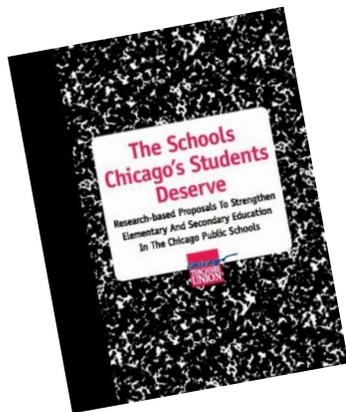


The Schools Chicago's Students Deserve

Research-based Proposals to Strengthen Elementary and Secondary Education in the Chicago Public Schools



The Schools Chicago's Students Deserve is a new Chicago Teachers Union study which argues in favor of proven educational reforms to dramatically improve the education of more than 400,000 students in a district of 675 schools.

These reforms are desperately needed and can lead Chicago towards the world-class educational system its students deserve. Our study presents 46 pages of research-based details on the following 10 essential recommendations:

- 1. Recognize That Class Size Matters:** Drastically reduce class size. We currently have one of the largest class sizes in the state. This greatly inhibits the ability of our students to learn and thrive.
- 2. Educate The Whole Child:** Invest to ensure that all schools have recess and physical education equipment, healthy food offerings, and classes in art, theater, dance, and music in every school. Offer world languages and a variety of subject choices. Provide every school with a library and assign the commensurate number of librarians to staff them.
- 3. Create More Robust Wrap-around Services:** The Chicago Public Schools system (CPS) is far behind recommended staffing levels suggested by national professional associations. The number of school counselors, nurses, social workers, and psychologists must increase dramatically to serve Chicago's population of low-income students. Additionally, students who cannot afford transportation costs need free fares.
- 4. Address Inequities In Our System:** Students and their families recognize the apartheid-like system managed by CPS. It denies resources to the neediest schools, uses discipline policies with a disproportionate harm on students of color, and enacts policies that increase the concentrations of students in high poverty and racially segregated schools.
- 5. Help Students Get Off To A Good Start:** We need to provide age-appropriate (not test-driven) education in the early grades. All students should have access to pre-kindergarten and to full-day kindergarten.
- 6. Respect And Develop The Professionals:** Teachers need salaries comparable to others with their education and experience. They need time to adequately plan their lessons and collaborate with colleagues, as well as the autonomy and shared decision-making to encourage professional judgment. CPS needs to hire more teaching assistants so that no students fall through the cracks.
- 7. Teach All Students:** We need stronger commitments to address the disparities that exist due to our lack of robust programs for emergent bilingual students and services for students faced with a variety of special needs.
- 8. Provide Quality School Facilities:** No more leaky roofs, asbestos-lined bathrooms, or windows that refuse to shut. Students need to be taught in facilities that are well-maintained and show respect for those who work and go to school there.
- 9. Partner With Parents:** Parents are an integral part of a child's education. They need to be encouraged and helped in that role.
- 10. Fully Fund Education:** A country and city that can afford to take care of its affluent citizens can afford to take care of those on the other end of the income scale. There is no excuse for denying students the essential services they deserve.



For more information contact the Chicago Teachers Union at 312-329-9100 or read the entire report on our website at www.ctunion.com/Deserve