Middle School Money Fair

Supported by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

In conjunction with

UIC College of Business Students, Community Volunteers and

Illinois Students, Their Teachers and School Communities

How did Middle School Money Fair Get Started?

The Canadian Foundation for Economic Education

showcased their annual 7th grade event

Talk with Our Kids About Money Day - TWOKAM

UIC Center for Economic Education agreed to partner.

Middle School Money Fair was created to offer a “science fair type” experience to students in grades 5-8.

Students created projects and schools decided which to bring to a spring event at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

These schools participated.

- Robert A. Black Magnet School
- Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School
- Chavez Elementary
- College Preparatory School of America (Lombard)
- Lee Elementary
- Lorca Elementary
- Morton School of Excellence
- Mount Vernon
- Parkland Middle School (McHenry)
- Richardson Elementary
- St. Josaphat
- Sumner Math and Science Academy
- Sutherland Elementary
- Wadsworth STEM

Is there a guide to follow?

- The Illinois Learning Standards for Social Studies Inquiry Skills

- The Illinois Learning Standards for Social Studies Disciplinary Skills – Financial Literacy

Step 1 for Inquiry Skills

Recognizing perspectives and articulating identities

Polling Question on STEP 1: Recognizing perspectives and articulating identities

When you teach financial literacy, from the perspective of which life stage do you feel most confident?

A. Youth

B. Young Adult

C. Midlife Adult

D. Retiree

E. None of the above

In-person Step 1 Inquiry Skills

Take on a middle school student perspective and identity

What are you curious about when it comes to personal finance?

Step 2 for Inquiry Skills

Developing questions and planning inquiries

Polling Question on STEP 2: Developing questions and planning inquiries

How much opportunity do students in your class get to develop research questions and plan inquiry on their own?

A. Regularly

B. Occasionally

C. Rarely

D. Never

In-person on Step 2 Inquiry Skill - Think of a question you might have wanted to investigate as a middle school student about

earning,

saving,

spending,

borrowing,

investing

protecting from risk

These are related disciplinary concepts

earning,

saving,

spending,

borrowing,

investing

protecting from risk

in the financial literacy middle disciplinary standards for Social Studies.

Step 3 for Inquiry Skills

Evaluating sources and using evidence

Polling Question on STEP 3 Inquiry Skill:
Evaluating sources and using evidence

Name one source you trust for financial education research.

In-person on Step 3 Inquiry Skill –What sources have you found useful when teaching about

earning,

saving,

spending,

borrowing,

investing

protecting from risk?

Step 4 for Inquiry Skills

Communicating conclusions and taking informed actions

Polling Question on STEP 4 Inquiry Skill:

Communicating conclusions and taking informed actions

The inquiry approach concludes with “taking informed action.” What is an informed action you could envision a middle school student recommending?

In-person on Step 4 Inquiry Skill – Communicating conclusions and taking informed actions.

The inquiry approach concludes with “taking informed action.” What is an informed action you could envision a middle school student recommending?

What did Money Fair look like on Tuesday, April 7, 2026?

Fantastic!

BA 320 · CIVIC ENGAGEMENT · SPRING 2026

Middle School *Money Fair*

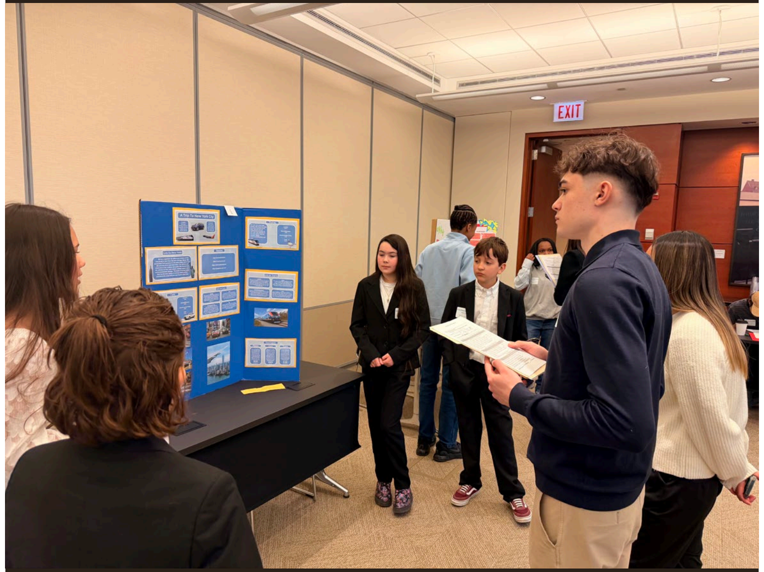
A Public Service Announcement on Financial Literacy in Chicago

