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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES PLAN TO MAKE FULL DAY FOUR-YEAR-OLD PRE-KINDERGARTEN UNIVERSAL

*Along with early education advocates, Mayor announces plan at Truman College, hub of the new \$2 million city scholarship to expand the early childcare workforce
CPS will expand access to full day programming for 3,700 additional children across Chicago next year*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced plans to implement universal full-day pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds, starting with an expansion for an additional 3,700 children next school year in CPS. Access to universal full-day pre-kindergarten will roll out more each year over the next four years, prioritizing communities with the most children in need. By the fall of 2021 pre-kindergarten will be universal for all 4-year-olds in Chicago.

"Early education is a necessity for every child, not a luxury for some children," said Mayor Emanuel. "Universal full-day pre-kindergarten ensures that every child in Chicago, regardless of their family's resources, gets the great start that all children deserve. This investment will help level the playing field, further close the achievement gap and build stronger communities across Chicago for generations to come."

Once implemented, Mayor Emanuel will have added 3.5 years of classroom time since 2011, when he began shifting away from the shortest school day and the shortest school year in Illinois. Universal pre-K is a critical element of the Mayor's plan to provide a full pre-K to 14 education for Chicago students.

"Early education is one of the best investments we can make, not just in a child's future, but in our City," said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. "Universal full-day pre-kindergarten has the power to level the playing field for students of all economic backgrounds by ensuring the youngest Chicagoans lay the foundation for a successful future."

Under this ambitious plan, an additional 180 full-day CPS classrooms will be added for this fall and will serve the families most in need – or roughly 15,000 of the city's 4-year-olds. In the first year, expanded programming will focus on families of four who make less than

\$46,435 per year. Before the Mayor took office, less than 6,000 4-year-olds had access to pre-K; this plan will ensure that 24,000 children are served.

“Every child in every neighborhood deserves a quality education and that must begin in their earliest years,” said DFSS Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. “I applaud the Mayor for listening to the needs of the community and recognizing that a high quality education is one of the most important investments we can make in our children's future.”

“Pre-K for All has fundamentally transformed New York City. Regardless of their zip code or background, all 4 year olds now have access to free, full day, high quality Pre-K — giving them an invaluable head start in life and easing the financial burden on working families,” said Mayor Bill de Blasio. “I applaud Mayor Emanuel for making this commitment and taking the critical first step to bringing universal pre-k to Chicago.”

Studies consistently show that full-day preschool helps prepare children for kindergarten better than half-day programs, and also better meets the needs of working families. Full day programs typically have higher enrollment and attendance rates than half-day. The Mayor's aggressive plan to ensure that all children have access to this critical resource was developed in partnership with Action for Children, learning from local stakeholders and national experts to develop a robust model for Chicago.

"Illinois Action for Children is excited to continue our partnership with the City of Chicago as it implements the Mayor's ambitious plan for universal access to full-day preschool," said Maria Whelan, President and CEO of Illinois Action for Children. "This plan will draw upon the strengths of both Chicago Public Schools and community-based organizations to effectively serve the highest-need children, while ensuring that the system will be financed appropriately to sustain high quality programs that effectively engage families and communities."

To support the growth of the early childcare workforce, Mayor Emanuel, CCC, CPS, and DFSS announced the Chicago Early Learning Workforce Scholarship. The \$2 million investment will expand the early childcare workforce by increasing access to coursework and credentials for educators who enroll in early childhood higher education programs. This scholarship will help to increase the number of educators, including at Truman College where Mayor Emanuel announced the plan implement universal preschool programing for 4-year-olds across the city. Scholarship recipients are eligible to pursue credentials at City Colleges, University of Illinois at Chicago, the Erikson Institute and other local 4-year universities, depending on the program. Programs at these institutions will prepare educators and ensure they meet the rigorous federal, state and local credential requirements to work in Chicago's early learning programs.

Researchers from leading universities have found CPS students are making durable progress that is an example for other urban districts around the country. Earlier this school

year, groundbreaking research from Stanford Professor Sean Reardon showed that CPS students gain six years of growth in just five years of school and are improving at a rate faster than 96 percent of school districts in the U.S. – across every racial and socioeconomic subgroup. Full-day pre-kindergarten is a critical step in accelerating that growth by starting earlier, when research shows such investments are most impactful. Studies have shown that children who are enrolled in a high quality preschool program are more likely to graduate from high school, earn more as adults and less likely to be arrested for a violent crime or become a teen parent.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has made early childhood education a top priority. The expansion of universal full-day pre-kindergarten for four-year-olds joins the long list of investments in early learning and education made during his administration. This includes creating the first of its kind online preschool application to make it easier for parents to access programs and expanding access to full-day kindergarten for every student.

All current early learning site locations can be found on the City's easy-to-use, interactive online portal at <http://www.chicagoearlylearning.org>.

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