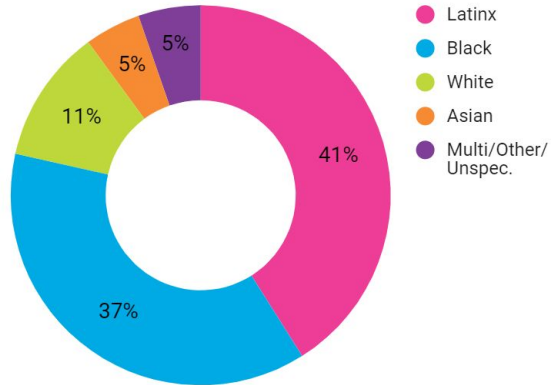
## Capacity and Offers



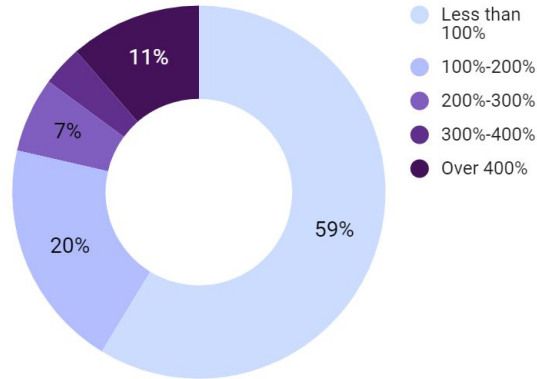


# Applicants' Demographics

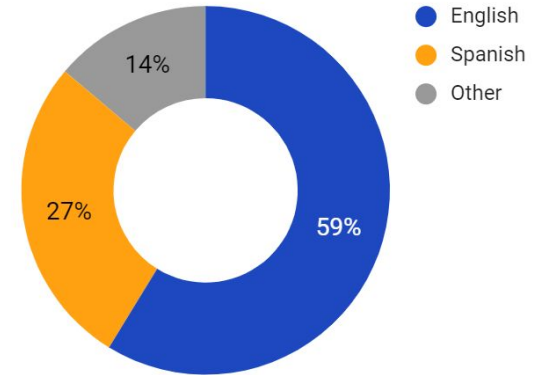
## Race/Ethnicity



## Income as % FPL



## Language Spoken



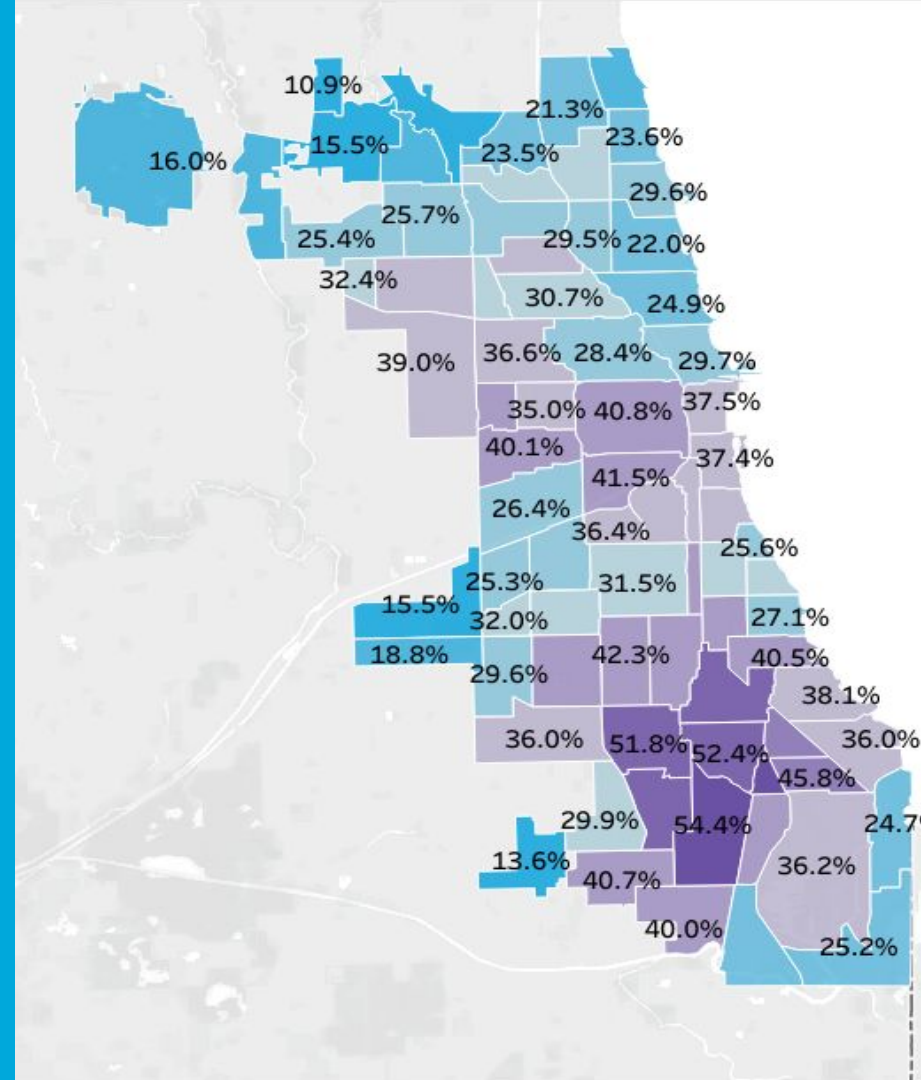


# Available Capacity

## Service gaps by age

- All children: 68%
- Infant and toddlers: 76%
- 3 and 4 year olds: 53%

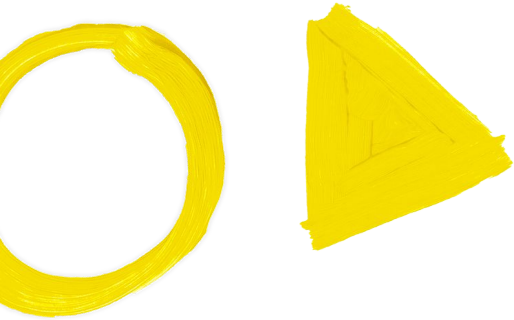
All children not enrolled in subsidized or private pay child care programs. Data source: cecids.org



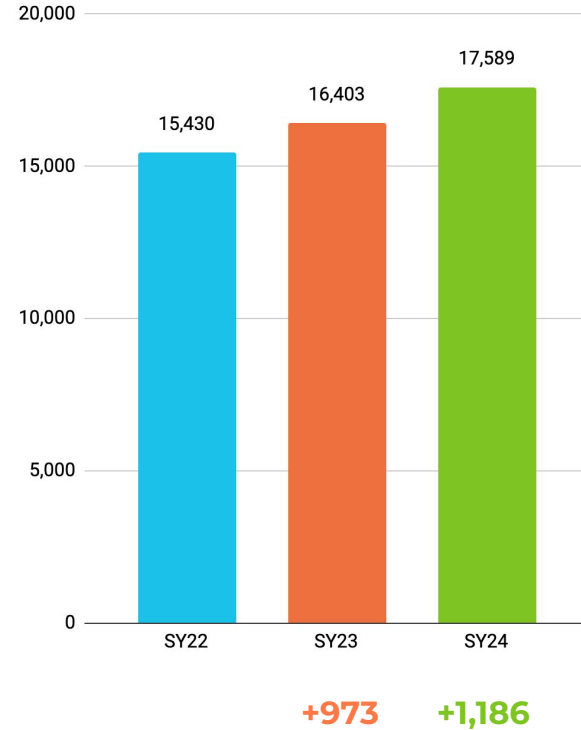
# Intro to Program Options and Enrollment



# Increase in Number of PE and PK Students Enrolled in 20th Day SY22 - SY24



20th Day PE/PK Enrollment



# CPS Programs



**School-Based Programs**  
*PK classrooms integrated into PK-8 buildings*

**Early Learning Centers**  
*Programs in buildings that only serve Pre-K students*

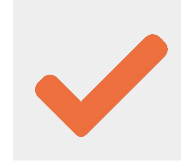
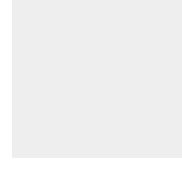
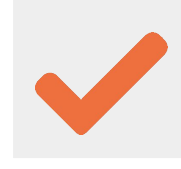
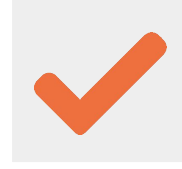
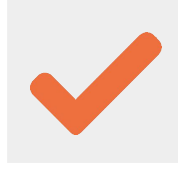
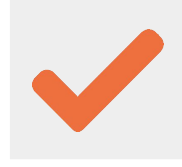
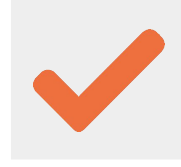
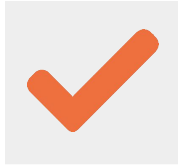
**Child Parent Centers**  
*Programs offer enhanced family engagement and PK-2 alignment within PK-8 buildings*

