



125 S. CLARK STREET, 4th FLOOR CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60603

No Child Left Behind Choice Program Frequently Asked Questions and Important Information

General Information

Who do I contact with questions about the application process?

If you have any questions or need assistance in completing the application, please contact the Office of Academic Enhancement at (773) 553-3350/3360, or (773) 553-2060.

Where do I send my application?

Mail your completed application to:

Chicago Public Schools
Attn: NCLB Choice Program
125 S. Clark Street, 4th floor
Chicago, Illinois 60603-4042

Important Dates:

December 17, 2010

March 25, 2011

Deadline for applications to be received by the Office of Academic Enhancement

Parents notified of application status

*Please note that some charter schools begin school in July or August. For more information on the start dates for charter schools, contact the Office of New Schools at (773) 553-1539.

What resources are available if I keep my child at his or her current school?

Each CPS school is working hard to provide instruction to meet the needs of each child, particularly those who are not meeting standards. For example, the Office of Extended Learning Opportunities offers free tutoring to students at selected schools. You can get more information at: http://www.cps.edu/About_CPS/Departments/Pages/OfficeofExtendedLearningOpportunities.aspx.

We encourage you to compare the services at your child's current school to the services offered at the schools to which you are applying to make sure that a transfer is the best option for your child. Contact the Office of Extended Learning Opportunities with any questions at (773) 553-3590.

If my child is accepted to transfer, when should I enroll my child at the new school?

You must enroll your child at the new school before the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year. Please note that some schools on the attached list start in July or August.

If my child transfers to another school, how long can he or she stay at that school?

Your child may stay at his or her new school until he or she graduates from the highest grade level offered, or until you transfer your child out. If you choose to transfer your child out of the school, your child's participation in the NCLB Choice program will end at that point.

How can I submit an application for my other children in elementary school?

You can submit a separate application for each child eligible for a transfer. We will make every attempt to keep siblings at the same school.

Are students with disabilities eligible for transfer?

If your child is selected through the lottery and the new school is unable to implement your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP), the Office of Specialized Services will work with you to identify different options.

Transportation Information

If my child is selected for transfer, is transportation available?

Yes. CPS offers the following transportation options:

1. Free school bus transportation will be made available from a bus site near the child's home to the transfer school you select. This option is only available for students in grades K-8 living between 1.5 and 6 miles from the school you select. Buses will not transport NCLB students to after-school programs. Students with disabilities requiring bus transportation as specified in the current Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be accommodated for home pickup and drop off. Contact the Bureau of Student Transportation Services with any questions at (773) 553-2860.

2. Free CTA bus and train passes are available for students. Parents of students in grades K-6 are eligible to receive passes to accompany their children to and from school. This option is available for students living more than 1.5 miles from the school you select. Contact the Bureau of Student Transportation Services with any questions at (773) 553-2860.
3. CPS will reimburse your transportation costs if you transport your child to and from school. Under this system, you will receive a check from your child's school at the beginning of the month in an amount for IRS mileage rate (currently 50 cents per mile) multiplied by the number of miles driven in that month. For example, if the distance between your home and the school is five miles, you would receive a check of about \$200 each month (50 cents x 10 miles a day x 2 trips x about 20 school days per month). This option is available for students living more than 1.5 miles from the school you select and requires parents to satisfy additional application and documentation requirements. Contact the Bureau of Student Transportation Services with any questions at (773) 553-2860.
4. Free school bus transportation is available for students with disabilities where transportation is specified in the current Individualized Education Program (IEP). Contact the Bureau of Student Transportation with any questions at (773) 553-2860.

How do I apply for one of the transportation options?

When you register your child at his or her new school, you can select one of the transportation options listed above and complete the NCLB transportation application for each student or family. The application requires signatures from both the parent and the principal. Applications are available through your child's new school. The school coordinator will forward the application to the Bureau of Student Transportation Services. The process of setting up transportation requires that the student be enrolled in the new school.

How long will it take to process the transportation request?

After the student has been enrolled in the new school and the Bureau of Student Transportation Services has received the completed NCLB transportation application, every effort will be made to process the request within five to seven business days. Therefore, you may have to make arrangements to transport your child to the new school until the application is processed.

