

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Thursday, May 25, 2023

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## Chicago Public Schools Hosts Medicaid Benefits Renewal Event for CPS Families

*Families representing eight CPS schools renew their Medicaid coverage*

**CHICAGO** – Chicago Public Schools (CPS) today hosted a Medicaid benefits renewal event at Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy to help District families update their healthcare coverage. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, families receiving Medicaid were automatically re-enrolled in the program. Beginning this spring, families now need to take action to renew their Medicaid benefits. To ensure students and families maintain these necessary services, CPS hosted today’s school-based enrollment event to help families navigate the Medicaid enrollment process.

“Events like this are extremely important to District families who look to their schools as a resource, not only for their child’s education, but also for important public information to help them make decisions for themselves and their families,” said CPS CEO Pedro Martinez. “Thanks to the leadership of the Office of Student Health and Wellness and our District partners, we’re able to provide essential resources to the school community.”

During Thursday afternoon’s enrollment event, families were connected with trained Medicaid enrollment navigators to assist them in confirming their eligibility and enrolling or renewing their benefits. Navigators provided support to families in both English and Spanish and were able to assist with both their own and their child’s benefit enrollment. Families from Spry Community School, Spry Community Link High School, Hammond, Farragut, Instituto Health, Kanoon, Finkl, and Telpochcalli joined Saucedo students and families at the event. No appointments were needed, and walk-ins were welcomed.

“I am proud of our work in providing families with accessible and time sensitive information about issues that impact their health and their child’s health,” said CPS Chief Health Officer Dr. Sofia Adawy Akintunde. “Medicaid is the single largest provider of healthcare services for our students. Over 70 percent of CPS students are covered by Medicaid. We will continue to work with our community partners to ensure that our students continue to receive these essential medical benefits.”

The State of Illinois began mailing out Medicaid renewal forms this month. To support this effort, the District is encouraging families that currently receive Medicaid benefits to make sure their contact information in the

state's database is correct so they can receive their renewal form and to check their mailbox regularly for important renewal forms. Once a family receives their renewal form, they should fill it out and send it back as soon as possible to prevent any loss in Medicaid coverage.

To update their Medicaid contact information or view their renewal form online, CPS families should:

- Visit [abe.illinois.gov](http://abe.illinois.gov).
- Click "Manage My Case" to log in to your account.
- Verify and update your mailing address under "Contact Us."

CPS will continue to communicate with families throughout the spring, summer, and fall with important information about Medicaid renewal to ensure that everyone who is eligible for Medicaid can access these important health benefits. For more information, families can call the Healthy CPS Hotline at (773) 553-KIDS (5437) or visit [cps.edu/medicaid](http://cps.edu/medicaid).

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### **About Chicago Public Schools (CPS)**

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is dedicated to providing a high-quality education to all students, beginning with the District's free full-day preschool programming for four-year-old scholars and continuing through neighborhood, magnet and selective-enrollment elementary schools that provide a rigorous K-8 education with schools that specialize in the fine arts, world language and culture, dual language, STEM, International Baccalaureate (IB), classical programs, and more. The rising District-wide freshmen-on-track and high school graduation rates reflect the hard work of the CPS community, including families, staff, and students across 635 schools. CPS celebrates the diversity of its more than 322,000 students who cite 182 home languages. Learn more about CPS at [www.cps.edu](http://www.cps.edu) and connect with CPS on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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## Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Teachers Union

### Celebrate National Board Certified Teachers

*532 CPS educators earn or renew prestigious teaching credential during height of the pandemic*

**CHICAGO** — Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Pedro Martinez and Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) President Stacy Davis Gates joined Illinois State Superintendent of Education Dr. Tony Sanders, National Board for

Professional Teaching Standards President and CEO Peggy Brookins, educators, school leaders and families tonight at Amundsen High School for a District wide celebration of educator excellence. The celebration of National Board Certification, the country's highest teacher certification, honored 532 CPS educators who earned or renewed their National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) credential during the height of the pandemic. This was the first NBCT certification celebration since 2019 and honors teachers, counselors and librarians who earned this credential during the past four years.

