



PROMOTE PARENTS HAVING PRESCHOOL *OPTIONS*

The City of Chicago's goal of universal preschool is laudable, but the current decision to prioritize the placement of four-year olds in schools over community organizations is potentially harmful to working families in Chicago. The decision compromises parents' freedom to choose the best setting to meet the needs of their children. The City's decision-making process largely excluded the input of community providers. The implementation of universal preschool will only be successful if community providers and parents are truly engaged and their voices inform decisions. If organizations are excluded, working families would suffer the loss of extended hours of the quality education they offer.

Chicago Public Schools might be the best option for some; however, many working families will continue to require the full-day, full-year, holistic programs that community providers offer for the whole family.

Support Early Education (SEEd) campaign requests that the City of Chicago halt the Chicago Early Learning Request for Proposals until there is a comprehensive plan that:

- **Ensures preservation of preschool slots for three- and four-year olds within community organizations.**
- **Includes substantive input from the SEEd campaign and other community providers.**
- **Conducts analysis of supply and demand for preschool slots by neighborhood and addresses facility needs for programming. Information must be public and disseminated to providers.**
- **Articulates how the roll out will address the shortage of quality staffing and teachers.**

The exclusion of community providers from serving three- and four-year olds could also threaten the survival of these organizations to serve birth-to-three-year-olds. As organizations rely on numerous funding sources to support programming, many will not have the financial capacity to continue serving that crucial age group. In a time of tumultuous immigration threats and school closures, communities will be further destabilized if these anchor institutions are forced to shut their doors.

How do community organizations meet the needs of working families and young learners in Chicago?

- Quality educational programming birth-to-age-five
 - Infant and toddler services that provide a continuum of care
 - Optimal-teacher student ratios
 - Support children with special needs
 - Home visiting programs
 - Extended child care for working families
- Licensed facilities that are safe and welcoming
- Parent education and family services
 - Mental health supports
 - Preventative health care
 - Adult education courses
 - Immigration services
 - Workforce development
 - Nutritional information and supports
- Highly trained and credentialed staff

Call to Action

Join us in supporting our coalition of early childhood community providers in building a better tomorrow. We ask that you join with Aldermen and Mayoral Candidates in promoting the inclusion of community providers within Chicago's universal preschool initiative. #SEEd, #supportearlyeducation