Will the transportation options change?

CPS is striving to provide services to as many students as possible. Due to budgetary constraints, CPS reserves the right to amend these options in the future.

Is transportation available for students living less than 1.5 miles from the school?

CPS does not offer transportation to students living less than 1.5 miles from the school. However, the State of Illinois offers the Parent/Guardian State Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Program to parents of students in Illinois living less than 1.5 miles from the school who transport their children to school because they are not eligible for school bus service. Parents are required to submit claim information to the school of attendance by June 30th each year, and school staff will submit it electronically to the State of Illinois by July 31st of each year. If funding is available, parents who submitted a claim will receive a prorated check in the mail from the State in late fall. Contact the new school or the Bureau of Student Transportation with any questions at (773) 553-2860.

Is transportation available for students living more than six miles from the school?

Yes. If your child lives more than six miles from the school, and the school has existing bus service, you may use the free school bus transportation option by taking your child to a pre-existing bus site. Note that the pre-existing bus site may or may not be near your home. This service is available as long as the pre-existing bus route is in place. If you feel a pre-existing bus site is too far from your home or there is no existing bus service at the new school, you may choose CTA fare cards or carfare reimbursement instead. Contact the Bureau of Student Transportation Services with any questions at (773) 553-2860.

How do I receive carfare reimbursement for transporting children attending two different schools under this program?

CPS will reimburse you for transportation costs that cover the distance between the two schools. Additional application and documentation requirements apply to the carfare reimbursement program.

If my family moves during the school year, what happens to the transportation service?

Your transportation options may change if you move, depending on how far your new home is from the school. For elementary students, bus service is dependent upon your new address and its proximity to a pre-existing bus route designated for your child's school. If a bus route is not available, you may choose CTA fare cards or carfare reimbursement instead. The Bureau of Student Transportation Services will work with you to determine if busing is available near your new home.

Additional Facts about NCLB and AYP

What is “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB)?

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is a federal law that requires states to evaluate the performance of every school every year. When a school does not meet state standards for two years in a row, the students at the school are given the option to transfer to another school.

What is “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP)?

AYP is calculated by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) each year for each school. In order to make AYP, a school must meet the following criteria:

1. The state test must be taken by 95% of the total student population and each subgroup* population.
2. The total school population must meet/exceed annual math and reading assessment targets. Assessments counted include ISAT, PSAE, and IAA.
3. All subgroups with at least 45 students must meet math and reading assessment targets or make Safe Harbor.**
4. School must meet/exceed annual targets for attendance in elementary schools and for graduation in high schools.

*Subgroups include specific categories of students such as students with disabilities, students from major racial and ethnic groups, and English Language Learners.

**Safe Harbor is a way for a school to make AYP for a subgroup by showing improvement in the percent of students that meet state standards in that subgroup from one year to the next.

What is a “School Improvement Status”?

Schools receiving federal funding that do not make AYP for two consecutive years are identified as “schools in need of improvement.” Each year that the school does not meet AYP, the school is moved to the next category of school improvement. At each phase of school improvement, a different intervention is implemented at the school. A list of school improvement categories and the required interventions is below:

School Improvement Category	Required Interventions
Choice	School choice transfer offered*
Choice-SES	School choice transfer and Supplemental Education Services (SES) tutoring*
Corrective Action	School choice transfer, SES tutoring, and school implements one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extended day/year;• Staffing changes;• New curriculum;• Decreased school-level management authority;• Restructured school organization; or• Appoint outside experts to advise school.
Restructuring Planning	School choice transfer, SES tutoring, and school develops restructuring plan
Restructuring Implementation	School choice transfer, SES tutoring, and school implements restructuring plan, which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace principal and/or staff;• Select outside management agency to operate school; or• Other major governance change.

*School choice and SES tutoring are provided to students on a priority basis as authorized by NCLB.

For more information on AYP and NCLB school improvement status, you can view your school’s report card on the Illinois State Board of Education website: <http://www.isbe.net>, or on the Chicago Public Schools website at <http://www.cps.edu>. You can also find information on both sites comparing the performance of your child’s school to other schools in the district.