

## enrollment snapshot 2013-14

TOTAL PUBLIC ENROLLMENT:	397,972
DISTRICT ENROLLMENT:	343,976
CHARTER ENROLLMENT:	53,996
CHARTER MARKET SHARE:	14%



# Chicago

75

## HOW CHOICE-FRIENDLY ARE AMERICAN CITIES?

To answer this question for Chicago and the twenty-nine other cities in this study, we combined publicly available data from federal, state, and local governments with proprietary data from a variety of education groups and a questionnaire of local stakeholders. We assigned cities scores from zero to four on multiple measures of choice friendliness, which we grouped into three areas: **political support**, **policy environment**, and **quantity and quality**. Cities received an aggregate score for each area as well as an overall score, which we obtained using a weighted average that estimates each area's contribution to a city's overall choice friendliness (more below). For the purposes of this study, we defined "choice" as any alternative to the traditional neighborhood school, including charter, magnet, career and technical education, private or religious, and online or virtual schools, as well as homeschooling or other choice mechanisms, such as vouchers and open or dual-enrollment programs.

### Area I: Political Support (15%)

This area assesses the willingness of local officials and other stakeholders to use their political capital to support school choice, as well as the degree to which the local media support choice in the community.

### Area II: Policy Environment (35%)

This area evaluates the policies and practices that ease the challenges that providers and consumers of school choice face. Support for providers includes funding, facilities, and technical assistance, and support for consumers includes information about school performance and school choice writ large, as well as making the act of choosing easier via a common application for all schools.

### Area III: Quantity & Quality (50%)

This area quantifies the school choice options that are available to families (e.g., charter, magnet, and online), as well as the accessibility and quality of those options.

## HOW CHOICE-FRIENDLY IS CHICAGO?

Since his election in 2011, Mayor Rahm Emmanuel has retained many of the choice-friendly policies established by former mayor Richard M. Daley and former superintendent Arne Duncan, in addition to overseeing the closure of more than fifty under-enrolled and under-performing district schools in 2013 (in the face of immense budgetary pressure). Unsurprisingly, these positions have earned him the wrath of the city's powerful teachers' union, which went on strike in 2012 and strongly opposed his reelection in 2015. However, despite the union's best efforts, Emmanuel was comfortably reelected, and under his direction Chicago Public Schools has continued to expand the choices available to students by establishing more magnet schools and authorizing new charters, including members of high-performing networks like KIPP, Noble, and YCCS. Meanwhile, declining enrollment and years of underfunded teachers' pensions have left the district on the verge of bankruptcy, forcing it to take out a \$1.1 billion loan and lay off more than 1,000 teachers in 2015.

## RANK (OUT OF 30 CITIES)

**AREA I**  
POLITICAL SUPPORT



**AREA II**  
POLICY ENVIRONMENT



**AREA III**  
QUANTITY & QUALITY



### Area I: Political Support

#### 15 POINTS

**CHICAGO RANKS SIXTH** out of thirty cities on political support, with a score of ten points out of fifteen. This high ranking is largely due to the broad support for school choice expressed by state and local officials, which is only partially offset by the hostility of the union. Although the mayor, his appointed superintendent and school board, and parent groups have supported school choice, the city council and the local media have remained neutral (though Chicago's largest newspaper has supported school choice). At the state level, the governor of Illinois has also publicly supported school choice.