Full Day

Half Day

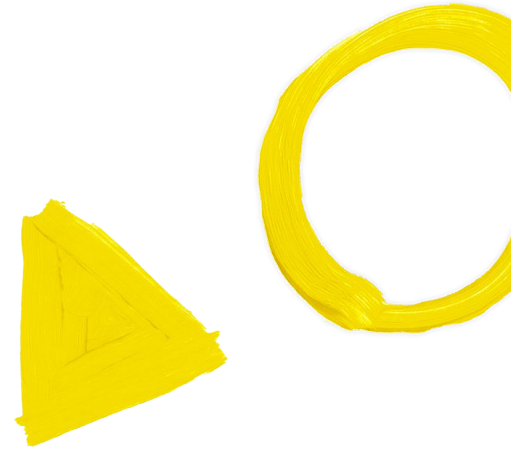
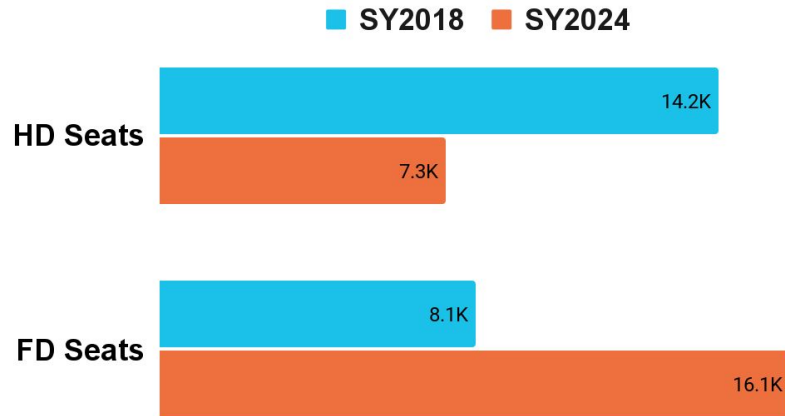
Serve Students with IEPs

On-Site Kindergarten



All CPS preschool programs are offered free of charge.

**Since the start of Universal Pre-K,  
CPS has doubled free full day availability  
while keeping half-day as an option for families in 373 schools.**



# DFSS Programs

- **Funds 96 Community Based organizations operating Early Learning Programs at 213 sites**
- **Full Day / Full Year program**
- **Funding Sources**
  - **State Early Childhood Block Grant**
    - Prevention Initiatives – Children aged birth – 3
    - Preschool for All – Children 3-5 years
    - Child Care Assistance Program – Children 0- 12 years of age
  - **Federal Head Start**
    - Early Head Start – Pregnant moms, children 0-3 years of age
    - Early Head Start Child Care Partnership – Children 0-3 years of age
    - Early Head Start Expansion = Children 0-3 years of age
    - Head Start – Children 3-5 years of age
- **Models**
  - Center-Based
  - Home Based / Home Visiting
  - Pregnant Moms
  - DOULA
  - Family Child Care Homes
  - Before and After Care options

Program	2023-2024 Funded Enrollment
Headstart	1,489
Early Head Start	1,276
Early Head Start CCP	1,100
Early Head Start Expansion	200
Preschool For All (PFA)	5,935
Prevention Initiative (PI)	4,996

