



**KIDS FIRST
CHICAGO**

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New Poll: Most Chicagoans Unaware of 2027 School Board Transition; Strong Support for State Action on CPS Funding

Chicago, IL — A new citywide poll commissioned by Kids First Chicago (K1C) reveals that while Chicagoans strongly support new State and City revenue options for Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the vast majority remain unaware of the most consequential governance change in CPS in decades: the transition to a fully elected 21-member Board of Education in 2027.

The survey of 1,361 Chicago adults, conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, shows that Chicagoans want structural, long-term investments in public schools and reject cuts or short-term borrowing. Yet residents have limited knowledge of who represents them on the Board of Education, and that elections will be held again next fall to complete the transition to a fully-elected board.

The poll also shows that confidence in CPS decision-makers varies sharply, with respondents expressing the greatest confidence in Governor J.B. Pritzker and more divided views toward Mayor Brandon Johnson, the Board of Education, the Chicago Teachers Union, and interim CPS CEO/Superintendent Dr. Macquiline King.

“This data shows a city that’s eager for strong, stable school funding—but still largely in the dark about the biggest governance change CPS has seen in decades,” said Hal Woods, Chief of Policy at Kids First Chicago. “With only one in ten Chicagoans able to name their school board representative and two-thirds unaware that a fully elected school board arrives in 2027, it’s clear we have significant work ahead to ensure families are informed and prepared.”

Key Findings

Two-Thirds of Chicagoans Unaware of 2027 Transition to a Fully Elected School Board

- Only **32%** of respondents knew that CPS will move to a **fully elected board in 2027**.
- **66%** were **not aware**, with the lowest knowledge among younger adults and Latine respondents.
- Just **10%** of respondents can name their existing school board representative.

Chicagoans Want Springfield to Step Up

Nearly **two-thirds (66%)** say the **State of Illinois should provide more money** for K-12 schools statewide. Among specific state revenue options:

- **79%** support closing corporate tax loopholes

- **75%** support raising the corporate income tax
- **74%** support raising the income tax for individuals earning above \$250,000

City Revenue Preferences Target Corporations and High-End Property

Among those who support more City funding for CPS:

- **74%** back increasing taxes on large corporations
- **56%** support higher real estate taxes on transactions over \$500,000
- **53%** support a local income tax on high earners

Chicagoans Oppose CPS Cuts or Borrowing to Close the Budget Gap

Respondents strongly reject staffing reductions or loans:

- **50%** call staff layoffs a **low priority** (only **19%** say high priority)
- **53%** call **CPS borrowing** a low priority (only **8%** high priority)

Instead, they prefer:

- **43%** advocating for more State money
- **34%** state teacher pension equity
- **33%** advocating for more City revenue

Governor Pritzker Viewed as Most Trustworthy on CPS Issues

On confidence in various leaders to act in the best interest of CPS students:

- **63%** have at least some confidence in **Governor J.B. Pritzker** — the highest of any actor tested
- **46%** trust the Chicago Teachers Union
- **43%** trust the Board of Education
- **35%** trust Mayor Brandon Johnson
- **30%** trust Interim CEO/Superintendent Macqueline King — with **36% unsure**, signaling low familiarity

“Chicagoans want long-term solutions, not cuts or borrowing. They want the State and the City to step up for students,” said Micaelan Valesky, Manager of Data Science at Kids First Chicago. “The governor’s strong approval on education-related issues suggests that residents might see Springfield as a central part of the answer.”

The full polling memo and methodology are available at kidsfirstchicago.org/2025poll.

Virtual Briefing – Friday, December 12 @ 9 am

Kids First Chicago will hold a virtual briefing on **Friday, December 12, 2025**, from **9:00 to 9:45 am** for members of the media and public. [**Register [here](#), English Only**]

Staff members are available for comment. Please contact Kristin Pollock (847-830-0866, kpolllock@kidsfirstchicago.org) or Sitoria Townsend (773-970-7111, stownsend@kidsfirstchicago.org) for more information.

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About the Survey

- **Field dates:** September 16–29, 2025
- **Respondents:** 1,361 Chicago adults (age 18+)
- **Margin of Error:** ± 3.73 percentage points
- Survey weighted to reflect Chicago's demographic composition.
- Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

ABOUT KIDS FIRST CHICAGO

Kids First Chicago's mission is to dramatically improve education for Chicago's children by ensuring their families are the respected authorities on what their kids need and decision-makers in their kids' education. We do this by partnering with families to support them in gaining the resources, access, and voice they need to achieve their vision for their children. K1C provides transparent and rigorous education analysis to families, educators, and policymakers alike to inform data-driven and inclusive decision-making about the future of Chicago's public schools. Visit kidsfirstchicago.org.