

Posted 8/11/21 5:24 PM (CST) by Parent

FOR THE CORRECTIVE SCHOOL YEARS "2015", "2016", "2017", AND "2018". HOW ARE THE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS BEING DISBURSED TO EACH STUDENT AND FAMILY THAT I.E.P. WASN'T COMPLIED BY THE LAW?. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE TO RECEIVE TUTORING SERVICES AND HEALTH CLUB RESOURCES?. WHERE ARE THE TUTORING SITES IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO?. WHERE ARE THE HEALTH CLUB SITES IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO?. HOW WILL THE SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DOWNTOWN DISTRIBUTE N95 MASKS TO I.E.P. STUDENTS?. WHERE DOES THE I.E.P. CHILDREN GO TO PICK UP HAND SANITIZERS?. DO YOU HAVE WATERS IN THE CASE MANAGER OFFICES OR PRINCIPAL OFFICES FOR I.E.P. KIDS TO DRINK WHILE WEARING MASKS ALL DAY IN SCHOOL?. DO YOU HAVE SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR I.E.P. CHILDREN AT THE SCHOOLS IF THEY DON'T HAVE ANY?. DO YOU ISSUE OUT DEBIT GIFT CARDS FOR I.E.P. FAMILIES THAT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR CHECKS WHO DON'T HAVE A BANK ACCOUNT?. DO YOU ISSUE OUT C.T.A. BUS CARDS FOR I.E.P. STUDENTS AT THEIR SCHOOL WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO GET TO SCHOOL AND FROM SCHOOL EACH DAY?. DO YOU PROVIDE FOOD FOR THE I.E.P. FAMILIES IF THEY DON'T HAVE FOOD TO EAT?. WHERE ARE THE I.E.P. CHILDREN RESOURCES AT IN THE C.P.S. DOWNTOWN HEADQUARTERS, C.P.S. SCHOOLS, C.P.S. NETWORKS, OR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION?. WHERE DO THESE CHILDREN GO WHEN THEY HAVE NEEDS?.

Posted 8/11/21 9:18 PM (CST) by Parent

I was in the process of resolving my case and had a meeting and signed a form for reimbursement. It's been a month and I have emailed twice to the case manager and to ODLSS and no response.

Posted 8/12/21 12:40 PM (CST) by Parent

Hello, I've paid over \$2,000 out pocket services for my son and have yet to receive any reimbursement. I've emailed and called the available number and haven't heard back. I'm being forced to interrupt his services due to being layed off as of Aug. 2nd and lack of funds.

Posted 8/14/21 10:24 AM (CST) by Parent

I had an appointment scheduled with you on Friday to go over the vendor list and you cancel the appointment for UER why? Do I have to retain an education attorney?

Posted 8/15/21 10:11 AM (CST) by Parent

This new communication is confusing as well. It states the new action that will be taken, but not when or how benefits will be distributed. Additionally, there is no status provided for the Affidavits already submitted for reimbursement. This has been poorly handled in the same manner that created the problem. In the end, the students are still suffering and falling much further behind. Get it straightened out and help the students achieve their fullest potential. Arguments are no place for a classroom. Teaching and learning should take precedent before all!

Posted 8/16/21 12:36 PM (CST) by Parent

My child was directly impacted by the lack of resources as they applied to her IEP...I had to supplement her education in order to ensure she was prepared for college! I had meetings that resulted in double talk by administration and ultimately my child lost out!

Posted 8/22/21 8:14 AM (CST) by Parent

The process has been very difficult to understand, Also very time consuming. But I feel the monetary option is a better solution.

Posted 8/23/21 12:49 PM (CST) by Parent

Cps should pay to students lot of money to make it up because IEP students was marginalized by Cps.

Posted 8/23/21 3:36 PM (CST) by Parent

My child has been tremendously hurt by the lack of special education services or not receiving the services at all in school. It's sad that our special education children have to even go through this. Especially, when you've fought so hard to help your child in school. My child is a fifth grader on a first/second grade level because CPS failed him by not giving him the services he needed. Yes, we (the parent)s should be compensated and more for the hard work we put in to substitute what special education did not give. We want our children to succeed. And my child's education means everything to me.

Posted 8/23/21 3:58 PM (CST) by Parent

My son attends a facility, his education funded by CPS. He receives Occupational therapy and Speech therapy, which the school has on staff. But per his IEP, he should have PT as well. CPS was providing a therapist to go to his school once a week the first couple of years he started there, which was 2010. Well 5-6 years ago, we were told no therapist was available to go out there once a week. And no offer was made to monetarily reimburse us for getting outside therapy. Not sure if this qualifies under this but felt the need to state my case somewhere. Thank you.

Posted 8/24/21 2:43 PM (CST) by Community Member

For people who are un-banked, CPS must have an option where a family can be provided a cashiers check or visa debit card

Posted 8/24/21 9:26 PM (CST) by Parent

I'm not sure as to what the plans are for CPS action for their special education students, but I do believe more could be done to inform parents when schools loose or replace support staff. I think it

is purposely deceptive to have students sitting in classes that knowingly disengage the child because of the child's inability to understand the concepts. This is not what access supposed to be about. Furthermore, due to a lack of communication and guidelines on reporting when support staff is not available, schools are getting away with not providing equal access to education. I'm glad that there is a goal in mind, but as a mother of a diverse learner this corrective action attempt has not been forthcoming with all that is known about why students were not receiving services they were legally obligated to provide.

Posted 8/25/21 10:14 AM (CST) by Parent

Trying to get services through CPS is a joke - I had to fight in grade school to even get him tested - requested it in October and he didn't get tested until MAY which caused him to fall further behind. Then in HS the lack of communication was ridiculous. I spent 2.5 years fighting for him before they finally placed him in a therapeutic day school. CPS didn't even tell me that was an option - I had to call an outside source who informed me that he was eligible for that with an IEP. Instead CPS sent me to a behavioral hospital where they misdiagnosed him and put him on meds that could potentially be harmful!! I was talked down to by most of the IEP staff and given a "pat on the head" like I didn't know what I was talking about when I requested things. When they finally put him in a therapeutic day school the bus situation was a joke with them not showing up half the time and he even got beat up by another student on the bus while the driver and aide did nothing. All of this lead to him graduating a year later than he should have. It could have all been avoided had they placed him in a therapeutic day school FIRST. Then all of this UER stuff is sent in legal speak so the average person doesn't know what's going on. Do better CPS make Diverse Learners a priority instead of the first things cut. How are they planning on handling diverse learners in the return to school with the pandemic?

