



CIPlace Pilot - A Teacher Housing Assistance Fellowship | FAQ

Overview

Coney Island Prep is seeking to tackle one of the key challenges facing NYC teachers: the lack of affordable housing. By working to remove or lessen the burden of limiting factors like sky-high rent, commuting costs, long commutes and more, we believe that Coney Island Prep could be at the forefront of a new movement in education— one that deeply prioritizes and places value not only in its teachers, but also recommitting to the the place and community we serve.

For the 2023-2024 school year, up to five (5) teachers will be selected for the inaugural CIPlace Housing Assistance Fellowship cohort. In this pilot program, Fellows will receive monthly housing subsidies to help offset rent costs and must live (or move) to neighborhoods near our Coney Island Prep schools to mitigate the challenges named above.

This CIPlace Fellowship pilot will allow us to understand the benefits and impact of living and working within your community, alongside reducing monthly rent, and lessening commute time and cost. We are very eager to explore the potential of this fellowship to improve teacher recruitment, teacher retention, and most importantly, strengthen student outcomes. *For more information, please read the full Theory of Change below.*

Who's eligible for this!?

The housing assistance fellowship will support teachers who *currently* have two to four full years of lead teaching experience, or teachers who will be in their third, fourth, or fifth year teaching during the 2023-2024 school year.

Eligibility is *not* based on years of service at CIP; it is solely based on full years of lead teaching experience in a K-12 school setting. This means any current teacher who has two, three, or four years of experience on CIP's teacher salary scale *or* any new hire who is coming to CIP with 2-4 years of prior experience is eligible to apply for the housing assistance fellowship. Please note that Coney Island Prep does not credit apprentice teaching, student teaching, substitute teaching, or any teaching not in a K-12 setting as a year of experience as a *lead* teacher in a K-12 school.

Teachers must currently be in good standing and have committed to return to CIP the upcoming school year via a signed offer letter. Years of experience is determined at the time of hire.

Why only teachers? Why limit to a narrow range of experience?

First, while everyone that works at CIP is a *critical* and *essential* part of our team, we recognize that teachers are most often on the front line with the majority of our students, every single day, delivering instruction that we hope will drive towards excellent academic results. All of us who are not teachers, know that our roles are about the kids first and foremost, but they are also about supporting teachers in delivering excellent instruction.

Second, beyond the studies and data that we've seen in recent years regarding a national teacher shortage, we also know from our own internal recruitment data that the teacher applicant pool has decreased significantly. This pilot program is both a recruitment and retention tool. We have long said that we want this to be a place where people can commit to teaching for a long time, without needing to step outside of the classroom to reap financial rewards. This is yet another initiative in that direction.

Finally, a number of studies have shown that nearly 50% of teachers leave the profession within their first five years of starting. Our teacher salary scale and compensation strategy works to combat this with the highest salary bumps occurring within the first five years. CIP already invests heavily in recruiting and supporting teachers who are new to the profession. This is an effort for us to recruit and retain teachers who already have some experience, are just beginning to realize their expertise and impact, but may be on the fence about committing to teach long term. *For more information, please read the full Theory of Change below.*

How long is the fellowship?

Two years. CIPlace Fellows are expected to commit to two additional years of teaching at CIP.

What is the fellowship award?

CIPlace Fellows will receive a \$500 monthly housing subsidy, equal to an additional \$6,000 per year in non-salary compensation. Housing subsidies begin disbursement in August 2023 and extend for up to 24 months through July 2025. A staff member must remain employed at CIP for the full two-year commitment to continue to receive rental assistance.

We anticipate this will be considered taxable income during the first year of the pilot. We are working in future years to partner directly with landlords, such that rental assistance will not be taxable income.

Where do I have to live to be considered for the fellowship?

CIPlace Fellows must live in, or move to one of the following zip codes:

- 11224 - Coney Island
- 11223 - Gravesend
- 11214 - Bath Beach
- 11204 - Bensonhurst
- 11230 - Bensonhurst
- 11235 - Brighton Beach
- 11229 - Sheepshead Bay

For the first year of our pilot only – this upcoming 2023-2024 school year – teachers may also apply if they currently live within a 40 minute commute of their CIP campus, or move within 40 minutes of their campus by August 15, 2023. This exception is in place during the interim period when CIP is not able to direct teachers to specific housing opportunities.