**Total Funded Enrollment: 14,987**

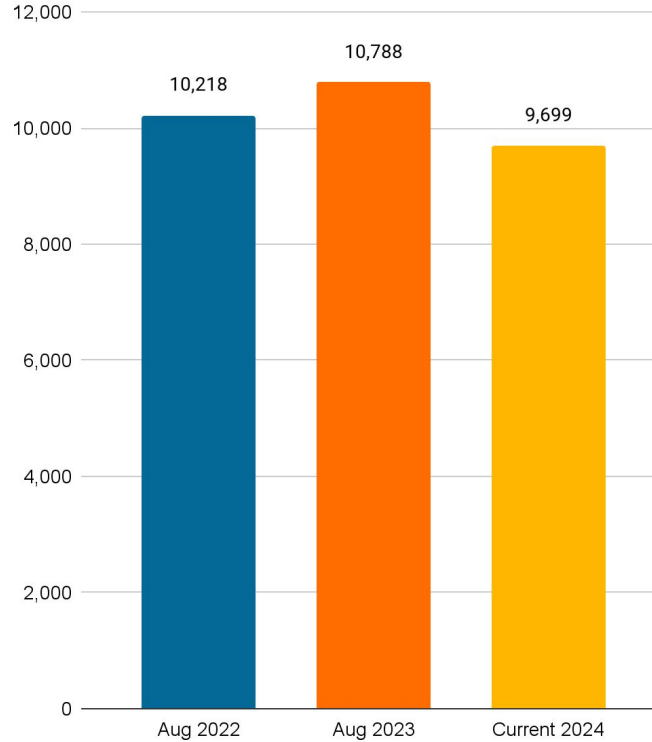
# DFSS

Department of Family  
and Support Services

## DFSS Programs

### Early Learning Enrollment Year-over-Year SY22-SY24

DFSS Children Services Division Enrollment





# Intro to Collaborations





***“What about the children?”***

**Since 1969, IAFC has been responding to this question.**

- Creating foundational conditions that allow children to reach their full potential in school and in life.
- Leading the state and nation in early childhood care and education.
- Improving learning and life outcomes for children and families.

**Our goal is for all children from diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds to thrive.**



***Illinois Action for Children's Founder,  
Sylvia Cotton***

# Chicago Early Learning Supports and Services

## Chicago Early Learning Hotline

- Year-round parent support hotline managed by IAFC.
- Assists over 20,000 parents annually to navigate early learning application and enrollment steps.

## Chicago Early Learning Outreach

- Targeted outreach to families by connecting with community stakeholders, social service agencies and community resources to provide on-site referral and application assistance.

## Community Collaborations Supports

- Funding and technical assistance to Community Collaborations to support hyperlocal, human-centered early learning outreach efforts.



# Little Village Education Collaborative (LVEC)

## Enlace Chicago

- Little Village Education Collaborative (LVEC)-LVEC's mission is to connect the key players impacting the education system in the community to evaluate the current state of this system, plan strategic improvements for the future, and support legislative and systems changes that expand educational access and opportunity from birth to old age.
- LVEC convenes a diverse range of stakeholders and promotes unique methods of collaboration. This encourages the development of innovative and comprehensive ways to address educational issues in Little Village.





# Altgeld-Riverdale Early Learning Coalition

## Mission Statement

Build a community-wide system to holistically support children's development and build equitable educational opportunities that will ensure all children in Altgeld Riverdale are succeeding by 3rd grade.

## Vision Statement

That all children in Altgeld-Riverdale have high-quality, early learning experiences leading to success in school and life.







**COFI**  
Community  
Organizing and  
Family Issues

**COFI has a 28 year history organizing parents around issues that matter to them citywide, and now statewide.**

Over 18 year history developing the Early Learning Ambassador Model: Parent to Parent conversations!

Door knocking in priority communities across the city, canvassing neighborhoods via businesses, small events, and public areas.





**COFI**  
Community  
Organizing and  
Family Issues

## About our Early Learning Ambassador Team:

They receive extensive training in:

- Leadership development
- Organizing around an issue
- 1-1 communication
- Early learning/childhood development
- Enrollment process

Experienced leadership - ambassadors with 5-10+ years of outreach. Two culturally mixed, bilingual teams across the city, that meet weekly to debrief results and plan the week ahead.

