



Acero School Transitions

# Welcome

## **SY25-26 Acero Community Incubation Meeting**

In-Person | Thursday, January 29, 2026

Esmeralda Santiago Elementary School

4:00pm - 5:30pm



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# Santiago Community Incubation Meeting Schedule

## Acero School Transitions

<b>Santiago Community Incubation Meeting Schedule</b> (In-Person, at the School, Thursdays, 4:00pm - 5:30pm) Meeting Cadence: Monthly			
September	October	November	December
<del>September 15, 2025</del> (virtual)	<del>October 23, 2025</del>	<del>November 20, 2025</del> <i>Principal Candidate Forum</i>	<del>December 18, 2025</del>
January	February	March	April
January 29, 2026	February 26, 2026	March 12, 2026	April 23, 2026
May	June	<b>2025-26</b>	
May 21, 2026	June 4, 2026		

# Agenda

- 01 Welcome Remarks + Norm Setting
- 02 Introduction of Administrator-In-Charge
- 03 Santiago Principal Selection Update
- 04 Key Incubation Updates
- 05 Q & A



# Welcome Remarks

## Acero School Transitions

### Objective and Purpose for Today

- **Meet & Greet** the newly assigned Administrator-in-Charge
- **Learn** next steps for principal selection for SY26-27
- **Provide** Key Incubation Updates
- **Facilitate** Q/A



# Norms for Engagement | Our Commitments

## Acero School Transitions

- **Be Present and Engaged**
- **Listen Respectfully:** Allow others to speak without interruption, seek to **understand different** perspectives, and avoid judgment.
- **Stay on Topic:** Keep discussions relevant to the agenda, manage time effectively, and address off-topic items separately if necessary.
- **Challenge Ideas, Not People**
- **Listen and gather community feedback and input**
- **Facilitate an equitable process**
- **Provide transparency**
- **Allow Equity of Voice**



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# Introducing Elvia “Laura” Garcia-Graham

## Acero School Transitions



### Ms. Garcia-Graham is:

- a retired CPS leader with extensive experience supporting elementary schools in Chicago;
- a former principal, assistant principal, and teacher at the elementary school level;
- currently working closely with the CPS Department of Principal Quality to support schools that are in a period of transition.

### Going forward, Ms. Garcia-Graham will:

- support the Santiago community in a temporary administrative capacity until the new Santiago CPS principal is selected and staffed;
- guide Santiago through its transition from a charter school to a district-managed school;
- execute incubation and transition tasks to keep Santiago on-track for operational readiness for SY26-27, under the direction of Acting Chief Tiffany D. Brown

**Note:** *Principal Sweazy and Assistant Principal Cauhorn will remain at Santiago through the end of this school year. They will continue to be the school's instructional and operational leaders, with Ms. Garcia-Graham providing additional leadership support specific to Santiago's transition to a district-managed school.*

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# New Santiago Principal Selection Update

## Acero School Transitions

Timeframe	Milestone/Activity
January 28- February 11	Position Posted and Application Submission
Week of February 16	Resumé Review & Candidate Pool Created by Network Leaders
Week of February 23	Initial Candidate Interviews with Principal Selection Committee; Vetting of Candidates by CPS Talent; Reference Checks Completion
TBD	Principal Selection Committee Schedules Interviews with Finalists + the Advisory and Design Leadership Council
TBD	<b>Interviews with Santiago Advisory &amp; Design Leadership Council</b>
TBD	Finalist(s) Interviews with Interim CEO Chicago Public Schools, or Designee(s)
TBD	Offer Letter, Salary, & Staffing

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# New Incubation Updates

## Acero School Transitions

- Santiago Advisory & Design Leadership Council welcomes four (4) new council members:
  - Lenora Ackerman “Segura”
  - Brittany De Leon
  - Luis Delgado
  - Melissa Klein
- CPS Real Estate Team is in negotiations to secure a master lease agreement with the Archdiocese of Chicago for all 5 school sites (current locations)
- Hybrid vs. In-Person Meeting Facilitation
  - Live Zoom sessions will be simultaneously cast based on the availability of the CPS Digital Web Services Team
  - Current month’s flyers and email messages will communicate if the meeting will include virtual access through Zoom

# New Incubation Updates

## Acero School Transitions

- Site Visits

- Various CPS Central Office teams and departments ***started completing site visits during the first week of January, which will continue through June 2026***
  - ***e.g. Marketing + Communications, Student Safety & Security, Information Technology Services, Capital Planning + Facilities***
- All dates and time frames were pre-approved through collaboration with Acero Network leaders, and are scheduled as to avoid disrupting teaching and learning for staff and students, and to prevent ***to the fullest extent possible***, the disruption of normal school operations;
  - ***Target dates and time frames prioritize when students are not present***
- The purpose of the visits are to assess and make decisions to ensure facility and environmental readiness by the first day of school in August 2026