CIP may change eligible zip codes or housing requirements in future years of the fellowship.

How will Fellows be selected?

In this first year of the pilot, the 2023-2024 school year, up to five (5) fellows will be selected by lottery.

Does CIP have access to any housing opportunities in the area?

We are working on this! Stay tuned!

Subject to securing additional housing stock, we hope to increase the number of **new** fellows to 10 during the 2024-2025 school year, and finally an additional **15** new fellows during the 2025-2026 school year.

How is this program funded?

We applied for and received innovation grants that will allow us to pilot the program and sustain it for the next three years, with hopes that our model will be successful and can be sustained for years to come.

How can I apply?

You can apply to take part in the lottery here (link to come). **Applications are due Friday, June 2, 2023 for current CIP teachers, approximately 48 hours after offer letters are due for return.**

For new hires, applications are due within 48 hours of accepting your offer letter to join CIP. Teachers who are not selected via lottery may re-apply in future years as long as they continue to meet eligibility requirements.

I have more questions. How can I ask them?

We will host an **information session** an in-person and Zoom information on **Monday, May 15, 2023 at 4:15 pm.** [You can find the Zoom link here,](#) or join in-person at the WHALE Pod at 626 Sheepshead Bay Road, Suite 560.

When will I find out if I have won the housing assistance lottery and will become a CIPlace Fellow?

Current CIP teachers will be notified on or before **Friday, June 16, 2023.**
New hires will be notified on or before **Friday, July 28, 2023.**

CIPlace - Teacher Housing Assistance Fellowship | Theory of Change

Research has long proven that highly-qualified, veteran teachers drive higher student outcomes. Indeed, when controlling for all other factors, teacher quality can have a greater impact on a student's academic results than their home zip code. Nevertheless, we know intimately the barriers to attracting and retaining high quality teachers.

Our theory of change seeks to prove not only the well-documented student outcome results of having high-quality teachers in the classroom, but also the necessary inputs and conditions required to support and facilitate teacher recruitment and retention during these challenging times.

First, in contrast to efforts like Teachers Village in Newark, New Jersey, Coney Island Prep does not have the means or interest in developing teacher-housing at scale. Not only is this cost-prohibitive in New York City, we are weary of catalyzing gentrification. **Second, Coney Island Prep has no interest in playing the role of landlord for its teachers. We risk creating significant stress for staff members if a teacher fears that their observation, feedback, and performance could directly impact their ability to maintain their housing. Our school should not and does not wish to potentially dismiss and evict a teacher at the same time. Because of this, we know it is integral for us to have a third party partner be the recipient of rent subsidies on behalf of our teachers.**

Third, we understand the impact a poorly thought out housing subsidy may have on a staff member. It is important to us that staff members do not leverage funds to rent "up market" to lease a property they might otherwise not be able to afford. This puts a staff member at risk from being forced to leave their apartment at the end of the fellowship, or be further impacted with annual increases on top of their previous monthly rent. We are also cognizant that any stipend paid directly to staff will count as taxable income.

Fourth, and most importantly, CIP is very sensitive to its target population for this fellowship program. We already invest significant extra funds in first or second year teachers who are still new to the profession. We heavily subsidize the pursuit of masters degrees for Apprentice through second-year teachers at Relay Graduate School of Education, at an investment of approximately \$10,000 per staff member. Instead our target population will be teachers with 2-4 years of experience, or teachers entering their 3rd through 5th year teaching. Our hope is that our program will (i.) attract experienced teachers in making a minimum two-year commitment; (ii.) invest them in moving to and staying in our community; and (iii.) benefit students immediately by attracting teachers who have some experience. We are also mindful that many of our early teachers benefit from other institutional supports for newer teachers, and our more-seasoned staff are more likely to benefit from other role-based stipends, or salaries that exceed \$85,000 annually.