Posted 8/25/21 5:50 PM (CST) by Community Member

How will ssca rights be addressed if we do not want to work with the cps

Posted 8/26/21 4:03 PM (CST) by Parent

My son lost a whole year of education due to CPS not having appropriate education for my son. I had to hire an attorney in order to get my son an proper services. Than the folowing school year CPS dragged its feet giving him acesss to the computer programs that has IEP said he should have.

Posted 8/27/21 4:41 PM (CST) by Other

Why are we still scheduling meetings during the 45 day wait time? We will have to reconvene as we do not have enough information to finalize on a case. As an SSCA representative we need to have ALL the information for parents/students. Why two meetings when we could have one. Unproductive and spinning our wheels!!

Posted 8/28/21 4:02 PM (CST) by Community Member

Why is cps moving forward with meetings during this advisory period. it would make more sense and waste less time of the parents if cps can figure out what they are doing first.

Posted 8/29/21 7:27 PM (CST) by Parent

My son was impacted! Was reached out to, then all communications stop! So confusing! Please help!!!!

Posted 8/30/21 9:04 PM (CST) by Unknown

I am a SSCA representative. Why are we having meetings right now instead of waiting until after the 45 days have passed? Currently we do not have all the information that is required and things are going to change, so holding meetings with parents right now will be a waste of their time as we will have to reconvene meetings after the 45 days due to new protocols.

Posted 8/31/21 12:48 AM (CST) by Parent

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Posted 9/1/21 7:54 AM (CST) by Parent

Hello,

This comment is to address the continued and ongoing lack of interest in CPS providing safe and reliable transportation for students with school placements. There is no communication to parents around routes or schedule changes often leading to no show or late arrivals. CPS transportation does not reply to address changes/updates even when there is prior notification given months in advance. CPS transportation does not notify transportation company of school specific days off leading to confusion and frustration for both parents and the transportation drivers. Most recently, CPS transportation has completely disregarded social distancing recommendations and have proceeded to consolidate routes leading to children being dropped after 5pm daily due to consolidation. No advance notice was given to parents to give time to adequately address and CPS transportation has outright refused to make any adjustments on their end. It is evident that CPS punishes children and students that require such services and aim to make the process as painful for both student and parent as possible

Posted 9/3/21 12:15 PM (CST) by Parent

I believe that a Monterey payout would be better so we can seek out the help needed for our IEP students more quickly, such as tutoring and education supplies.

Posted 9/5/21 4:26 PM (CST) by Other

\$500/year is a woefully insufficient sum for transportation reimbursement. Over the course of a 10-month school year, \$500/year averages out to \$50/month. At the average Federal mileage reimbursement rate for 2016-2018 of \$0.54, \$50.00/mo is only enough to cover travel no further than 1.4 miles from home to school.

The District is currently offering \$500/month to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the bus-driver shortage; 10 times the proposed SSCA reimbursement rate.

Surely, parents who are eligible for reimbursement because the ISBE determined that their disabled children were denied transportation due to the illegality of policies that were instituted by CPS are entitled to compensation equal to that being offered to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to a national bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/5/21 10:39 PM (CST) by Other

THE 2ND SECTION SHOULD NO LONGER BE HEADED "SSCA UNIVERSAL ENRICHMENT REMEDY TELEPHONE CALL" AS A PHONE CALL IS NO LONGER PART OF THE PROCESS

Posted 9/5/21 11:16 PM (CST) by Other

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THIS SECTION SHOULD NO LONGER BE HEADED "SSCA UNIVERSAL ENRICHMENT REMEDY TELEPHONE CALL" AS A PHONE CALL IS NO LONGER PART OF THE PROCESS

#1: UNLIKE THE 8/2020 GUIDANCE, THIS VERSION DOES NOT INDICATE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS TO WHOM A UER WILL BE OFFERED.

THE 1ST SENTENCE SHOULD INDICATE THAT CPS HAS IDENTIFIED 11816 STUDENTS WHO ARE COVERED BY THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES.

THERE IS NO LONGER A NEED TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE 10515 WHO WERE ORIGINALLY PRE-QUALIFIED FOR A UER CALL AND THE 1301 WHO WERE PRE-QUALIFIED FOR AN SSCA MEETING.

Posted 9/5/21 11:36 PM (CST) by Other

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#3: UNLIKE THE 8/2020 GUIDANCE, THIS VERSION DOES NOT INDICATE THE NAME OF THE NOTIFICATION FORM, OR THAT THE NOTIFICATION FORM WILL HAVE BEEN SHARED WITH THE ISBE AND THE ADVOCATES (SPEACC) PRIOR TO BEING SENT TO PARENTS.

THIS AND ALL PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS PURSUANT TO STUDENT SPECIFIC CORRECTIVE ACTIONS MUST BE VETTED BY THE ISBE MONITOR AND THE SPEACC REPRESENTATIVES PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION.

AN OFFICIAL NAME FOR THE NOTIFICATION FORM MUST BE INDICATED IN THE GUIDANCE

Posted 9/7/21 7:41 AM (CST) by Parent

I am not personally affected by this, but this does not seem fair. Reimbursement for affected families should be the same price as what we are getting this year if we do not receive bus service.

Posted 9/7/21 8:12 AM (CST) by Parent

Why is the compensation for student transportation set at \$500 total when CPS is currently paying CPS families \$1,000 plus \$500 monthly for transportation. How many families lost jobs, lost services and lost opportunity that we know costs at least \$500/month to compensate. The \$500 in transportation denial compensation is the height of injustice and CPS' current policy proves it.

Posted 9/7/21 8:49 AM (CST) by Parent

CPS is offering \$500 per month to families of kids whose bus routes were cancelled this year, many of whom go to selective enrollment schools and have a variety of safe and affordable ways to transport their children, but only \$500 per YEAR for families of disabled students for whom they denied transportation and who have few and costly transportation options. The message this sends to the disabled community as well as to the rest of the community is that CPS sees students with disabilities as second class citizens with a value 1/10 that of other students. Disgraceful.

Posted 9/7/21 9:16 AM (CST) by Parent

Parents whose disabled children were denied transportation because CPS broke the law deserve the same compensation as parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the current (fall 2021) bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/7/21 3:42 PM (CST) by Community Member

CPS is offering \$1000 up front and \$500/month after that for parents who have to provide their own transportation right now. it's an insult to offer \$500 total for transportation under this UER cash settlement.