Dash	· Finance
Rahim	· Finance
Modupe	· Finance
Patrick	· Marketing
NY	· Finance
Ammar	· Finance

Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago · April 7, 2026

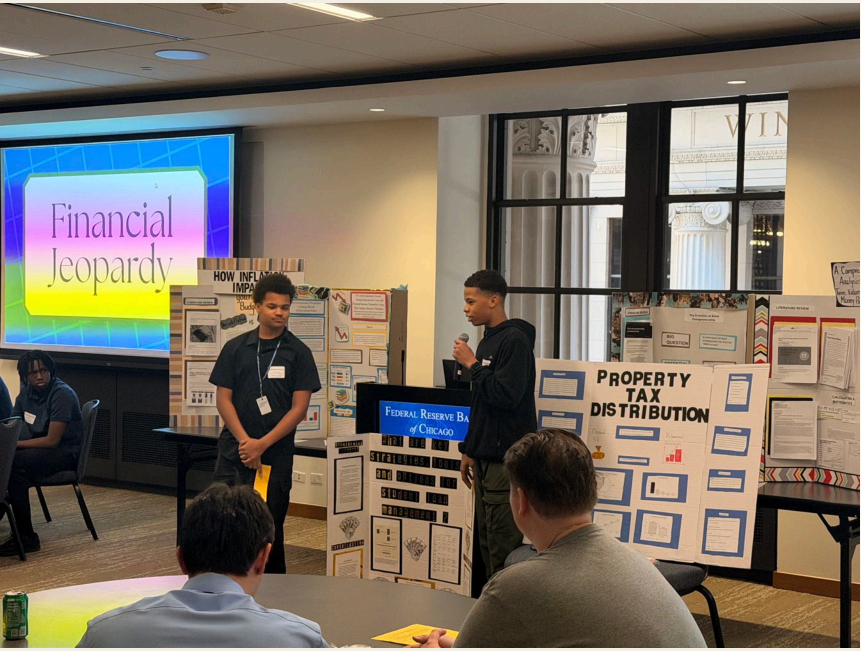
WHERE WE WERE

Chicago



DAY-OF EXPERIENCE

What We Witnessed



Curiosity in Action

Middle schoolers engaged with real financial concepts, asking sharp questions about savings rates, credit scores, and loans.

Confidence Building

Many had never presented to an audience before. Despite that, the presenters were confident and topics. They all clearly explained their ideas and answered questions.

Real Stakes

A lot of these students come from communities where financial stress is a daily reality. That’s why its important to teach them real world concepts early. Build smart habits, make informed decisions, and have strong financial futures.

WHY IT MATTERS

Financial Literacy Changes Life Outcomes

01

Breaking the Cycle of Debt

Financially literate individuals are far less likely to rely on rely on high-interest debt, one of the biggest barriers to barriers to building wealth in low-income communities. communities.

02

Smarter Decisions About College

Students who understand borrowing make better choices about loans and scholarships, reducing lifelong lifelong financial burden and stress.

03

Stronger Neighborhoods

When individuals manage money well, local economies economies benefit , higher savings, fewer foreclosures, and foreclosures, and more investment in small businesses. businesses.

Today we have three experienced teachers on today's panel and others on site with experiences to share.

Social Studies Education	After School Finance Club
Diverse Learners	Curriculum Development
Chicago schools	Suburban schools
Public schools	Parochial schools

Welcome to our panelists: Amon Brooks, Sean Eshaghy, and Asim Gaffar

Moderator – Joy Joyce