### Area II: Policy Environment

#### 35 POINTS

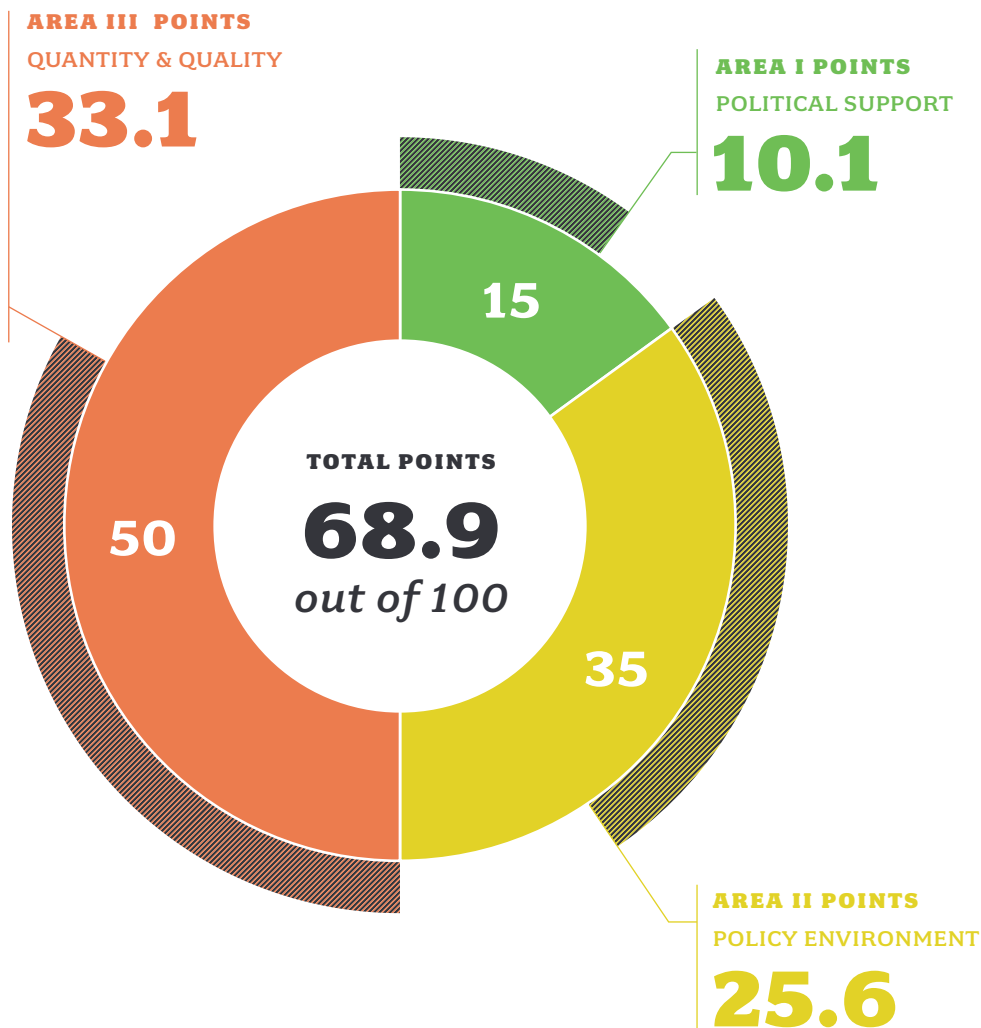
**CHICAGO RANKS SIXTH** out of thirty cities on policy environment, with a score of twenty-six points out of thirty-five. The city receives high marks for NGO, business, and philanthropic support; its membership in the Portfolio School District Network; and the district's willingness to close schools with low enrollments. Despite the fact that charters do not have the "right of first refusal" to district buildings, many Chicago charters are located or co-located in district facilities (though many empty buildings have yet to be utilized). However, the potential for future growth is limited by Illinois law, which places a cap on the number of charters that can operate in the city. Additionally, because Chicago does not provide transportation to schools of choice, it is often difficult for families to access the choices available to them.

### Area III: Quantity & Quality

#### 50 POINTS

**CHICAGO RANKS TWENTIETH** out of thirty cities on quantity and quality, with a score of thirty-three points out of fifty. The city offers a variety of choices to families, including charter, magnet, career and technical education, independent, Catholic, and virtual schools, as well as homeschooling. Mechanisms such as intradistrict open enrollment and dual enrollment programs provide families with access to a variety of public options. However, because Illinois does not have a voucher or tax credit scholarship program, many private options remain out of reach for Chicago families. Compared to other cities in the study, a high proportion of Chicago's public schools are schools of choice. However, most of these are magnet (or "magnet cluster") schools, and the percentage of Chicago students who enroll in charters is still fairly low. Finally, the performance of Chicago's charters is average, modestly exceeding that of district schools in math but not in reading.