Posted 9/8/21 10:43 PM (CST) by Parent

I feel monetary compensation makes sense and is easier and more convenient . I do think these monetary compensations should be made exempt from taxes if not and also these monetary

compensations should not negatively impact a student or parent's benefits such as SSI, medicaid , SNAP, etc and CPS should ensure that this money is exempt from any income or asset implications related to such benefits mentioned . I also feel all students identified or undergoing SCCA meetings should all be granted a free , new Chromebook . I waited a long time for my SCCA meeting (approx nine months) and by that time , chrome books were no longer being offered as I believe they should be I also feel denial of certain medical diagnosis (es) being listed on an IEP as well as denial of any clinician services such as speech and Ot should be made part of this inquiry without needing to go through the more lengthy comp education referral process . The amount for transportation should also be increased . With all this being said , I encountered very kind and helpful UER meeting and SSCA meeting staff that explained the process well and listened to my concerns and were dedicated. I thank them for that .

Posted 9/8/21 11:28 AM (CST) by Parent

I would like to propose an option of direct deposit to recipients of monetary remedy payments such as direct deposit to a checking or savings account, credit to a designated debit card and also the consideration of depositing into an Illinois Able account (to protect disabled individuals benefits)in addition to the check option giving recipients lots of options . The mail system is slow and not always reliable and may be more difficult to manage if checks don't reach recipients . Thank you . Can google Illinois Disability accounts or Illinois Able for more info on these types of accounts .

Posted 9/8/21 11:47 AM (CST) by Parent

Transportation remedy should please be increased . Often parents have to accompany their children to and from school when transportation is denied and may have multiple bus or cab /car trips a day to manage getting their kids to and from school . The overall cap amounts for transportation remedy should please be raised to account for this . Thank you .

Posted 9/8/21 4:02 PM (CST) by Other

Comments Part I — Because these comments exceed 5000 characters, they are submitted in two parts.

These comments address two key deficiencies in the CPS's latest approach to Student Specific Corrective Action issued on August 11, 2021 (herein referred to as "SSCA 4.0"). SSCA is intended to remedy problems identified in the Illinois State Board of Education's 2017 Public Inquiry which potentially impacted tens of thousands of students with disabilities during the relevant 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, including thousands who are no longer enrolled in CPS.

First, the proposed timetable in SSCA 4.0 is completely unrealistic, and ignores mistakes that have been made in CPS's past SSCA efforts. SSCA 4.0, which can only be implemented once CPS finalizes its plan after this comment period ends on September 27th, sets January 31, 2022 as a critical date by which the nearly 12,000 affected students/parents are expected to either accept

CPS's offered monetary remedy and return a signed waiver or request a meeting to ask for a different remedy. This means that in a 4-month period CPS must finalize and implement its plan, including contacting each of these students/parents and explaining SSCA 4.0 so that students/parents understand their options and can make an informed decision, and get a waiver or request for a meeting back to CPS by the January 31, 2022 deadline. CPS proposes the same deadline of January 31, 2022, for all students who are not eligible for UER to request an SSCA meeting if they would like to be considered for a remedy. This means that in addition to the nearly 12,000 students/parents CPS must contact about UER, they must also successfully communicate with all other students who were enrolled in the District during the Inquiry years and may have been harmed. It is important to note that this group of students is not limited to the 50,000+ students with IEPs during those years, as one Inquiry issue was denial of eligibility for an IEP, so there are almost certainly students who are eligible for SSCA even though they never received special education services.

How such a deadline could possibly be set in light of the following facts is beyond comprehension:

- (1) over the seven-month period from December 2020 to July 2021 CPS was able to successfully make contact with only 361 of the 10,515 students who were eligible for an automatic remedy (UER) under the prior SSCA plan, and less than 100 parents/guardians and students who were not identified for UER requested an SSCA meeting;
- (2) CPS has been consistently inaccurate in projecting and meeting deadlines, and in making adjustments in light of problems— the most recent plan prior to SSCA 4.0 was supposed to be completed in September 2021;
- (3) most eligible students/parents received some combination of letters, robo-calls, email messages, and/or flyers during the past 3 school years based on prior CPS SSCA plans, and it will be important to clear up confusion about SSCA 4.0 going forward versus past SSCAs so that decisions are informed — this will take time;
- (4) it is unrealistic to expect to reach the thousands of students/parents, let alone to complete the process of explaining SSCA 4.0 and providing sufficient information and time for students/parents to make an informed decision, in the time period ending on January 31, 2022 (e.g. CPS has not yet made efforts to contact any of the more difficult-to-find 2500 students who are no longer enrolled and SSCA 4.0 does not mention these students);
- (4) with a monetary award, parents/students may have questions that require consultation regarding the implications of accepting the award on other aspects of their lives (e.g. qualification for other programs) in order to make an informed decision; and
- (5) the 4-month timeline ending on January 31, 2022 includes two holiday periods when CPS will be closed, and the SSCA 4.0 does not anticipate the certain impact COVID 19 will have on CPS's ability to effectively communicate with students/parents.

Recognizing both CPS's and students'/parents' need to bring to bring the remedial phase of the Inquiry to a close after 3 years of false starts, it is important to define the end, but to do so equitably and realistically. What CPS has proposed is to set a date — January 31, 2022 — by which the universe of students/parents who will get a remedy is defined. However, all the unknowns in the proposed SSCA 4.0 strongly argue against setting a specific date in the plan. The danger of setting that date is that it does not allow for addressing unanticipated problems that will certainly be encountered in implementation. Is a preferred approach to set benchmarks which if met define the

timeline and the universe of students who will get the remedy? Or is a better approach to establish an end date with flexibility to extend it if certain benchmarks on a timeline are not met along the way? (continued in second comment)

Posted 9/8/21 4:04 PM (CST) by Other

Comments Part II – Because these comments exceed 5000 characters, they are submitted in two parts.

This a continuation of comments addressing two key deficiencies in the CPS's latest approach to Student Specific Corrective Action issued on August 11, 2021 (herein referred to as "SSCA 4.0").

In any case, the expectations/benchmarks should be very high as there are few reasons that parents who understand their options would decline a monetary remedy. Further, any approach will require robust and easily accessible data collection systems. No matter what approach is taken, it is not acceptable for CPS to set an end date which writes off students/parents because CPS has been unsuccessful in actually contacting students/parents, or because it has not provided them with the time and information needed to make an informed decision.

Second, SSCA 4.0 does not adequately address strategies to actually reach and effectively communicate with students/parents. Its outreach strategies must include not only having a contact with a particular student/parent, but also effectively communicating all the information that is needed to make an informed decision; and in doing so CPS must use methods that are specifically tailored to be understood by the populations involved, including those for whom English is not their primary language. CPS's difficulties in developing and implementing such strategies is evident from the lack of progress in their most recent SSCA efforts – significantly more than what has been done in the past is required.

