CPS Tuition-Based Preschool Program  
Billing and Tuition FAQs

What is the tuition?  
Tuition for the 2018-2019 school year is $13,974. The deposit is $700 and will be collected and credited to the annual tuition after a placement has been offered. Deposits are not required for pending or waitlisted families. Once a family is offered a spot then a deposit is collected and is non-refundable.

Who manages tuition collection?  
The Smart Tuition Management System is responsible for the monthly collection of tuition payments. Tuition payments may be paid by check, money order, or automatic checking account deduction. Online credit and debit options, as well as making payments at 7-11, are also available; however, a small fee is charged for using these options. SMART Tuition Management also charges a one-time processing fee of $50 for using their system. They also charge a $40 late fee per month for overdue accounts.

May I pay in full?  
Yes. There is a 5% discount for paying in full. Contact Pat McCaughey at pamccaughey@cps.edu for more-pay-in-full information.

How do I set up a payment plan for tuition?  
Once you are offered a slot in the program you will be giving instructions about how to set up a Smart Tuition account. At that time you will have the opportunity to select your method of payment. Once the account is set up tuition amounts will be loaded and the account activated. Any Smart Tuition Accounts set up by the Tuition-Based program are set, by default, to “mail-in invoice”. Once the account is activated the parent may adjust method of payment. Returning families are automatically rolled over into the next year.

When is the tuition payment due?  
The annual tuition is spread over ten monthly payments. Tuition is due on the 20th of each month, billed from August through May. If payment has not been received by the 30th of the month, a $40 late fee will be charged to your account.

Please note the program is entirely funded by the collection of tuition. This includes teacher and teacher assistant salaries, benefits, as well as equipment and supplies. The Tuition-Based Preschool program does not receive funds from Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the city of Chicago, or the state of Illinois; therefore, timely tuition payments are critical for the successful operation of the program.

If a monthly tuition payment becomes one month overdue and it is not paid in full by the last day of the upcoming month, your child will be removed from the program and his/her slot will be immediately filled. For example, the withdrawal process will begin on September 30th if the August 20th payment has not been received by then. If a child is withdrawn, any unpaid tuition balance is still owed. If not paid, the account will be sent to a collection agency.

Do you offer financial aid?  
No, financial aid is not available.
Are there any tuition discounts?
Yes, there is a 5% family discount for paying in full at the beginning of the school year and a 5% family discount for having more than one child in the Tuition-Based Preschool program.

Are full tuitions charged for months with school vacation weeks in them?
Yes. The tuition is an annual amount that is spread over ten equal monthly payments, regardless of how many actual weeks of student attendance there are in any given month.

Who do I contact for more information about the program?
If you need additional information regarding the Tuition Based Preschool program, contact Pat McCaughey at 773-534-3845 or email pamccaughey@cps.edu.

Additional Information

How are refunds and partial year accounts calculated?
For students enrolling after the school year starts the tuition is calculated based on the number of weeks remaining in the school year and prorated over the remaining months of billing. For 2018-19 the school years is 38 weeks and tuition is $13,974. Therefore, the weekly amount is $367.74. Refunds are calculated based on this weekly amount. Amount paid (including deposit) is calculated. This is compared to weeks of enrollment. For our purposes any week beginning or ending a child’s tenure with us with three or more days of student enrollment is counted as a week. Any overpayment is refunded. Any underpayment is the remaining balance.

The refund/balance formula:

For school year 2018-19 Tuition is $13,974 for all students.

There are 38 weeks of school. $13974 / 38 weeks = a weekly rate of $367.74

A week is defined as three or more days of Tuition-Based student enrollment (as per the CPS enrollment system)

Refund or balance formula:

Total weeks of enrollment x weekly rate is Total CPS Tuition Owed
Total Paid to Smart + $700 deposit - $50 Smart fee –Smart late fees = Total CPS Tuition Paid
Total CPS Tuition Paid - Total CPS Tuition Owed = refund
Total CPS Tuition Owed - Total CPS Tuition Paid = balance

Setting up a prorated account:
Multiply remaining weeks of school by weekly rate.
Subtract $700 deposit.
Spread that amount over remaining months of school once Smart account is set up.

Refunds are paid via check mailed to the address on file with Smart Tuition.