“Our students are incredibly lucky to have this highly-talented and diverse group of educators in their classrooms every day,” said CEO Pedro Martinez. “Great educators like the ones we honored tonight make a world of difference in our students’ lives and their success both in and outside the school walls. I am incredibly grateful to our new NBCT educators for their relentless pursuit of educational excellence and their dedication and commitment to our students.”

This year marks the 27th anniversary of the [Nurturing Teacher Leadership program](#), a partnership between the District and the Chicago Teachers Union to enable CPS educators to earn National Board Certification. Since 1997, CPS and CTU have produced more than 2400 NBCTs, the third highest number of NBCTs of any district in the nation.

“I am so proud of all the teachers, counselors and librarians who achieved National Board Certification over the last four years. The NBC process is rigorous and challenging during the best of times. But these educators completed the certification during a once-in-a-100 year global pandemic. I am inspired by their resilience,” CTU President Stacy Davis Gates said. “Today, we are celebrating these educators for their personal and professional achievements because every metric related to student learning and well-being is improved by having a National Board Certified Teacher in the classroom. Our students deserve high-quality classrooms where equity and justice abound; NBCTs are part of making that a reality. Over the past four years, 41 percent of Chicago's new NBCTs are teachers of color--and the most recent cohort boasts 45 percent teachers of color. I applaud all our NBCTs who undertook this grueling process to refine their practice, to examine and reflect on their pedagogy and to work with colleagues to achieve this distinction.”

National Board Certification is a rigorous, voluntary certification program for educators to develop and enhance their teaching practice and ultimately improve student learning that is developed by the [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#). [Research](#) shows school districts that have a high number of NBCTs positively impact student performance and lead to an increase in collaboration among teachers.

“We are strong believers in National Board Certification and have been supporting teachers' efforts to grow professionally through this rigorous process for more than two decades,” said State Superintendent of

Education Dr. Tony Sanders. “The expertise teachers acquire through National Board Certification elevates all the educators around them. It’s an investment that pays dividends for our schools, our students, and our communities. Congratulations and thank you to all the teachers who have earned this prestigious distinction. I look forward to seeing how you contribute to the continuing evolution of the teaching profession for many years to come.”

Gladys Joy de Guzman earned National Board Certification as an Early Childhood Generalist through the Nurturing Teacher Leadership (NTL) program, a professional development initiative made possible by the CTU-CPS partnership. A pre-k educator for more than 10 years, NTL connected de Guzman with like-minded educators who were committed to rigorous, effective and inclusive instructional practices and who also valued her experiences as an immigrant and former bilingual student.

“Making sure our children have a safe, fair, equitable and affirming learning environment is what motivates me as an educator,” said de Guzman. “I would encourage any educator who loves working with children, who believes in the promise of public education and whose goal is to positively transform student learning outcomes in CPS to take advantage of this great program.”

The District recently renewed its commitments to investing in teacher professional development and learning in the [Three-Year Blueprint](#). The District is taking steps to improve awareness of professional development programs, like National Board Certification, especially among historically underrepresented groups. More information will be posted in the weeks to come on the [Lead With CPS website](#).

William Weaver, a social studies teacher at Kenwood Academy High School earned National Board Certification in 2020. With more than 10 years of experience in the classroom, Mr. Weaver also pursued National Board Certification through the NTL program to heighten the quality of teaching and learning in his classroom.

“Achieving my NBCT has been one of the biggest feats of my educational career,” said Weaver. “Thankfully, I didn’t have to do it alone. With the support of my family, NBCT mentors, colleagues and students, I was able to distinguish myself as an educator and build confidence that has solidified my place in this profession as an accomplished educator, mentor and coach and improved students’ learning.”

To recruit new candidates, the CTU Quest Center hosts information sessions that explain their support offerings. More information about the program is available [here](#).

In addition to the CTU program, CPS teachers can also access support through [Illinois State University’s National Board Resource Center](#).