Posted 9/9/21 10:09 PM (CST) by Teacher

Parents whose children were denied transportation because CPS broke the law in 2016 and 2018 deserve the same compensation as parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to a bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/11/21 5:25 PM (CST) by Parent

CPS treats special education children and their parents like they are nonexistent. We started out having my child placed during kindergarten to 2nd where he was supposed to go up to the 4th through 6th special education class but they made him stay a whole year longer because the 4th through 6th's class was apparently "full" and since my child was the youngest they made him stay there. I of course complained and requested for a meeting with the principal. My child was placed up their in the 3rd through 6th but after a week they immediately kicked him back to the kindergarten to 2nd class. I was furious and complained at the Principal AGAIN and someone from CPS came down and just said "We have no more space so deal with it." the utter rudeness and ignorance they have treated us is absolutely terrible and unspeakable. After waiting the one year to have him finally in the 3rd to 6th class he was in fourth, but the teacher was nice but there were only one teacher and 2 aids

in a classroom of 12 special needs kids some had a more severe case of special needs and the teachers had to always supervise them 24/7 leaving the others who did not have such of a severe case to fend for themselves and learn by themselves which is absolutely horrible. The same situation happened again in 6th where he could not go to the 6th to 8th for ANOTHER YEAR and now he is in it but in 7th. School these past two weeks were also awful they again have a "special needs" class but of course its "FULL" so they throw special needs kids with IEP plans to regular classrooms in the virtual academy.

Posted 9/13/21 1:35 PM (CST) by Community Member

The change to providing a monetary award offers some solutions to issues with the existing system. It will make it easier for parents/guardians to get reimbursed for prior services (they will not have track down receipts from years ago) or pay up front for private services now (they will not have to pay with their own money and then wait for reimbursement from CPS). That said, it will create new barriers to actually obtaining services for many students. As a result, CPS should offer both monetary awards and in-kind services, letting parents/guardians and students decide what is best for them.

The goal of UER and SSCA is to provide a remedy to students who did not get the services they should have during 2016-17 and 2017-18. Sending a check for an amount of money may provide that remedy for some families, offering reimbursement for transportation costs during the Inquiry Years or private tutoring / therapies that were paid for by families because students weren't getting those services in school. That said, many students need extra educational services to make up for what they lost, not money. I understand that parents/guardians can use the money to obtain extra services for their student(s), but expecting them to research and find their own provider adds an extra barrier to actually getting those services.

The solution is to offer both monetary remedies and in-kind service remedies. CPS should continue to offer the services that were available under the prior system and allow families to decide whether they want to receive a check for their UER amount or put those funds towards certain services. This will ensure that all students have access to providers for the variety of services they may need, while also allowing them to choose to receive a check so they can use a different provider if they are not satisfied with the options from CPS. This will also provide a solution for families who are concerned about the variety of issues that may arise if they accept a monetary remedy, such as tax implications and the impact on eligibility for public benefits.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, under the prior system CPS was working with CTU to make CTU providers available through UER. CPS has indicated that they will no longer be working with CTU to make them available under the new system. This is a huge mistake and a missed opportunity to make a large number of providers available to students throughout Chicago. Partnering with CTU would almost certainly ensure that students from all over the city have easy access to a variety of service providers in their communities. To not involve CTU would waste what could be a tremendous resource for the students of CPS who were harmed by the inquiry.

In closing, cutting a check and walking away from the issue is not sufficient. Offering a monetary remedy will be an improvement for some students, but will create additional barriers for others. In order to offer, and deliver, appropriate remedies to students who were harmed by the Inquiry, CPS needs to offer both monetary and in-kind service remedies.

Posted 9/26/21 2:16 PM (CST) by Other

The decision by CPS to provide monetary remedies instead of a menu of service options for families is a wrong decision. While it may make it easier for families to get reimbursed for past services they have already paid for, it does not completely solve the issue. In some cases it may create more problems for families trying to obtain services. CPS should offer both a monetary remedy and in-kind services. This will allow families to have a voice in what they think is best for their child.

An option for in-kind services should be made available to truly meet the goal of UER and SSCA. That goal was to provide a remedy to students who did not receive the services they were entitled to in school years 2016-17 and 2017-18. Services those students should have received in school. As mentioned, a monetary award as reimbursement is fine for families who were able to pay for services on their own but what about the families who were not able to? Their children have still not received any remedy of services five years later. They should have an option for direct services to be provided to them to remedy the past denied services.

The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) negotiated in good faith for over a year with CPS about making CTU members eligible vendors for providing services. We agreed to an application process, work rules and compensation. CPS launched the application and CTU cooperatively notified members of the opportunities to serve students. CPS received over 1,000 applications from highly qualified members willing to provide services to our CPS students who were harmed by the past denial of services. While CTU members were hired to make contact with and hold eligibility meetings with affected families, CPS cut the actual providing of direct services by members out of the plan and with no notice to the CTU. This is a grave injustice to our students to take away a clear option for direct services by ready, willing and highly qualified teachers and clinicians.

CPS has said that families can use the monetary award to choose a service provider that can be a CTU member. However, no guidance has been provided to families as how to initiate that option. It also puts a burden on families to have to search for a service provider on their own when they could have easily been provided one through the joint CTU-CPS process. In addition, making families responsible for payment to service providers could create issues around withholding for tax purposes. Families seeking direct services and CTU members willing to provide them should not have to jump through these hoops to assist our students with the services they were entitled to and denied by CPS.

Finally, it seems as if CPS hopes the lure of money and a process that may be time consuming for other options will satisfy families and stifle any further pursuit of remedies. If a large number of monetary remedies are made this would give the appearance of reaching the goals of UER & SSCA

from a strictly numbers view but will have not really made our families whole for the services their children were denied for so long on their path to an education that serves them appropriately.

Posted 9/27/21 12:06 PM (CST) by Community Member

The SSCA policy should indicate that CPS will compensate the parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at the same rate that the district is currently offering to the parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

The legal obligation of CPS to provide transportation is the same in both scenarios and should be compensated similarly.

As is standard in procurement processes, I would expect an additional public review period must be commenced for any and all material changes that CPS intends to make to the iteration of the Guidelines currently under review.

Posted 9/27/21 1:41 PM (CST) by Community Member

This pennies-on-the-dollar approach is an insult to students with disabilities and their families, and an affront to the provisions of the federal law. \$500 per year of transportation amounts to about \$50/month. Can you name in what realm is transportation in Chicago possible for that laughable amount? This inhumane proposal illustrates once again the disdain that CPS management has for Chicago's disabled kids, working families, and minorities. Can CPS also explain how it justifies paying \$677K annually, plus \$1 Million in COVID relief money, to a "transportation consultant" from Lake Forest, while thousands of our special needs kids continue to be without transportation? CPS "leadership," under the directives of Mayor Lightfoot, continues its quest to destroy public education. Shame on you, CPS!!