**Our foundation is 1-1 relationship  
building with parents**





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## New Campaign

### Strategy

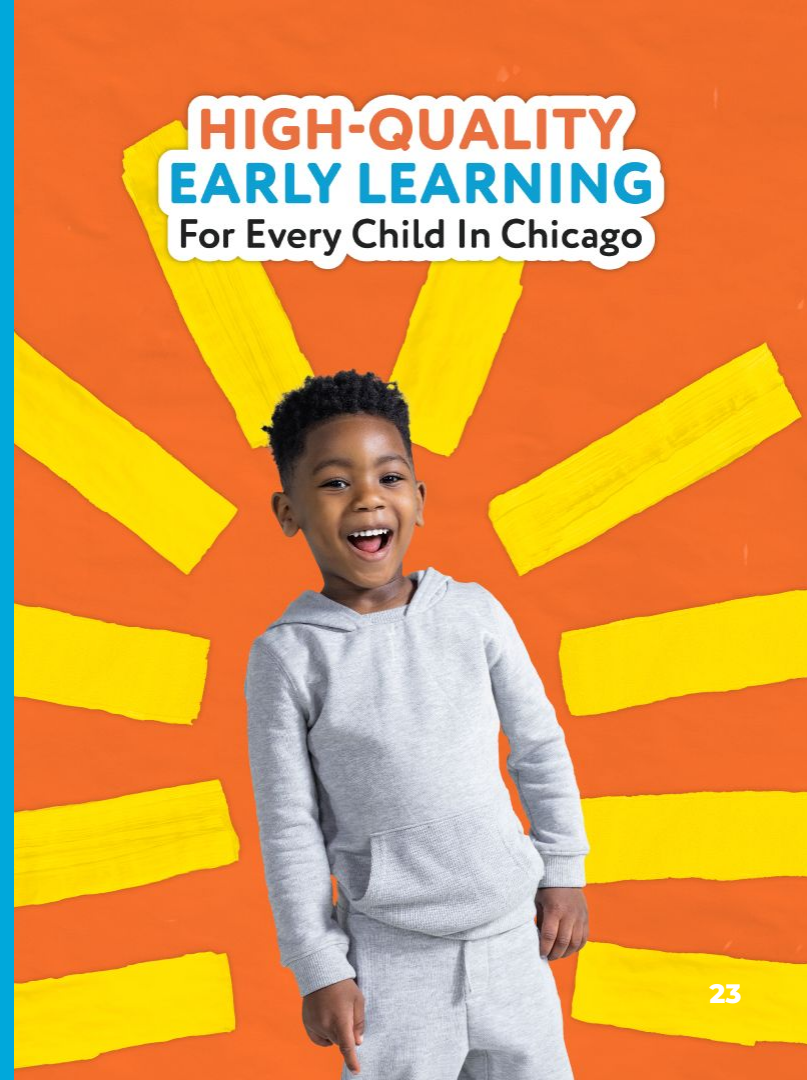
Meet parents where they gather, in-person and online.

### Connect with

- Alderman
- Intergovernmental - Libraries, Parks, Homeless Services, Dept. of Health
- Stakeholders - other nonprofits that serve our same audience



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## Tactics

- Custom Materials for every site and school
- Social Media
- Paid Media
  - Billboards
  - Radio
  - CTA
  - Print
  - OTT
- Trusted Voices - Stakeholder Engagement
- Monthly Newsletters
- Community outreach
- Webinars



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## Outreach

Our powerful grassroots initiatives efficiently connect our marketing efforts with Black, Latinx, and immigrant communities. Our outreach teams meet people where they gather, at: small and large community events, neighborhood venues, faith-based initiatives, city-sponsored celebrations, and client-hosted forums.