## Chicago Results



*Totals may not add up precisely due to rounding.*

**CHICAGO RANKS ELEVENTH OUT OF THIRTY CITIES OVERALL, with high marks for political support and policy environment outweighing its below average score for the quantity and quality of choice. Thanks to the strong support it receives from NGOs, business, and philanthropies, Chicago's charter sector seems poised for continued growth. However, the city's families need better supports—such as more choice friendly transportation—to take full advantage of these options. Chicago's many underserved communities would also benefit from a private-school-choice mechanism, such as a voucher or tax credit scholarship program.**

HOW CHOICE-FRIENDLY IS CHICAGO? <sup>a</sup>		DATA	POINTS OUT OF 4*
<b>AREA I: POLITICAL SUPPORT (15%)</b>			
1.1 Official Support	1.1.A To what extent do you agree/disagree that the mayor is willing to use his/her political capital to support school choice?	Strongly agree/Agree	3.67
	1.1.B To what extent do you agree/disagree that the city council is willing to use its political capital to support school choice?	Neutral/Agree	2.33
	1.1.C To what extent do you agree/disagree that the superintendent is willing to use his/her political capital to support school choice?	Agree/Neutral	2.67
	1.1.D To what extent do you agree/disagree that the school board is willing to use its political capital to support school choice?	Agree/Neutral	2.67
	1.1.E Has the governor mentioned school choice in his/her "state of the state" speeches?	Yes	4.00
1.2 Community Support	1.2.A To what extent do you agree/disagree that the teachers' unions are willing to use their political capital to support school choice?	Strongly disagree/Disagree	0.33
	1.2.B To what extent do you agree/disagree that parent groups are willing to use their political capital to support school choice?	Agree/Neutral	2.67
	1.2.C To what extent do you agree/disagree that the media are willing to use their political capital to support school choice?	Neutral	2.00
	1.2.D What is the overall tone toward school choice as reflected in the editorials, op-eds, and opinion pieces of Chicago's principal newspaper?	Very positive	4.00

AREA I POINTS (out of 36.00) = 24.34

**AREA I SCORE: 24.34/36.00 x 15% = 10.14**

## AREA II: POLICY ENVIRONMENT (35%)

### PROVIDER ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Public Policies	2.1.A To what extent does Illinois charter law restrict the number of charter schools in the state?	The state has geographic caps with some room for growth	2.00
	2.1.B Are multiple authorizers available to prospective charter school operators in Chicago?	There is only one authorizer available and only one allowed	2.00
	2.1.C Is Chicago's largest school district a member of the Portfolio School District Network?	Yes	4.00
2.2 Public Facilities	2.2.A Does Illinois have a "right of first refusal" policy for charter schools to obtain facilities?	No	0.00
	2.2.B What percentage of Chicago charter schools are located or co-located in city- or district-owned buildings?	Between 25% and 50%	3.00
2.3 Public Support	2.3.A In how many ways do public entities support schools of choice in Chicago (of 4 possible)? <sup>b</sup>	2 (of 4 possible)*	0.81
	2.3.B How great is the disparity between district and charter per-pupil funding in Chicago?	Between 5% and 20%	2.00
	2.3.C Does Illinois law guarantee adequate funding for charter authorizers?	Yes	4.00
2.4 NGO Support	2.4.A Is there a state or local NGO that supports school choice in Chicago?	Yes, both	4.00
	2.4.B In how many ways do NGOs in Chicago support schools of choice (of 3 possible)?	3 (of 3 possible)*	1.33
2.5 Business Support	2.5.A Is there business-community support in Chicago for schools of choice?	Yes, for most/all types of schools of choice	3.50
	2.5.B In how many ways does the business community in Chicago support schools of choice (of 5 possible)?	5 (of 5 possible)*	2.22
2.6 Philanthropic Support	2.6.A Is there philanthropic support in Chicago for schools of choice?	Yes, for most types of schools of choice*	3.00
	2.6.B In how many ways does the philanthropic community support schools of choice in Chicago (of 6 possible)?	6 (of 6 possible)*	2.44
	2.6.C Of 5 major national foundations (Broad, Carnegie, Gates, Joyce, and Walton), how many support schools of choice in Chicago?	5 (of 5)	4.00
2.7 Teacher Policies	2.7.A Are Chicago charter schools exempt from local collective bargaining agreements?	Yes	4.00
	2.7.B Are Chicago charter schools required to hire certified teachers?	Some teachers must be certified	2.00
2.8 Quality Control	2.8.A Is there a regular review process by an oversight body with authority to sanction authorizers?	Yes	4.00
	2.8.B What is the average quality score, out of 12, for Chicago's charter authorizers (e.g., do they use academic, financial, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions)?	12.00	4.00
	2.8.C Does the district have a policy for closing schools with low enrollment and a history of doing so?	Yes	4.00

AREA II continued on next page...