Posted 9/27/21 2:21 PM (CST) by Other

Submitted by Terri Smith-Roback.

The District's proposed transportation compensation amount is neither adequate nor equitable.

In a bid to incentivize them to provide alternate means of transportation to and from school this year, CPS is offering an incentive package worth \$5500.00 to the parents of the 3300 students who are without busing due to the SY 2021-2022 bus driver shortage.

Parents who enroll in the District's incentive program will receive \$31.25 for each of the 176 days of the school year irrespective of how far away they live from school.

If each of the 3300 parents were to enroll in the incentive program, it would cost the District \$18,150,000.00

By contrast, the District's proposed SSCA policy allots a mere \$500.00 per year payout to the parents of the 2031 disabled children who were unjustly denied transportation during SY 2016-2017 and SY 2017-2018.

For these parents, the daily compensation rate would fluctuate depending upon the number of days that transportation was withheld; as little as \$2.84 per day for parents whose children were denied transportation for all 176 school days.

If CPS were to adopt the \$500.00 annual SSCA Transportation compensation amount as proposed in this iteration of the SSCA Guidelines, the District will spend only \$1,015,500.00 to compensate the 2031 parents whose disabled children had no way to get to school during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years due to the District's failure to meet its obligation to provide Transportation as a Related Service.

Inquiry-impacted parents who self-transported their children to school 2016-2018 must be awarded the same amount that the District is currently offering to parents in order to incentivize them to self-transport their children to school. There can be no excuse for a discrepancy. The SSCA policy should indicate that CPS will compensate the parents of the 2031 SSCA-eligible students the same \$31.25 per day as that the District is currently offering to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the bus-driver shortage.

During the course of the 45-day review period, CPS has proposed that instead of a flat \$500.00 per year payout, the District will apply a mathematical formula by which to calculate SSCA transportation reimbursement.

As the proposed SSCA transportation compensation methodology would constitute a material change that was not indicated in these proposed Guidelines; and as the public comment period closes on 9/27/2021; and because the proposed material change impacts the procedural safeguards afforded to parents, this (and any and all other material changes) must be subject to an additional review period.

Posted 9/27/21 2:21 PM (CST) by Parent

The SSCA policy should indicate CPS will compensate parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at same rate that CPS is currently offering to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/27/21 2:52 PM (CST) by Unknown

The currently proposed UER/SSCA amount for transportation is inadequate. It should be a minimum of \$1200 flat rate remedy.

Posted 9/27/21 2:58 PM (CST) by Unknown

Regarding this line in the proposed revised guidance : "Requests for SSCA meetings must be made before January 31, 2022". ODLSS has not done enough parent outreach or marketing of the UER/SSCA program for families to be informed and aware that they may be eligible and should request a meeting. This deadline is a further attempt to thwart eligible families from coming forward. The deadline for parent requested SSCA meetings should be moved back to a min of June 2022. This must be done in combination with updated UER/SSCA townhalls, webinars, training's, robocalls to all CPS DL families, mailings from school sent to families, etc

Posted 9/27/21 3:01 PM (CST) by Unknown

Regarding this line • "CPS will also verify that the student has not already waived his/her claims as a result of a due process hearing order, settlement agreement, and/or mediation agreement" - THIS should be revised to state "result of a due process, settlement, mediation agreement that was directly in response to one of the identified SSCA violations during the 2016-18 timeline only" As in, unless your due process or settlement was to remedy an area of the inquiry - then families should still be eligible for a UER/SSCA remedy

Posted 9/27/21 3:05 PM (CST) by Other: Special Education Advocate

Submitted by Terri Smith-Roback:

Pursuant to the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/14-6.01), any and all substantive material changes to these proposed Guidelines made subsequent to this 45-day review period (including but not limited to the addition/removal of any provisions; and changes to compensation amounts, deadlines, notification procedures etc) must be subject to an additional public review period BEFORE the change(s) can be adopted by CPS.

Posted 9/27/21 3:09 PM (CST) by Parent

I believe SSCA policy should direct CPS to compensate the parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at the same rate they are offering to the families with transportation disruptions due to the 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

They should offer an additional public review period for material changes that CPS intends to make to the iteration of the Guidelines currently under review.

Posted 9/27/21 3:34 PM (CST) by Community Member

The SSCA policy should indicate that CPS will compensate the parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at the same rate that the district is currently offering to the parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/27/21 3:46 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC Advocate

SPEACC Public Comments RE: Updated SSCA Guidance (1 of 10)

I. Introduction

The Special Education Advocacy Coalition of Chicago (SPEACC) has a number of comments, questions, and concerns in response to the proposed updates to the SSCA Guidance. We would like to preface our comments by noting that we are very pleased that CPS is willing to reconsider the current UER and SSCA systems and make adjustments to ensure that all CPS students who were harmed by the policies and procedures at issue in the Public Inquiry have access to a remedy. With that in mind, we hope that CPS makes the necessary updates and changes in response to these and the other public comments that have been submitted. While the proposed changes offer some improvements and solutions to issues that arose under the prior system, there are prior concerns that remain, and a number of new issues that are certain to arise under the new UER/SSCA systems.

It is imperative that CPS respond to these issues and update their guidance accordingly before it is finalized to ensure the new system can be implemented effectively and efficiently.

This Comment is broken into parts to comply with the character limit. A table of contents follows:

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Posted 9/27/21 3:48 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (2 of 10)

II. Shift to Monetary Remedy / Lack of In-Kind Services

Perhaps the most significant change under the new UER/SSCA system is the shift in the actual remedy that is being offered. The current system offers students a “bank” of funds that can be used to pay for approved special education services or to reimburse parents/guardians who obtain private services. Under the new proposal, this is shifted to a strictly monetary remedy. So, instead of an amount of funds being made available to designate for educational services, parents/guardians will simply receive a check from CPS in the designated amount, and then they are free to use that money for educational services as they wish. While on its face this simplifies the system, as it removes the need to involve CPS in the procurement of services or reimbursement for private services, it will create new barriers to actually obtaining services for students and may raise a number of other issues for families who are receiving checks. Most importantly, it puts the burden on families to identify and contract with an available provider, and it will raise a number of taxation and public benefit concerns because the families are receiving a cash payment. A superior solution would offer both monetary awards and in-kind services, letting parents/guardians and students decide what is best for them.

