



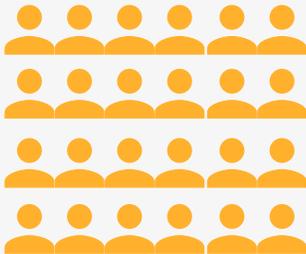
# The Power of Enrolling Your Child in a Pre-K Program with Bilingual Education Services

*English Learners in Chicago Public Schools: An Exploration of the Influence of Pre-K and Early Grade Years*  
University of Chicago Consortium on School Research

As a parent, you're naturally your child's first teacher. You understand their needs and strengths, and you can help identify resources that will help your child thrive. This document provides an overview of opportunities to help you make choices about your child's early childhood education, specifically if your child is learning English while learning subject matter.

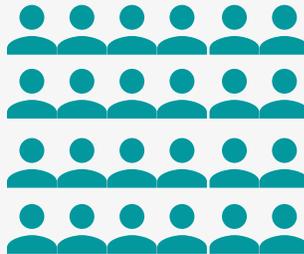
**A recent study by the University of Chicago took a look at attendance, grades, test scores, and English proficiency among two groups of Chicago Public School students:**

Group 1: English Learners in Pre-K



**14,058**

Group 2: English Learners in K-3rd grade



**16,651**

The researchers wanted to learn more about which types of preschool programs help English Learners grow. They also wanted to identify the English Learners who need support early on. Below are the significant findings and key questions to consider.

## Weighing and making choices about your child's first early learning program

There are different options you have to consider for your child's early learning program as a parent.

- Whether to enroll in full- or half-day preschool?
- Whether to consent to bilingual services?

All of these factors can influence your child's success. What do we know about what works for English Learners in the early years? Research conducted within Chicago Public Schools by the University of Chicago answers these **key questions**. -->

**1**

### **Does it matter if my child is enrolled in half-or full-day preschool?**

Yes, English Learners who attended full-day Pre-K had higher attendance, on average 2.5 additional school days. They also demonstrated stronger kindergarten readiness, meaning these English Learners demonstrated stronger speaking skills and reading ability.

**2**

### **Does enrolling my child in preschool at the age of 3 make a difference?**

Yes, enrolling a child as early as possible in a state-funded Pre-k program (at three years old vs. four years old) is related to stronger English language development (scoring one level higher on MODEL test) and early reading skills.

**3**

### **Are bilingual and ESL programs effective for young English Learners?**

Yes, some of the benefits to bilingual services may not show up early on but show up later. In kindergarten, ELs who received Bilingual Education Services had lower English proficiency scores on the ACCESS test than similar ELs whose parents or guardians refused those services. However, by the end of third grade, students who received bilingual services had higher English language proficiency scores on the ACCESS test (4 percentage points higher).

**4**

### **If I am not sure about bilingual services for my child and I refuse those services, will it impact my child's future education?**

Refusing bilingual education services for English Learners is associated with lower grades, attendance, and test scores in the long run. Identifying English Learners early on can positively influence their path. When English Learners first enroll in a state-funded Pre-k program, they are screened for English proficiency within 30 days of enrollment. This screener helps identify which students could benefit from bilingual education.

de la Torre, M., Freire, S., & Blanchard, A. (2021). *English Learners in Chicago Public Schools: An exploration of the influence of pre-k and early grade years*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. [https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/English-learners-in-Chicago-Public-Schools-an-exploration-of-the-influence-of-pre-K?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=English%20Learners%20in%20Chicago%3A%20A%20New%20Perspective&utm\\_campaign=EL%20Report%20Blast](https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/English-learners-in-Chicago-Public-Schools-an-exploration-of-the-influence-of-pre-K?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=English%20Learners%20in%20Chicago%3A%20A%20New%20Perspective&utm_campaign=EL%20Report%20Blast)