

2026–2027 Enrollment Procedures/Requirements

Procedures and Required Documents for Enrollment of Students

The parent, legal guardian, or temporary caregiver of any elementary or high school-age child seeking enrollment at Chicago Public Schools for the first time shall present to the school principal or his/her designee **proof of age, proof of guardianship or custodianship, proof of current address, physical exam, and immunization records.** ([Board Report #: 24-1212-PO2](#))

If a student is experiencing housing instability, they must be immediately enrolled without requiring proof of age, guardianship, address, physical exam, or immunization records. This includes students residing in shelters, doubled-up housing due to hardship, or other temporary living situations. Unaccompanied youth must also be enrolled, even without an adult.

Adults acting in the role of temporary custodian to a child due to circumstances involving the parents, legal guardians, or child, may enroll a student with applicable documentation of residency and status as temporary custodian, which may include a notarized letter from the parent authorizing the temporary custody and the reason or the Illinois State Board of Education's Affidavit of Enrollment and Residency.

Enrollment practices must be non-discriminatory and ensure equal access for all students, regardless of race, color, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or citizenship status. Students cannot be barred from enrollment due to their own or their parents' immigration status.

The following documents are required for enrollment from each category

Proof of Age

Provide any ONE of the following documents to verify a child's age:

- Child's original or certified copy of birth certificate
- Baptismal record (not accepted for preschool enrollment)
- U.S. or foreign passport
- Court documents (foster children enrolling in preschool only)
- Medical records (accepted for preschool enrollment only)

Proof of Guardianship or Custodianship

Provide any ONE of the following proof of guardianship or custodianship documents:

- A valid court order
- The most recent tax return naming the child as a dependent
- Health insurance coverage for the child
- Any public aid documents covering the child
- Affidavit of Residency form

Proof of Adult's Identity

Provide any ONE of the following forms of current photo identification:

- Unexpired US Passport
- Employee ID Card
- Unexpired Driver's License or a State ID Card
- Chicago CityKey ID

Proof of Current Address

Provide any TWO of the following verification of current Chicago address documents:

- Current utility bill
- Illinois driver's license or state ID
- Deed or current lease document
- Employee ID card
- Voter registration card
- Court documents
- Medicaid/Medicare card
- Stamped U.S. Postal Service change of address form
- Any official document issued by a federal or state agency

Missing Children Records Act Requirements for Proof of Identity and Age

In addition to collecting documents to show proof of age and address for enrollment, schools are required per [Board Report #: 24-1212-PO2](#) to collect and maintain documentation for enrolling students that shows reliable proof of student identity and age and to maintain this documentation as a student permanent record. Acceptable documentation includes an original birth certificate or one of the following documents **with an affidavit** explaining the inability for the parent/guardian to produce a copy of the original birth certificate: US or foreign passport, US or foreign visa, Verification of Release, I-94, I-385, or United States Department of State Travel Document.

Preschool, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade Enrollment Eligibility

All children residing within the limits of the City of Chicago are eligible for enrollment at Chicago Public Schools. Schools must adhere to the Board's age-eligibility rules for student enrollments. For 2026-2027 enrollments, the applicable birth date cut-offs are noted below.

- **Preschool:** Children who turn 3 or 4 years old on or before September 1, 2026 may apply through the district-wide preschool enrollment process. Please note that preschool enrollment also requires proof of income (in addition to proof of age and current address).
- **Kindergarten:** Children must be 5 years old but not yet 6 on or before September 1, 2026 (birth dates between 09/02/2020 – 09/01/2021). Early entry may be available through a formal process.
- **1st Grade:** Children must be 6 years old but not yet 7 on or before September 1, 2026 (birth dates between 09/02/2019 – 09/01/2020). Limited exception applies for a child born between 09/02/21 – 12/31/21 if child (i) attended the same non-CPS preschool and kindergarten and (ii) was taught in kindergarten by an appropriately-certified teacher.

To learn about how to apply for citywide preschool programs, visit cps.edu/ChicagoEarlyLearning. For personal assistance, you can call the Chicago Early Learning Hotline at 312-229-1690.

CPS has established a policy and process for parents interested in pursuing early entry of their student to kindergarten. For more information on this process, please contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or visit go.cps.edu/accelerated-placement.

Enrollment Support and Resources

- **CPS Student Enrollment Booklet:** For more information on the enrollment process for students enrolling at CPS, download our Student Enrollment Booklet. https://drive.google.com/file/d/17A4NDd6_DMkx8RA6aDFVgZ7AX4M_QujK/view?usp=sharing [ENGLISH]
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EWHA7ZdxJypHnj8MrY7o5ARvAZiSgotH/view> [SPANISH]
- **General Enrollment Support:** Contact the Parent Support Center at 773-553-3772 for help with school enrollment, required documents, or school assignments.
- **School Locator:** Find your child's attendance area school using the CPS School Locator at schoolinfo.cps.edu/schoollocator
- **Incoming, Transitioning, and Exiting Students:** For information on how CPS students transfer into, within, or out of the district, including required documents and steps for enrollment, transition, and withdrawal, visit cps.edu/schools/apply-enroll
- **Early Childhood Enrollment:** For preschool enrollment, visit cps.edu/ChicagoEarlyLearning or call the Chicago Early Learning Hotline at 312-229-1690.
- **Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS):** If your family is experiencing homelessness or housing instability, contact the STLS Office at 773-553-2242 or reach out to your school's STLS Liaison.
- **Special Education & Diverse Learners:** For assistance with IEPs, 504 Plans, or special education services, contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) at 773-553-1800 or visit cps.edu/OSD.
- **Accelerated Placement (Early Kindergarten Entry):** If you are interested in early entry for kindergarten, contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or visit go.cps.edu/accelerated-placement.