The goal of UER and SSCA is to provide a remedy to students who did not get the services they should have during 2016-17 and 2017-18. Sending a check for an amount of money may provide that remedy for some families, offering reimbursement for transportation costs during the Inquiry Years or private tutoring / therapies that were paid for by families because students weren't getting those services in school. That said, many students need extra educational services now to make up for what they lost. We understand that parents/guardians can use the money to obtain extra services for their student(s), but expecting them to research and find their own provider adds an extra barrier to actually getting those services. The solution is to offer both monetary remedies and in-kind service remedies. CPS should continue to offer the services that were available under the prior system and allow families to decide whether they want to receive a check for the UER amount or put those funds towards certain services. This will ensure that all students have access to providers for the variety of services they may need, while also allowing them to choose to receive a check if they are not satisfied with the options from CPS.

The most important in-kind service that has been eliminated with the proposed formula is the option to have UER funds paid directly to CTU providers. CPS has indicated that they will no longer be working with CTU to make teachers and related service providers available under the new system. This is a huge mistake and a missed opportunity to make a large number of providers available to students throughout Chicago. Partnering with CTU would almost certainly ensure that students from all over the city have easy access to a variety of service providers in their communities. Expecting parents to establish private contracts with individual teachers is not an acceptable substitute. Doing so imposes another barrier on many families and will exacerbate the inequities we already witness between families who have advocated successfully for their children and those without the requisite skills, time, and information. Not involving CTU would waste what could be a tremendous resource for the students of CPS who were harmed by the inquiry.

Retaining the option of in-kind services will also provide a solution for families who are concerned about the variety of issues that may arise if they accept a monetary remedy, such as tax implications and the impact on eligibility for public benefits. The proposed guidance does not include any information about whether the checks sent to families would be viewed as a qualifying asset for public benefit purposes. This puts parents/guardians in the difficult situation of attempting to evaluate the impact that accepting such a check will have on their family. The solution, of course, is to not force parents/guardians to make this decision.

Posted 9/27/21 3:50 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (3 of 10)

III. Proposed Timeline

The updated guidance also fails to address two related issues that were at the heart of many problems under the previous system – failure to stick to proposed timelines and inability to successfully contact eligible families. SSCA is intended to remedy problems identified in the Illinois State Board of Education's 2017 Public Inquiry which potentially impacted tens of thousands of

students with disabilities during the relevant 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, including thousands who are no longer enrolled in CPS. Despite this, neither set of guidance has provided concrete information on how CPS will successfully contact these families and deliver a remedy. Under the prior system, CPS projected that they would complete over 10,000 UER calls and thousands of SSCA meetings in less than nine months. Nine months later, less than 2% of the 10,515 students initially eligible for UER are actually in the process of receiving a remedy, and a few hundred SSCA meetings have been held. Despite this, the updated guidance does not address how such issues will be fixed under the new system, and in fact seems likely to fall into some of the same problems.

The proposed timetable in the updated guidance is completely unrealistic and ignores mistakes that have been made in CPS's past SSCA efforts. The new system, which can only be implemented once CPS finalizes its plan after this comment period ends on September 27th, sets January 31, 2022 as a critical date by which the nearly 12,000 affected students/parents are expected to either accept CPS's offered monetary remedy and return a signed waiver or request a meeting to ask for a different remedy. This means that in a 4-month period CPS must finalize and implement its plan, including contacting each of these students/parents and explaining the new system so that students/parents understand their options and can make an informed decision (some of the concerns with which are detailed above), and get a waiver or request for a meeting back to CPS by the January 31, 2022 deadline.

CPS proposes the same deadline of January 31, 2022, for all students who are not eligible for UER to request an SSCA meeting if they would like to be considered for a remedy. This means that in addition to the nearly 12,000 students/parents CPS must contact about UER, they must also successfully communicate with all other students who were enrolled in the District during the Inquiry years and may have been harmed. It is important to note that this group of students is not limited to the 50,000+ students with IEPs during those years, as one Inquiry issue was denial of eligibility for an IEP, so there are almost certainly students who are eligible for SSCA even though they never received special education services.

The proposed timeline / deadline is even more curious considering what has happened up to this point:

(1) over the seven-month period from December 2020 to July 2021 CPS was able to successfully make contact with only 361 of the 10,515 students who were eligible for an automatic remedy (UER) under the prior SSCA plan, and fewer than 100 parents/guardians and students who were not identified for UER requested an SSCA meeting;

(2) CPS has been consistently inaccurate in projecting and meeting deadlines, and in making adjustments in light of problems— the previous SSCA plan was supposed to be completed by September 2021;

(3) most eligible students/parents received some combination of letters, robo-calls, email messages, and/or flyers during the past 3 school years based on prior CPS SSCA plans, and it will be

important to clear up confusion about the new system going forward versus past SSCAs so that decisions are informed – this will take time;

(4) it is unrealistic to expect to reach the thousands of students/parents, let alone to complete the process of explaining SSCA and providing sufficient information and time for students/parents to make an informed decision, in the time period ending on January 31, 2022 (e.g. CPS has not yet made efforts to contact any of the more difficult-to-find 2500 students who are no longer enrolled, nor have they provided a strategy for how they will reach these students);

(5) with a monetary award, parents/students may have questions that require consultation regarding the implications of accepting the award on other aspects of their lives (e.g. qualification for other programs as outline above) in order to make an informed decision; and,

(6) the 4-month timeline ending on January 31, 2022 includes two holiday periods when CPS will be closed, and the new SSCA plan does not anticipate the certain impact COVID 19 will have on CPS's ability to effectively communicate with students/parents which was seen under the prior system.
--this section continued in submission 4 of 10--

Posted 9/27/21 3:51 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (4 of 10)

Proposed Timeline--continued from submission 3 of 10.

Recognizing both CPS's and students'/parents' need to bring the remedial phase of the Inquiry to a close after 3 years of false starts, it is important to define the end, but to do so equitably and realistically. All of the unknowns and unaddressed issues in the proposed SSCA strongly argue against the specific date—January 31, 2022-- proposed in the plan.

