

Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) Data Snapshots School Year 2025-2026

The Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) is a publicly-funded program that provides access to free, high-quality preschool for all Cambridge 4-year-olds and prioritized 3-year-olds. Families apply to CPP through a single, centralized online application. They can choose from preschool programs offered by Cambridge Public Schools (CPS), the Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP), and select community-based preschool and family childcare providers. CPP covers the cost of the school-day, school-year portion of preschool programs. Depending on a family's income, there may be additional costs for programs that provide full-day, full-year (including summer) preschool.

Summary:

- The 2025-2026 data snapshots reflect the program's second year of implementation in preschools across the city of Cambridge.
- A total of 851* children are currently enrolled in CPP.

CPP Overall System Data:

- **93** preschool classrooms between CBO, CPS and DHSP partners
- **50** preschool classrooms at Community-Based Programs
- **28** preschool classrooms at Cambridge Public Schools
- **15** preschool classrooms at Department of Human Service Programs
- **225** preschool educators in the system including:
 - Administrative Staff (**45**)
 - Lead Teachers (**89**)
 - Assistant Teachers (**91**)

Enrollment Demographics

Current CPP Enrollment - SY25-26*:

	CPS	DHSP	Community Providers
Total 4-year-olds	222	92	274
Total 3-year-olds	80	122	61
% Priority**	28%	59%	40%
Total Enrolled	302	214	335

*Reflects enrollment data through 03/04/26.

**Please note that CPS uses Free and Reduced lunch criteria to determine priority status. Priority at DHSP and Community-based providers is determined by household size and incomes at or below 65% HUD Area Median Income .



School Year 2026-2027

Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) Marketing & Communications

The CPP application for the 2026-2027 school year opened on October 1, 2025. This year, we extended the application window by two additional weeks to give families more time to explore CPP preschool options and complete their applications.

To ensure families had the information needed to make their preschool choices and complete the CPP application, OEC expanded outreach and engagement efforts across the city through strategic marketing initiatives and an informational webinar. In the fall, a new annual enrollment fair was introduced, offering families additional opportunities to explore Cambridge Preschool Programs and connect with providers in person. More than 300 people attended the fair, leading to follow-up tours and continued engagement with CPP providers.

The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood (OEC) expects enrollment numbers to continue rising throughout the summer as eligible children who move to Cambridge after the application deadline or who missed the initial window are enrolled. The numbers below reflect the results of the lottery match for the 2026-2027 school year.

Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) Application Data

Total Completed Applications Received:	925
Total Applications Matched:	*832

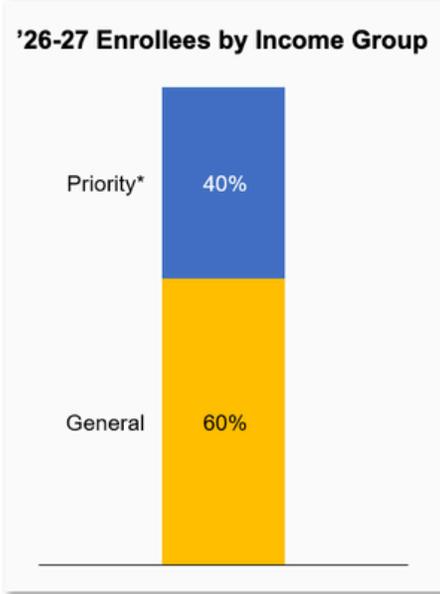
**Please note the only children who did not receive a match are 3-year-olds without priority status.*

Total Children Enrolled for SY 26-27 as of 03/04/26:	CPS	DHSP	Community-Based Providers	Total
Total 4-year-olds	191	140	239	570
Total 3-year-olds	63	74	61	198
% Priority*	21%	53%	38%	40%
Total Enrolled	254	214	299	768