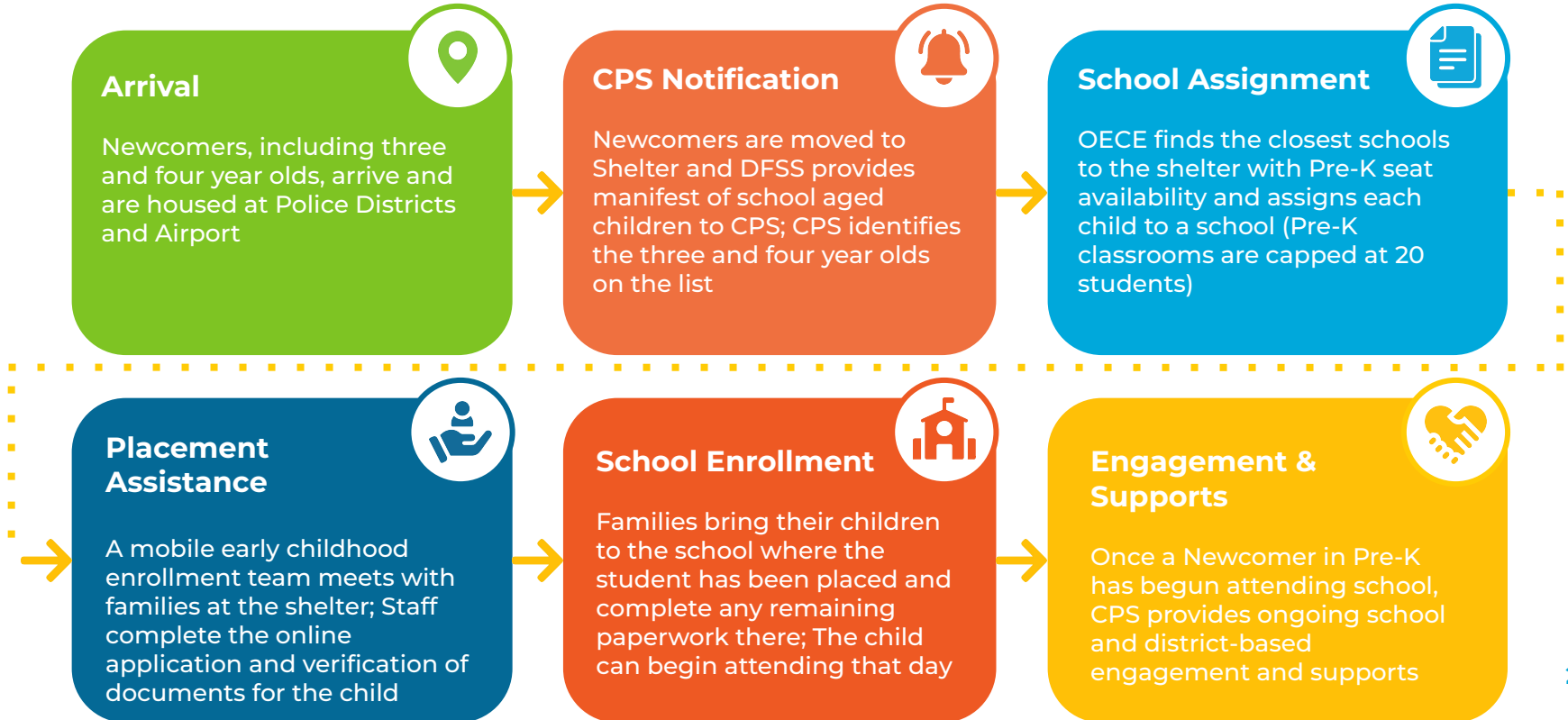
Every two weeks partners meet to discuss upcoming community events, sharing best practices, discuss outreach challenges, and discuss popular field FAQs.



# Newcomer Supports



# CPS Newcomer Pre-K Enrollment Process





# CPS Newcomer Pre-K Enrollment Process



These steps describe the centralized Pre-K enrollment process currently in place for Newcomer students. Please note-any Newcomer student can apply for a Pre-K program at a school site, over the phone, or with the assistance of another volunteer.

Class sizes, however, must be capped at 20 students and schools CANNOT enroll additional students when they are at capacity. All families must complete an online application and receive a valid CEL offer before they can be enrolled in Aspen.



# CPS Pre-k Enrollment Pathway



	School walk-in enrollment	Mobile enrollment	By phone or online
<b>Who is eligible?</b>	Pre-k does not have neighborhood guarantees; Any student is eligible to enroll in any school provided that there are open seats	Newcomers staying at Shelters or Police Departments	Families (with volunteer assistance if needed) can call CPS Early Childhood at (773) 553-2010 to provide their information and receive a placement over the phone
<b>What school does the child enroll in?</b>	Any CPS school with open Pre-K seats	Best fit school* as identified by CPS Early Childhood Staff	Best fit school* as identified by CPS Early Childhood Staff
<b>Who enrolls the child?</b>	The school clerk completes the application and enrollment process	The Early Childhood team will complete the application and the school clerk will complete enrollment at the school.	The Early Childhood team will complete the application and the school clerk will complete enrollment at the school.
<b>Who provides students with STLS transportation cards?</b>	School of enrollment	Shelter until school of enrollment is able to provide.	School of enrollment
<b>Who conducts the students social -emotional, academic, and linguistic assessments?</b>	School of enrollment	School of enrollment	School of enrollment

*\*Best fit school is the school which has the capacity to provide appropriate supports, has space to enroll the student, and which the family can travel to daily*



# CSD New Arrival Recruitment & Enrollment Process

# DFSS

Department of Family  
and Support Services



## Step 1

Children Services Division (CSD) maps nearby Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in relation to nearby shelters.