Posted 9/27/21 3:52 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (5 of 10)

IV. Parent Contact and Community Outreach

In its revised guidance, CPS should detail how it will meaningfully contact the former and current students/parents who were impacted by the Inquiry issues, and then add a year for completion of waivers and payment of monetary or in-kind remedies. If CPS accomplishes its parent/student contacts ahead of schedule, the final year will start early; on the other hand, if CPS has underestimated the time it will take to contact students/parents, the deadline will be extended. The comprehensive plan should address the issues raised in these comments, including adopting specific language where it has been suggested. It should detail issues such as the following:

week by week timelines of what CPS expects to accomplish;

the steps it will exhaust and document in contacting individual students/parents, which should include multiple attempts to make contact through known emails, multiple attempts through known phone numbers, multiple attempts through known addresses, multiple contacts through certified mail, involvement of school staff at schools students/former students attended, involvement of staff at schools/programs out of the district where students may currently reside or attend;

the steps it will take to reach special populations such as those students no longer in attendance;

the steps CPS will take to use media, in-person meetings with community groups/school groups/disability organizations etc. in an attempt to reach parents;

identification of written documents for individual students/parents to explain SSCA, a plan for how these will be distributed, who will be involved in the distribution, and a timeline for development and distribution;

the methods CPS will use to ensure the information provided is understood by the populations involved, including those for whom English is not their primary language

the kinds of written documents it will develop to reach the community in general, how these will be developed, how these will be distributed, who will be involved in the distribution and a timeline for development and distribution;

identification of resources for students/parents who have questions, both within CPS, ISBE and the community;

development of a robust and easily accessible data collection system tracking, for example, all efforts to contact parents/students, and status of remedy,

commitment to public reporting every two weeks of what has been accomplished (e.g., number of students contacted broken down by Inquiry category during the 2-week period and cumulatively, number and amount of awards paid out by Inquiry category during the period and cumulatively, etc.)

SPEACC objects to the imposition of an end date which disqualifies students/parents because CPS has either been unsuccessful in contacting them due to lack of effort or has failed to provide them with adequate time and information needed to make an informed decision.

As it stands the new SSCA does not adequately address strategies to reach and effectively communicate with students/parents. CPS's failure to develop and implement such strategies is evidenced by the lack of progress in the District's most recent SSCA efforts. Outreach strategies must include not only having contact with a particular student/parent, but also effectively communicating all the information that is needed to make an informed decision. In order to do so, CPS must develop and implement methods that are designed so that they can be easily understood by all affected parents/guardians, including those for whom English is not their primary language. Communication methodology should include maximizing the use of digital and broadcast media,

establishing an in-person presence at relevant community and school events, and using the District's parent communication systems, such as ASPEN to make initial contact with the parents/guardians who have been identified as having been impacted by the SSCA procedures.

Posted 9/27/21 3:53 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (6 of 10)

V. Transportation

The District's proposed transportation reimbursement amount is neither adequate nor equitable.

In a bid to incentivize them to provide alternate means of transportation to and from school this year, CPS is offering an incentive package worth \$5500.00 to the parents of the 3300 students who are without busing due to the SY 2021-2022 bus driver shortage.

Parents who enroll in the District's incentive program will receive \$31.25 for each of the 176 days of the school year irrespective of how far away they live from school.

By contrast, the District's proposed SSCA policy allots a mere \$500.00 per year payout to the parents of the 2031 children with disabilities who were unjustly denied transportation during SY 2016-2017 and SY 2017-2018.

For these parents, the daily reimbursement rate would fluctuate depending upon the number of days that transportation was withheld; as little as \$2.84 per day for parents whose children were denied transportation for all 176 school days.

The SSCA policy should indicate that CPS will compensate the parents of the 2031 SSCA-eligible students the same \$31.25 per day as that the District is currently offering to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the bus-driver shortage.

During the course of the 45-day review period, CPS has proposed that instead of a flat \$500.00 per year payout, the District will apply a mathematical formula by which to calculate transportation reimbursement.

As the proposed transportation reimbursement methodology proposes a material change that was not made available during the public comment period that closes on 9/27/2021; and because the proposed material change impacts the procedural safeguards afforded to parents, this (and any and all other material changes) must be subject to an additional review period.

Posted 9/27/21 3:53 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (7 of 10)

VI. Taxes and 1099's

CPS must make a clear statement in the Guidelines that it does not consider SSCA payments to be taxable income to the recipients for federal or state tax purposes.

Just as the provision of educational services is non-taxable to the recipient, so too are payments made for a failure to provide educational services. Clarifying the tax status of these SSCA payments up front is essential, because we have undocumented families who cannot provide a taxpayer identification number, and we have families for whom a change in income will impact their public benefits. In addition, families must know in advance if they need to save a portion so they are not surprised by a tax obligation later. SPEACC has consulted with two sets of tax attorneys; both agree that there is legal support for the argument that CPS need not issue 1099's for SSCA payments.

CPS must clearly state in the Guidelines that: 1) it will not require recipients to complete a W9 form or provide a taxpayer identification number (i.e. Social Security or other identification number); 2) recipients will not receive an IRS Form 1099 or other tax form from CPS; and 3) CPS will not report payments to the IRS as income to the recipients.

If CPS is not willing to agree to the above, we request a meeting as soon as possible so that SPEACC can present the legal arguments that CPS need not issue 1099's for SSCA payments.

Posted 9/27/21 3:56 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (8 of 10)

VII. Impact on Public Benefits

CPS needs to recognize that the families it serves receive a variety of public benefits where eligibility could be endangered by a monetary payout. It is urgent that CPS understands these impacts and then structures the SSCA process so that families have time to clarify the potential impact SSCA payments may have before they accept a payment. The alternative is that CPS will endanger the financial stability of families already living with limited financial means. In select situations, a CPS payment could endanger the family's sole source of income – as, for example, with a family that relies entirely on an SSI check.

If SSCA benefits are not considered taxable income, that will resolve the issues for some types of public benefits. For example, if it is not considered taxable income, an SSCA payment would not impact most medical cards and it probably would not impact SNAP eligibility. However, some public benefits, like SSI, have income and asset limits. A one-time payment of \$2,000 (or even less for some families) would put a family in danger of losing their eligibility for SSI. There are some temporary exceptions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic that might place families in the clear. In addition, some families could avoid a negative impact if they "spend down" the money within a month. Point being, there are many considerations in this analysis, and there is no general, universal advice that could be provided to families. They really need to talk to an expert who can thoroughly consult with them on their specific situation.

We are asking that CPS: 1) meet with SPEACC as soon as possible to discuss specifics of how SSCA payments can affect specific benefits, and bring representatives from the CPS Office of Student Health & Wellness; 2) offer in-kind service and/or reimbursement options instead of a straight one-time monetary payout to families for whom a monetary payout will endanger benefits; 3) offer to make monetary payments in installments for families for whom a one-time monetary payout will endanger benefits; 4) be prepared to screen families for benefits issues in a preliminary contact and provide a referral so they can get advice particular to their family before they accept a payment.

Posted 9/27/21 3:56 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (9 of 10)

VIII. Unbanked Families

The FDIC estimates that 5% of people in the United States are unbanked. This percentage is likely higher in a district like CPS that serves a high number of low-income persons. Cashing a check when you are unbanked means paying high fees, and it means walking around with an unsafe amount of cash. CPS needs to provide families with the option of receiving their SSCA payment in a Visa Check Card or other debit card that can be used in a wide variety of locations without incurring fees.