...AREA II continued

## CONSUMER ENVIRONMENT

2.9 Accountability	2.9.A Are student data for schools of choice included in Illinois's accountability system?	Yes, for all public schools of choice	4.00
	2.9.B How comprehensive are report cards for schools of choice in Chicago?	Moderately/Mostly comprehensive	2.50
2.10 Information	2.10.A In how many ways is information on school choice disseminated to parents in Chicago (of 6 possible)?	5 (of 6 possible)*	2.50
2.11 Application	2.11.A Does Chicago have a common application for schools of choice?	Yes, for some types of schools of choice	2.00
2.12 Transportation	2.12.A Does Chicago provide or subsidize transportation to public schools of choice on equal terms as for district assigned schools?	No	0.00
2.13 Extracurriculars	2.13.A Are Chicago's homeschooled students and/or students who attend charter schools eligible for district programming, such as music or sports?	Homeschooled students must be enrolled part time; law is silent on charter students	1.50

AREA II POINTS (out of 94.00) = 68.8

AREA II SCORE: 68.8/94.00 x 35% = 25.62

## AREA III: QUANTITY &amp; QUALITY (50%)

3.1 Types of Schools	3.1.A Are charter schools available to families in Chicago?	Yes	4.00
	3.1.B Are magnet and/or CTE schools available to families in Chicago?	Yes	
	3.1.C Are independent schools available to families in Chicago?	Yes	
	3.1.D Are Catholic schools available to families in Chicago?	Yes	4.00
	3.1.E Are online and/or virtual schools available to families in Chicago?	Yes	
	3.1.F Is homeschooling available to families in Chicago?	Yes	
3.2 Access	3.2.A Does the district facilitate intradistrict open enrollment, either through attendance waivers or through a districtwide lottery?	Yes	4.00
	3.2.B Are there interdistrict enrollment options in Chicago? Can districts opt out?	No	1.50
	3.2.C Are there dual-enrollment options in Chicago? Can districts opt out?	Yes, but districts can opt out	
	3.2.D Does Illinois have a voucher or tax credit scholarship program? Is there a voucher or tax credit scholarship program specifically for Chicago students?	No	0.00
3.3 Market Share	3.3.A Compared to other cities in the study, what percentage of public schools in Chicago are schools of choice (charter, magnet, and/or CTE schools)?	Comparably, a high percentage	3.00
	3.3.B Compared to other cities in the study, what percentage of students in Chicago enroll in charter schools?	Comparably, a low percentage	1.00
3.4 Quality	3.4.A What is the marginal impact of attending a Chicago charter school on learning gains in reading?	No impact	2.00
	3.4.B What is the marginal impact of attending a Chicago charter school on learning gains in math?	Positive	3.00

AREA III POINTS (out of 40.00) = 26.50

AREA III SCORE: 26.50/40.00 x 50% = 33.13

TOTAL SCORE: 10.14 + 25.62 + 33.13 = 68.89

## table notes

<sup>a</sup> The fifty indicators reflected in the table represent the aggregation of over one hundred discrete data points. All questionnaire data are current as of November 30, 2014. References to elected officials in Area I reflect those in office as of this date as well. All terms are generic, such as “superintendent,” which can be applied to cities that have chancellors or other leaders. Depending on the context, the term “Chicago” refers to the city as a whole or to Chicago Public Schools, the largest district in the city. The latter is the case when the indicator is determined at the district level.

<sup>b</sup> For the definition of “schools of choice,” see Appendix A.

\* A few indicators may be worth less than four points due to missing data. An asterisk indicates partially missing data for a given indicator. In these cases, we subtracted an appropriate amount from the indicator and area denominators. For example, Chicago has only partial information for indicator 2.3.A, so we subtracted 2.22 points from the 2.3.A and Area II denominators.

For complete details on the data sources and scoring for each indicator and its component subindicators, see Appendix A.