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**MAYOR EMANUEL, CEO BYRD-BENNETT ANNOUNCE IMPROVED CPS ELEMENTARY STUDENT
READING AND MATH SCORES**

*Scores Exceed National Growth Averages Scores Improve in Every Grade, While District 8th Graders
Pass National Averages*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett today announced that students in every grade from 2 through 8 showed gains in both math and reading and continue to make progress against their peers nationally, according to results from the recent Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments. CPS 8th graders showed strong growth in math and reading for a second consecutive year, an indication that they'll be ready for the rigors of a challenging high school curriculum.

"These impressive results are yet another indication the hard work by our teachers, principals and families is making a meaningful, measurable difference in the lives of our students." Mayor Emanuel said. "Every child in every neighborhood deserves a quality education, and improvements in every grade demonstrate that we are building a strong foundation upon which Chicago students can grow and succeed."

NWEA is a national benchmark in math and reading and was administered to all CPS students in grades 2-8 beginning in the 2012-13 school year. Students take NWEA multiple times during the school year to show growth in core academic subjects. Results from the test help drive instruction, and are a component of teacher evaluations and the elementary school promotion policy. Beginning in School Year 2014-15, NWEA results will be a factor in the District's new School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP).

"When educators, families and partners work together to support our students, there is no limit to what they can achieve," CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett said. "These scores show that our students continue to make meaningful progress in our goal for every child to be 100 percent college ready and college bound."

CPS 8th graders out-paced the national average in both reading and math in School Year 2013-14, representing the highest gains in grades 2 through 8 across the District. CPS 7th graders made strides in reading against 7th graders nationally. NWEA results show that more than half of CPS

students in grades 2 through 8 scored at or above the national attainment level in reading for their grade.

Following a year of transition for students enrolled in welcoming schools, NWEA results reveal that students boosted their overall performance in reading and even exceeded the national growth average. Welcoming schools saw a slight decline in math performance from the previous year, though 50 percent of students in Welcoming Schools met the national average for growth.

These early successes reaffirm the District the transition process to keep students engaged and focused in the classroom.

NWEA is more closely aligned to the Common Core State Standards than any other standardized test used by CPS. These encouraging results indicate that students and teachers are gaining a better understanding of the Common Core benchmarks and their implementation across the District.

Chicago Public Schools serves 400,000 students in 665 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school district.

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