

User Testing Script: CPS GoCPS School Search

Website being tested

<https://www.cps.edu/gocps/gocps-school-search/>

Platform

UserTesting.com (unmoderated remote test)

Test Goal

Identify usability issues and pain points parents face when searching for a better school for their child.

1. Introduction (Pre-Test Instructions)

Hi! Thank you for participating in this test.

Today, we're looking at how parents use the CPS GoCPS School Search tool to find schools for their child. We are not testing you — we're testing the website.

Please think out loud as you complete each task. Share what you're thinking, what's confusing, and anything you like or dislike.

There are no right or wrong answers.

If you get stuck, that's very valuable feedback, so please keep talking and let us know where you are having trouble.

2. Screener Questions (Optional)

1. Do you currently have a child enrolled in a Chicago Public School? (Yes/No)
2. Are you considering changing schools for your child in the next year? (Yes/No)
3. What grade level is your child in? (Open text)

Recruiting criteria:

- Parents or guardians with at least one child in grades K–12.
- Must live within Chicago city limits or CPS district boundaries.

3. Pre-Test Background Questions

- Tell us a bit about your child's current school experience.
- Have you ever used the GoCPS website before?
- What matters most to you when choosing a school? (e.g., location, academics, extracurriculars, special programs, safety)

4. Core Tasks

Scenario for Participant: Imagine you are looking for a better school for your child for next school year. You'll be using the CPS School Search tool to explore options, compare schools, and decide which schools might be the best fit.

Task 1: First Impressions

Go to the website: <https://www.cps.edu/gocps/gocps-school-search/>.

Without clicking anything yet, describe your first impressions.

- What do you notice first?
- What do you think you can do on this page?

Goal: Assess clarity of homepage, initial usability, and overall trustworthiness.

Task 2: Search for Nearby Schools

Using the search tool, find three schools near your home.

Pretend you live at: 1234 W Madison St, Chicago, IL.

Say out loud what you expect to happen when you enter this information.

Follow-up probes:

- Was it easy or difficult to find schools near you?
- Did the map and list view make sense?

Goal: Identify challenges in initial search and navigation.

Task 3: Apply Filters

Now, filter the results to only show elementary schools that offer STEM programs.

Describe your thought process while using the filters.

Follow-up probes:

- Were the filter options clear?
- Did you feel confident you were selecting the right criteria?
- Was there anything missing or confusing?

Goal: Test discoverability and usability of filter system.

Task 4: Compare Two Schools

Choose two schools you might consider sending your child to.
Try to compare them side-by-side using the information on the site.

Follow-up probes:

- Was it easy to compare schools?
- What information was most important to you?
- Was anything missing that you needed to make a decision?

Goal: Identify pain points in decision-making process.

Task 5: Save or Mark Favorites

If you were really doing this, how would you keep track of the schools you like most?
Look for any features on the site that help you save or remember your choices.

Follow-up probes:

- Was this process intuitive?
- If you couldn't save schools, what would you do instead?

Goal: Determine whether the site supports ongoing research and decision tracking.

Task 6: Next Steps

Now, imagine you've narrowed it down to one school you want to apply to.
Find how you would start the application process or learn about next steps.

Follow-up probes:

- Was it clear what to do after selecting a school?
- How confident do you feel about taking action based on what you found?

Goal: Assess clarity of final steps and call-to-action.

5. Wrap-Up Questions

- What was the most frustrating part of this experience?
- What did you like most about the website?
- If you could change one thing, what would it be?
- Would you recommend this tool to other parents? Why or why not?

6. Success Metrics to Track

Metric	Definition
Task success rate	% of participants who successfully

	complete task
Time on task	How long it takes to complete each step
Error rate	Mistakes or misclicks recorded
Satisfaction rating	Participant's 1-5 rating after completing tasks
Key verbatim quotes	Direct user feedback for pain points or positives

7. Key Research Goals

- Understand parental decision-making behavior when searching for schools.
- Identify navigation issues and filter usability problems.
- Evaluate whether the site supports comparison and tracking of schools effectively.
- Assess overall trustworthiness and clarity of calls to action.