CBO closest to shelter within 1-2 mile radius.



## Step 2

CSD determines interest of CBOs to conduct in-shelter enrollment event.

Interest and availability are gauged via number of vacancies across all programming, nearest family shelters, etc.



## Step 3

CBOs confirm interest with CSD and are then connected with Homeless Services Division (HSD) to collect relevant information.

CBOS share their program flyer, confirm # of open slots by program type, provide 2 suggested dates for enrollment event, etc.



## Step 4

CSD and HSD connect CBOs with shelter to finalize and execute in-shelter enrollment event.

DFSS introduces the CBOS to the shelter staff and confirm enrollment event dates



## Step 5

CBOs and shelter report back within 24 hours to CSD and the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS)

# of children enrolled, # of families who completed CEL application, # of family interactions

# DFSS Newcomer Enrollment Process

DFSS CEL	CPS	CBO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each DFSS facilitated family shelter creates a manifest of number of children with age ranges of children housed.</li><li>• The family shelter provides a list of school age children 3-17 years to CPS and the Homeless Services Division provides age ranges of children for each shelter to CSD.</li><li>• CSD contacts CBO's within the two to three- mile radius of each shelter to confirm available capacity to coordinate an enrollment event at the shelter site.</li><li>• CSD/shelter staff schedule events and track enrollments and engagements of families from enrollment events.</li><li>• All enrollment events must be scheduled through DFSS for time, date, and contact person coordination.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CPS works with school age manifest to place children in school based on seat availability within a two-mile radius.</li><li>• A list of all early childhood children ages 3-5 years that are not placed in a school based program due to capacity are sent to DFSS-CSD.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CBO's can contact CSD at <a href="mailto:sharay.johnson@cityofchicago.org">sharay.johnson@cityofchicago.org</a> to discuss and schedule potential enrollment events on site.</li><li>• CSD will also contact CBO's based on proximity to shelter location and/or home visiting program vacancy/seat availability to conduct a shelter enrollment event.</li><li>• CBO's will track each enrollment event and provide documentation to CSD at the end of shelter engagement.</li><li>• All enrolled children identified or suspected for "special education services" will be referred through the normal screening process for CBO participants.</li></ul>

# Improved Efforts

## 1) Improved clarity in CBO and CPS offer letters to parents

- We received feedback from families about confusion they had when receiving the application offer letter. We revised the letter and shared it with a targeted group of 7 CBOs in order to confirm the revisions were more clear and concise.

## 2) Host annual focus groups for Families, Principals, Clerks, Executive Directors, and Staff

- Objectives of these focus groups are to:
  - Gain a better understanding of why parents are applying to Chicago Early Learning (CEL) programs or not.
  - Gather feedback from families and early learning professionals on the application and enrollment process to uncover key areas of improvement.
  - Better understand what works and what doesn't when it comes to our recruitment marketing efforts.

## 3) Collect qualitative and quantitative data from families in the field

- Hearing first-hand from our audiences of focus ensures we have our finger on the pulse of what's happening in communities and pivot tactics as needed; as well as highlight timely areas of concern (ie: Newcomer Enrollment, Health & Safety)

# Group Discussion

## A. Given the data presented and information presented?

- 1) What is missing?
- 2) Where are the families that we need to touch?
- 3) What strategies will be useful to connect with families in under enrolled communities? (3 year olds)
- 4) Do you have what you need to be effective in assisting families with enrolling in programs?

# Q&A



# Next Steps

## How You Can Support CEL Enrollment

- Know when the Pre-K application opens - April 9th at 10am!
- Add a section in your newsletter or share with your email list
  - Share the application walkthrough video [here](#).
- Request the CEL Outreach Team at Your Event
  - Share your event with us [here](#).
- Print and share 'Apply Now' Flyers
- Sign up for an [Application Training](#)
- Join our [Ambassador Facebook Group](#) for updates
- See our banners or outreach teams while you're out and about?
  - Snap a photo and tag @chicagoearlylearning on social media!

Contact us with any questions at [info@chilearn.org](mailto:info@chilearn.org)

**Family Support Hotline:** (312) 229-1690