



CPS Office of Diverse Learners

January 24, 2018

Our Mission

CPS is committed to providing a high quality public education for every child, in every neighborhood, that prepares each for success in college, career, and civic life.

In order to fulfill our vision equitably, every student with special needs is entitled to an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** outlining resources and practices required to ensure students have a level playing field.



IEPs Becoming More Common

- **District-wide enrollment is declining as the total number of students with IEPs remains relatively constant.**
- **At the same time, the number of special education teachers and classroom assistants has increased.**

| Students with IEPs | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| School Year | Students with IEPs | Percentage of Students with IEPs | Total Enrollment | Total Teachers | Total SECAs |
| 2013-14 | 51,001 | 12.7% | 400,545 | 3,601* | 3,366* |
| 2014-15 | 51,648 | 13.0% | 396,683 | 3,934** | 3,590** |
| 2015-16 | 52,231 | 13.4% | 392,285 | 3,955 | 3,642 |
| 2016-17 | 52,093 | 13.7% | 381,349 | 3,692 | 3,707 |
| 2017-18 | 50,917 | 13.7% | 371,382 | 3,626 | 3,734 |

**Note: This data is as of 2/3/2014 - 20th Day data was not available*

***Note: This data is as of end of year*



Need for Reform

- Two years ago, CPS initiated a process to address three issues that impact CPS and schools throughout the country
 - **Uniform Guidelines:**
 - CPS needed to develop uniform, objective guidelines for building IEPs to ensure student needs are identified and addressed in a consistent manner across the district.
 - **Early Interventions:**
 - A process to consistently implement early interventions was needed to ensure students received proper resources quickly and to prevent students from inappropriately being placed in a restrictive environment.
 - **Racial over-identification:**
 - Nationally and in CPS, African American and Latino male students are more likely to be pulled from the classroom.



Policy Reforms

- **Special Education Guideline Updates**

- **Transportation**

- Initial change in September 2016
 - Criteria updated in mid-September in response to feedback

- **Paraprofessional Justification Form**

- Rolled out in late September 2016
 - Following discussions with CTU, adjusted criteria in mid-October

- **Special Education Procedural Manual**

- **Procedural manual had not been updated since 2002, lacked clear, objective criteria**

- In July 2017, CPS posted draft update, incorporating feedback from advocates
 - Subsequent update released in December 2017, reflecting additional feedback
 - Conversations with stakeholders remain ongoing



Additional Resources

65 New Positions to Support Special Ed

- **Additional assistance to help meet student needs**
 - 56 School-Based Positions; Nine Citywide Positions
 - Resources will build capacity at schools with high English Learner populations and schools in need of additional Social and Emotional Learning resources.
- **New positions will supplement work being done by current teachers and support staff**
- **\$5.2 million annual investment will continue in subsequent years**



Path Forward

ISBE Review: CPS requested ISBE to carry out a public inquiry of district reforms.

Parent Involvement: CPS plans to hire 3 full-time parent involvement specialists and train a group of part-time parent ambassadors to help assist families with the IEP process. The district will also create a **special education parent advisory council** by March 2018.

Stakeholder Engagement: CPS will continue to work closely with parents, educators, advocates and CTU to help ensure student needs are met.

