



# Children First Fund

The Chicago Public Schools Foundation



## CHILDREN FIRST FUND: INVEST WITH IMPACT

The Children First Fund serves as a knowledge hub and liaison between Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and its community of partners, securing and organizing resources that advance CPS's mission to provide a high-quality public education that prepares every child in every neighborhood for success in college, career, and civic life. As the district's only fiscal agent, the Children First Fund is best positioned to help direct your resources for maximum impact.

### COVID-19 Response

This is a difficult time for our school communities--especially families who rely on us for more than an education.

We hope you will consider a gift to the [CFF Compassion Fund](#) to help us quickly mobilize support to ensure that all of our students and their families are safe, supported and given the resources they need to continue their education.

### Thank You

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the numerous individuals and organizations who have generously stepped up as leaders and supporters during this challenging time,

We are also grateful to our champions and supporters who continue to share and follow our efforts on social media **@chifirstfund**.



Children First Fund: The Chicago Public Schools Foundation  
200 West Madison Street, 2nd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60606

[childrenfirstfund.org](http://childrenfirstfund.org) | [contactus@childrenfirstfund.org](mailto:contactus@childrenfirstfund.org)



# CFF COMPASSION FUND: POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS



## Support for Graduating Seniors: Preventing Summer Melt

Students get detoured every year between the time they have accepted college and the first day of classes--the phenomenon is known as "summer melt." 10 to 40% of students who enroll in college do not end up attending in the fall. The rates are highest among low-income students, students in large urban districts, and community-college bound students, which describes a large percentage of CPS students.

CPS Director of Postsecondary Pathways, Maria Bucio, has found that the COVID-19 crisis and its fallout are prompting members of the Class of 2020 to rethink their postsecondary school plans. This effect is compounded for students who were already disengaged prior to the beginning of remote learning or those who have had to take on jobs to support their families during the current crisis.

**Now, more than ever, graduating CPS students need our support to achieve their full potential. Philanthropic funding will help provide urgent financial assistance to graduating CPS students with post secondary plans, such as: costs related to enrollment (fees, deposits), textbooks, transportation, clothing, supplies and other identified barriers.**

This incentive is intended to lessen the financial burden and encourage students to continue with plans to attend a postsecondary institution despite the current situation. Please join us in our commitment to helping our graduating seniors succeed. We aim to raise \$150,000 that will support up to 500 graduating seniors with small financial assistance grants. CFF will work closely with school leaders and CPS College & Career Specialists to identify individual students to receive the award. Any level of support is helpful to meeting our goal.

## Looking Ahead:



- With the Chicago Roadmap, CPS and City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) will work as one, providing a seamless education pathway beginning the moment students step into Pre-K classrooms and stretching to and through college.
- Stay-tuned for an invitation to a virtual Grantmaker Town Hall in the coming months.

## Support for Graduating Seniors: Preventing *Summer Melt*

Philanthropic support of the CFF Summer Melt Fund will help provide urgent financial assistance to graduating CPS students with post secondary plans, such as: costs related to enrollment (fees, deposits), textbooks, transportation, clothing, supplies and other identified barriers. CFF aims to raise \$150,000 to support graduating seniors.

CFF and the Office of College and Career Success partnered to create the following process to help address the needs of graduating seniors with philanthropic support:

### **IDENTIFY STUDENT NEEDS**

CPS College and Career Specialists--who have the overall responsibility of managing the college and career preparation strategies and activities within their designated CPS Network(s)--will be deployed to identify "summer melt fund" needs of graduating seniors, in partnership with school-based teams (principals, counselors, etc).

### **APPLY & APPROVE**

College and Career Specialists will complete the application (via user-friendly Google Form) that details key information, including the barrier that could be alleviated by summer melt funds for a given student. Applications will be reviewed and approved at the Director-level in the Office of College and Career Success (OCCS).

### **FUND & TRACK**

Approved funds will be deployed and tracked via OCCS in coordination with Children First Fund to meet the needs of graduating seniors. The first wave of applications will take place around graduation (June 2020), with additional follow-up throughout the summer in-line with overall communication and support efforts to keep graduating seniors on track for their plans.

Funds of \$50 to \$1,000 per student will be distributed primarily via gift cards and check/ACH transfer to organizations/institutions.