

The University of Chicago **Urban Education Institute**



The Challenges in Urban Education

The majority of our nation's public schools fail to prepare students from low-income families to succeed in college and life. The odds that children growing up in urban America will finish college are deeply problematic. Only 8 percent of students who entered Chicago public high schools as freshmen graduate with a bachelor's degree by the time they are 25. Of those students, only 3 percent are African American or Latino males.

Many view these problems as intractable. The University of Chicago Urban Education Institute does not.

We have amassed decades of empirical evidence that demonstrates the extraordinary influence schooling can have on the lives of poor children. And we are convinced that by building knowledge born from exemplary practice and scholarship, by creating new methods to develop and support teachers and school leaders, and by creating scalable tools and models for improving urban schools we can influence the lives of children nationwide.

MISSION

The mission of the Urban Education Institute is to create knowledge to produce reliably excellent urban schooling.

UEI is comprised of four primary components:



University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (UChicago CCSR)

leads UEI’s applied research effort, informing practice, policy, and the public about schooling in Chicago. Since its founding in 1990, UChicago CCSR has undertaken research to document, analyze, and assess Chicago’s school reform efforts. It’s a national model for undertaking research to track the progress of urban school systems, partnering closely with district leaders, creating and administering longitudinal surveys of schools, and creating indicators and methods to deepen understanding of school reform and improve educational practice. As a result, UChicago CCSR is being replicated in cities and states nationwide.



University of Chicago Urban Teacher Education Program (UChicago UTEP)

prepares exemplary teachers for Chicago Public Schools while empirically testing a model for urban teacher preparation and support. UChicago UTEP is a two-year graduate program accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education. Students enroll in rigorous course work and receive intensive clinical preparation over a 15-month period. Graduates receive three years of in-classroom coaching upon entry into Chicago schools. The retention rates for graduates dramatically exceed national norms. Nationwide, 50% of teachers leave the profession within five years. UChicago UTEP’s five-year retention rate is 96%.



University of Chicago Charter School (UChicago Charter School)

is a pre-K-12th pathway to college. There are four campuses of the UChicago Charter School, located in neighborhoods across the South Side, proximate to the University. The Donoghue and North Kenwood/Oakland campuses serve pre-K-5th grade students, the Carter G. Woodson campus serves 6th-8th grade students, and the Woodlawn campus serves 6th-12th grade students. The UChicago Charter School is non-selective (admitting students by lottery) and enrolls approximately 1,700 low-income African American children. UChicago Charter School has higher college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates than both the Chicago Public Schools and national averages.



UChicago Impact provides schools, school systems, and states with the highest quality research-based diagnostic tools and training designed to produce reliably excellent schooling. UChicago Impact tools and training are derived from knowledge culled across UEI — from our applied research, teacher training, and the day-to-day operation of effective schools. All UChicago Impact products are research and practice based — designed to improve instruction, leadership, and college readiness and to accelerate academic achievement. UChicago Impact worked in 33 cities and 19 states — including in some of the highest performing school systems and charter management organizations nationwide.

Taken as a whole, UEI represents a model for how higher education institutions can engage systematically in the improvement of pre-K-12th grade schooling. The meaningful intersection of applied and scholarly research, teacher education, the operation of exemplary schools, and creation and dissemination of tools and solutions that are research-based and practice-proven provides the opportunity to improve American schooling nationwide. No other institution in the country joins these domains of work and depth of expertise under a single roof, enabling UEI to make lasting and significant changes to the quality of American education.

“UEI was created in the Dewey tradition to discover better ways to educate children growing up on Chicago’s South Side and across urban America.”

Timothy Knowles, John Dewey Director, Urban Education Institute

This is the promise of UEI.