Posted 9/27/21 3:57 PM (CST) by Other: SPEACC

SPEACC Public Comments re Updated SSCA Guidance (10 of 10)

IX. Language, etc.

The following page references refer to pages in the Updated SSCA Guidelines

Page 2:

This section should not be headed "SSCA universal enrichment remedy telephone call" as a phone call is no longer part of the process

Unlike the 8/2020 SSCA guidance, this version does not indicate the number of students to whom a UER will be offered. Instead, it should indicate that cps has identified 11816 students who are eligible for SSCA. There is no longer a need to differentiate between the 10515 who were originally pre-qualified for a UER call and the 1301 who were pre-qualified for an SSCA meeting.

Page 3:

The 8/2020 SSCA guidance indicated the name of the parent notification form and stipulated that the notification form will have been shared with the ISBE and SPEACC prior to being sent to parents.

All parental notifications pursuant to student specific corrective actions must be vetted by the ISBE monitor and the SPEACC representatives prior to implementation.

Posted 9/27/21 3:57 PM (CST) by Parent

The amount of damages offered to families for transportation was \$500 for a whole year, but this year they were offering \$500 a month. Increase damages to families to pay out what is owed for the damages caused by CPS. Our children matter, CPS neglected them.

Posted 9/27/21 4:19 PM (CST) by Unknown

Regarding this section :

"The SSCA Team and Preparing for the SSCA Meeting

A. The SSCA Team will consist of a special education teacher, a general education teacher, and the parent/guardian. A case manager may also be in attendance. The special education and general education teachers will be hired by CPS to participate in SSCA meetings. Neither they nor the case manager will be current members of the individual student's IEP team.

- Additionally, a member of the ISBE Monitoring Team and a District Representative may observe or participate in any SSCA meeting"

An ISBE representative should be present at ALL parent requested SSCA meetings moving forward. 72 families have requested an SSCA meeting, only ~34 meetings have been held and out of the 34 meetings only ~4 have been approved for a remedy. I personally prepped 3 of the 4 who were found approved. The SSCA teams are trained to deny families and are trained not to prompt or ask questions which may show eligibility. This is the fault of ODLSS and the SSCA manager, not of the SSCA reps themselves.

Posted 9/27/21 4:46 PM (CST) by Other: Special Education Parent Advocate

CPS is currently offering \$5500.00 to incentivize 3300 parents to transport their children to school for the year -\$31.25 for each of the 176 days in the school year. As it is an "incentive" this amount is far in excess of what it actually costs to transport a child to school.

An incentive is essentially a reward that is paid in advance. Accordingly, the district should pay the 2031 Inquiry-impacted parents \$31.25 for each day that they transported their children to and from school 3-5 years ago.

It's the only just and right thing to do.

Posted 9/27/21 4:47 PM (CST) by Community Member

It is known that denial to access to a TDS (Therapeutic Day School) was a part of the inquiry and included in the SSCA violations. Families are able to request an SSCA meeting if they feel they were denied access to a TDS during the 2016-18 school years. However, there is little to no guidance for families who fall into this category in the proposed revised SSCA policy. This group of families could arguably have been impacted the most of all; access to a TDS now (if appropriate LRE) should be the remedy, or a significant flat rate amount exceeding that of the SLD category should be provided. This area of violation and possible eligibility must be shared widely in all marketing materials, webinars,

trainings etc. ODLSS should try to identify families who may have been impacted in this area (if possible).

Posted 9/27/21 4:55 PM (CST) by Parent

Families deserve more than \$500 for many months and years of denied transportation services. CPS paying \$500 per month for families who did not get a bus route this year makes clear the \$500 total for Special Education transportations violations is absurdly low.

Posted 9/27/21 4:57 PM (CST) by Other: Dr. Angel Alvarez

The Student Specific Corrective Action needs to consider the ramifications of having the consequences of infringement being significantly less than the cost of compliance. CPS failed to provide necessary services for students with disabilities and must offer compensation for affected families as part of the corrective action. The amounts proposed for each identified area of concern are dramatically less than the money saved by withholding services legally required for affected students to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Concerning all identified areas, the proposed reimbursement amount should be proportionate to the actual cost faced by these families. For example, the remedy for failing to provide transportation to a child with an IEP under this SSCA proposal is only \$500 PER YEAR. The low amounts offered raises moral and ethical concerns given that families of non-disabled students in selective enrollment schools are receiving at least \$500 PER MONTH to self-transport due to this year's bus driver shortages. The proposed amounts are significantly less than the actual cost of adequately implementing the IEPs and do not address the harm done to children from withholding services. Failure to provide appropriate oversight and accountability creates a perverse incentive for CPS, and any District in Illinois, to deny students with disabilities FAPE to save money.

Posted 9/27/21 5:10 PM (CST) by Parent

The SSCA policy should indicate CPS will compensate parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at same rate that CPS is currently offering to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage. It makes no sense that CPS will compensate families less who were purposely harmed when CPS has the exact same legal obligation to these students.

Posted 9/27/21 5:32 PM (CST) by Parent

The SSCA policy should indicate CPS will compensate parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at same rate that CPS is currently offering to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/27/21 7:28 PM (CST) by Community Member

"The SSCA policy should indicate that CPS will compensate the parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at the same rate that the district is currently offering to the parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

The District's legal obligation to provide transportation is the same in both instances. CPS should compensate parents equally.

An additional public review period must be commenced for any and all material changes that CPS intends to make to the iteration of the Guidelines currently under review."

Posted 9/27/21 8:20 PM (CST) by Parent

The SSCA policy should indicate CPS will compensate parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at same rate that CPS is currently offering to parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

Posted 9/27/21 8:32 PM (CST) by Parent

My child has had issues with his IEP not being followed such as lack of a paraprofessional, receiving extra time/ability to retest. I was told that it was due to lack of staff etc, but how does that assist my child? We have had years of issues with transportation as well. The first weeks of class are always an issue that typically results in tarries and or having to scramble for someone to get him to school. I have had to provide services due to lack of case manager/ social worker/ OT. No new IEP in two years. Overall stressful and overwhelming.

Posted 9/27/21 10:31 PM (CST) by Parent

The SSCA policy should indicate that CPS will compensate the parents who are eligible for SSCA transportation reimbursement at the same rate that the district is currently offering to the parents whose children's transportation is being disrupted due to the 2021-2022 bus-driver shortage.

The District's legal obligation to provide transportation is the same in both instances. CPS should compensate parents equally.

An additional public review period must be commenced for any and all material changes that CPS intends to make to the iteration of the Guidelines currently under review.