

CPS Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency

Student Focus Group – Meeting #2 Summary

In Person | Mikva Office, 200 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL

Thursday, April 17th, 2025, 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

To incorporate student voices, we created a separate focus group for students. We collaborated with Mikva Challenge, an organization focused on empowering, informing, and engaging youth to become active citizens who promote justice and equity.

To protect privacy, students have been identified by school and grade level, rather than by name.

Attendance

Facilitators & Project Team:

Felipe Perez (Facilitator), Jill Gottfred Sohoni (Facilitator), Alejandra C. Sanchez (Coordinator)

Student Committee Members:

- Hancock HS | Gage Park - Junior
- Hubbard HS | Chicago Lawn - Junior
- Hubbard HS | Chicago Lawn - Junior
- Sullivan HS | Rogers Park - Senior
- Back of the Yards HS | Back of the Yards - Junior
- Simeon HS | Auburn Gresham - Sophomore
- Roosevelt | Albany Park - Junior

Meeting Materials

- [Agenda](#)
- [Slide Deck: MIKVA Session 2 – Indicator Review](#)
- Google Forms for
 - [School Profiles](#)
 - [College Enrollment and Persistence](#)
 - [High-Quality Curriculum](#)
- [School Profiles Site](#)

Objectives

By the end of the session, students:

- Reviewed and provided feedback on the School Profiles & Overview page
- Evaluated the College Enrollment & Persistence indicator
- Assessed the High-Quality Curriculum indicator

What Is CIDT?

CIDT (Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency) is CPS's new framework for publicly sharing school quality data. It is built around three guiding, student-created questions:

1. What should schools be doing to provide a high-quality education?
2. Is my school doing those things well?
3. If not, what is the district doing to support improvement?

Facilitators emphasized that student perspectives matter and that their lived experience navigating CPS systems is central to shaping these tools.

School Profiles & Overview Page – Feedback Summary

What Students Hoped to Find:

- Graduation and dropout rates
- College enrollment trends
- Specific post-secondary destinations, such as which colleges graduates attend
- Recognition of non-college pathways (e.g., trades, apprenticeships, military)
- Clarification of terms like “persistence” and how transfer students are counted

A participant shared that their own experience transferring from a 2-year to a 4-year institution was not accurately reflected in the data.

Navigation & Layout:

- Overall layout rated as “pretty good,” but participants wanted clearer directions to key metrics
- Some confusion around data labels and unclear icons

- Graphs and charts were mostly helpful, but many preferred trends over single-year snapshots

Language & Accessibility:

- Mixed feedback: some said the language was mostly clear, others found sections vague or overly technical
- Several said more student-friendly descriptions would help, especially for English learners
- A participant said the data didn't always reflect complex student journeys, such as community college transfers

Data Accuracy & Relevance:

- Participants flagged errors, such as incorrect racial demographic listings, inaccurate dismissal times, and wrong information for 9th graders
- Requested additional metrics: scholarships awarded, disciplinary actions, and cultural climate indicators

College Enrollment & Persistence Indicator – Feedback Summary

What Students Wanted to See:

- Common colleges attended by alumni
- Data broken down by race/ethnicity
- Distinctions between 2-year and 4-year college pathways
- Clearer explanations of "persistence" and whether it means students are still enrolled or have dropped out

Usability & Layout:

- Appreciation for summary snapshots, but more context and multi-year trends requested
- Suggestions for clearer definitions, trend visuals, and more student-centered design

High-Quality Curriculum Indicator – Feedback Summary

Student Expectations:

- More language options and electives beyond the basics

- Transparency around course offerings, especially AP, honors, dual credit, and ESL
- Equity in offerings across schools; one participant noted their school only offered a single world language option

Language & Terminology:

- Terms like “gifted,” “AP,” and “NYP” were confusing to some
- Plus-sign summaries were unclear and hard to interpret
- Suggested hover-over explanations and simpler terminology

Transparency & Clarity:

- Requests for grade-level breakdowns of courses and clearer visuals explaining what makes a curriculum “high quality”
- Desire for indicators reflecting student experiences, not just available offerings

Suggestions for Improvement

- Use plain-language definitions for educational terms and metrics
- Include trend data and racial/ethnic breakdowns where relevant
- Increase visibility of non-college post-secondary options
- Use tooltips or hover text to define unfamiliar terms
- Reduce jargon and make content more accessible, especially for English learners
- Add more visuals and interactive elements for engagement

Closing Reflections

Facilitators praised the students for their insight, engagement, and quick navigation of the site—faster than many adult groups. Participants were encouraged to submit additional feedback after the session. Their input will directly shape how CPS presents school data to be more student-friendly, inclusive, and useful.