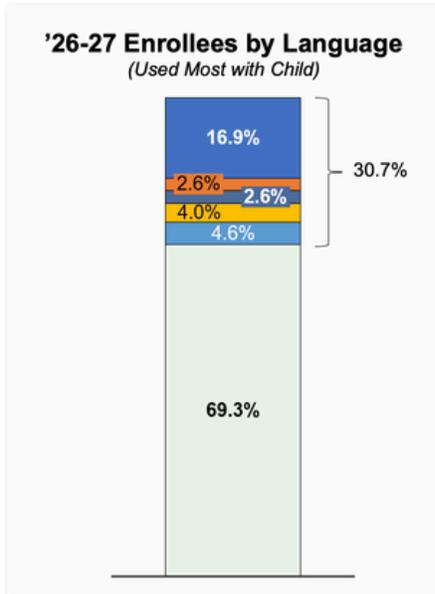
- **For priority applications**
 - 86% of families received their first choice.
 - 97% of families received one of their top 3 choices, reflecting a strong family-choice system.
- **For general (non-priority) applications that received an offer:**
 - 80% of families received their first choice.
 - 94% of families received one of their first 3 choices.
- **Of the general 3-year-old applications CPP received:**
 - 46% were matched with a DHSP/CPS provider.
 - The remaining 54% were placed on a waitlist.
 - It is important to note that general 3-year-old applicants are not guaranteed a CPP seat at CPS, and are not eligible to be matched with a community-based provider.
- Families of CPP's affiliate programs serving Harvard & MIT families will be matched to programs this summer, and OEC will continue to enroll children who have recently moved to Cambridge or who missed the fall application deadline. As a result, the total number of CPP students enrolled for SY26-27 will increase.

CPP Enrollment: Accepting and Declining a placement for SY26-27

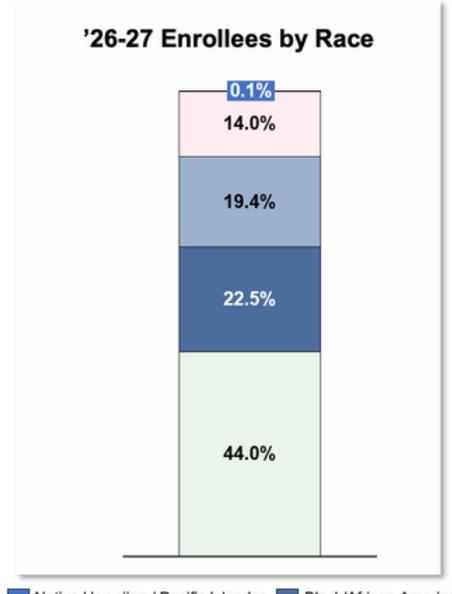
- 92% of families accepted their CPP seat for SY26-27.
- 70 families declined their seats for a variety of reasons:
 - Some accepted placement at a preschool program outside of CPP.
 - Some found the program location inconvenient for their family.
 - Some experienced changes in circumstances, such as moving or arranging care with a family member.



*Priority is based on household size and income. Applicants with a household income of 65% or less than HUD Area Median Income (AMI) are given priority in the lottery.



Other: 16.9%, Amharic: 2.6%, Mandarin (Chinese): 2.6%, Spanish: 4.0%, Japanese: 4.6%



Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander: 0.1%, Black/African American: 22.5%, Multiracial: 14.0%, Asian: 19.4%, White/Caucasian: 44.0%

Images provided by the City's Department of Human Service Programs.



Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) Tuition & Demographics

CPP Tuition Budget For Children Enrolled in Community-Based Programs – SY25-26:

The CPP reimbursement rates are based on the cost of providing high-quality preschool programming in the Boston metropolitan area, considering factors such as classroom-teacher ratios, teacher qualifications, instructional materials, and other related expenses.

For the 2025-2026 school year, Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) providers are reimbursed \$31,281 for each child enrolled in a CPP seat, which covers 6.5 hours of preschool each day from September through June. Additional reimbursement is provided for priority families who participate in extended day and summer programming. For children enrolled in a preschool program operated by the Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP) or Cambridge Public Schools (CPS), the costs are already included in those organizations' budgets, so they are not paid directly by CPP.

CPP Tuition Funding:

CPP Tuition Expenditures as of 01/31/26:	\$5,332,136.48
Anticipated Cost for CPP Tuition for SY 25-26	\$12,368,771