



**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | FEBRUARY 6, 2026**

KIDS FIRST CHICAGO **Contact:** Kristin Pollock
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Special Virtual Town Hall: Is Chicago's New School Board Living Up to Its Promise?

Kids First Chicago holds its annual town hall, Wednesday, February 11, at 6:00 pm

What: Join Kids First Chicago for its annual virtual town hall reflecting on the first year of Chicago's Hybrid School Board.

Kids First Chicago will present a new analysis of Board member voting patterns in year one, shedding light on how elected and appointed members voted on CPS's most contentious issues.

The program will also feature a parent and partner panel sharing perspectives on how the school board's first year has impacted families, communities, and schools across Chicago. The discussion will be moderated by Brandis Friedman, an Emmy Award-winning journalist and anchor of WTTW *Chicago Tonight*, known for her work elevating community voices and leading thoughtful, accessible conversations on education, equity, and public policy.

Who: CPS community members and families, civic, education, and philanthropic leaders.

Nearly 260 are registered to attend.

Speakers:

- **Moderator: Brandis Friedman**, Alexandra and John Nichols Chief Correspondent & Anchor, WTTW *Chicago Tonight*
- **Arnie Rivera**, Founding Executive Director of the Chicago Education Alliance, and former CPS Board Member
- **Melanie Lopez**, CPS Educator and K1C Parent Advisory Board Member
- **Claiborne Wade**, K1C Parent Advisory Board Member
- **Alma Sigala**, K1C Parent Advisory Board Member

When: Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 6:00 pm–7:30 pm

Where: Virtual by Zoom. [Register here >](#)

Why It Matters: On January 15, 2025, Chicago transitioned to a 21-member hybrid – elected and appointed – school board. One year in, we look back to see if the new school board lives up to its promise of delivering more responsive, inclusive, and independent decision-making for Chicago Public Schools.

This issue is particularly timely as results from [Kids First Chicago's fall 2025 poll](#) show that **most Chicagoans still don't know a fully elected school board is coming in 2027.**

- Only 32% of residents are aware that CPS will move to a fully elected board in 2027.
- 66% are not aware, with the lowest knowledge among younger adults and Latine respondents.
- Just 10% of respondents can name their existing school board representative.
- Only 43% of respondents had high confidence that the Chicago Board of Education is acting in the best interests of CPS students.

The town hall will be presented in English with Spanish interpretation. All members of the media are welcome to attend.

[Register here >](#)

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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.