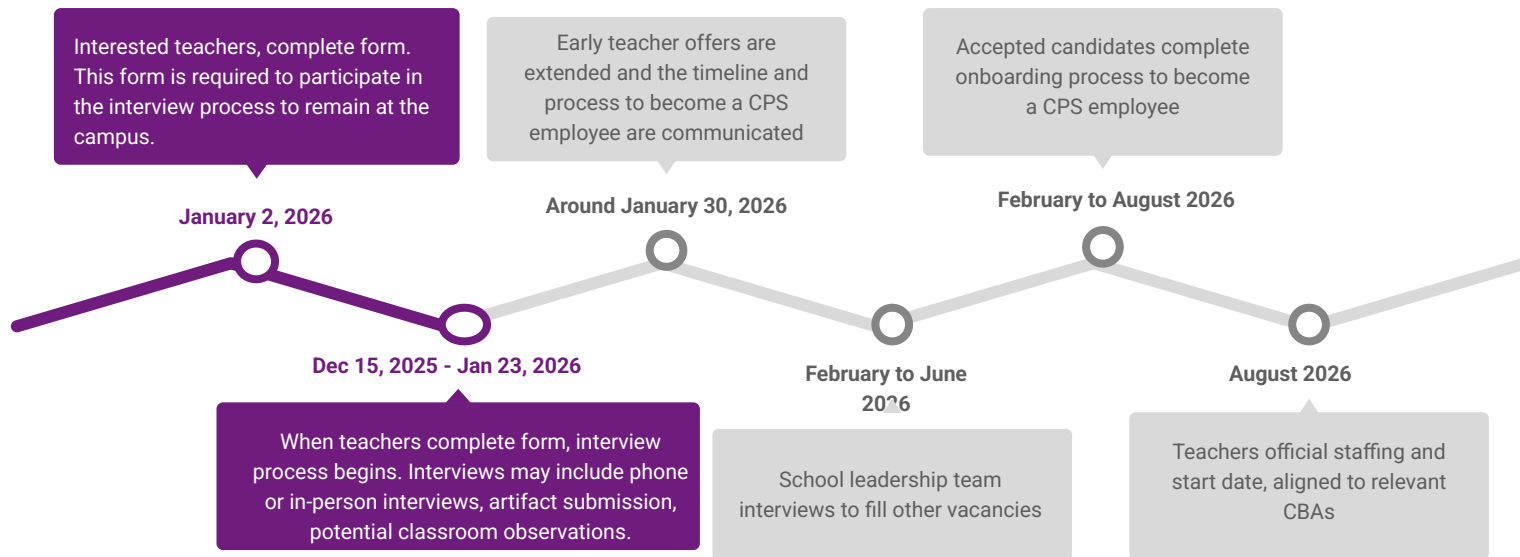
# Incubation Updates | Interview Priority

## Acero School Transitions

- Our top priority is to make sure that current teachers and staff affected by this transition are given the first opportunity to interview for available CPS positions at the school.
- Final staffing decisions are made once CPS employment eligibility is confirmed and all required onboarding steps are completed, including a licensure review, criminal background check, and CPS policy acknowledgements.

# Incubation Updates | Anticipated Interview Time for Current Acero Teachers

## Acero School Transitions

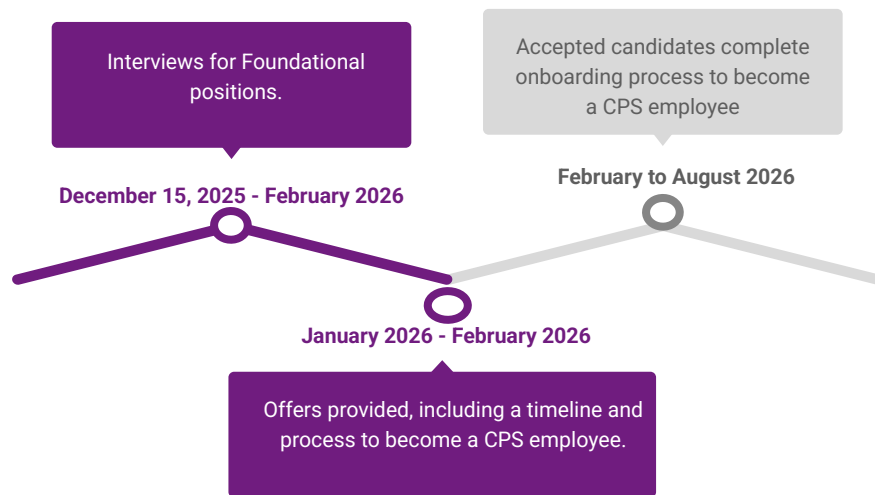


# Incubation Updates | Interview Timeline for Foundational Positions

## Acero School Transitions

Foundational Positions are the following roles:

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- School Clerk
- School Counselor



# Incubation Updates | Centrally Staffed Positions

## Acero School Transitions

**School-based centrally staffed positions fall into the categories below are not interviewed and hired by the school principal, but rather the CPS department that manages their work.**

**The Principal will work with ONS and relevant Central Offices regarding the following roles:**

- **Related Service Providers** - Managed and assigned by Office of Students with Disabilities
- **Security Officers** | Pre-screened by the Office of Safety and Security
- **Nutrition Support** | Managed and assigned by Nutrition Support Services
- **Custodial & Engineering** | Managed and assigned by Facilities



# Incubation Timeline

## Acero School Transitions

- ~~August:~~ Decision on the Network for each school
- ~~September:~~ Opening of Principal positions
- ~~Late September:~~ Establishment of Advisory Council at each school
- ~~October:~~ Inaugural Advisory Council Meetings
- **September - June 2026:** Recurring district incubation committee meetings, listening sessions with stakeholders, design committee and advisory council meetings
- ~~Middle of December 2025:~~ Principal hired
- ~~Start of January 2026:~~ Posting of Foundational Positions (AP, Clerk, and School Counselor) and teacher and staff positions
- **End of January - February 2026:** Foundational positions hired
- **December - June 2026:** Hiring of teachers and support staff
- **January - May 2026:** Final planning in conjunction with Advisory Councils and Design Committees
- **July 1, 2026:** Opening Day

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# Q&A







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# Thank You For Coming!

*Have an amazing  
rest of your  
week!*

See you on February 26th for the next  
Santiago Community Incubation Meeting







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