



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 18, 2017

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES FIVE NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMMING SITES

Investment of \$1.8M in 2018 budget will allow an additional 600 children access to High-quality early childhood education

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced that \$1.8 million will be allocated in this year's budget for five new, high-quality early education programming sites next year. These sites will be designed to meet community need, with input and insights from stakeholders from the communities. The city's total early education allocation for the 2018 budget is \$15.075 million, which remains consistent with 2017.

"Every student deserves a high-quality education that gives them the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their zip code, and that begins with early learning programs," said Mayor Emanuel. "From early learning through post-secondary, we are making smart, critical investments that support our children's futures."

The five sites will be selected through a coordinated effort with Aldermen and city agencies to ensure that funding is strategically allocated across the city in a way that best serves the most children. The process for designing these programs involves comprehensive community engagement and a streamlined review by both the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to ensure that all programs being supported by city funding are high-quality and prepare students for kindergarten and continued learning.

This year, over 18,000 children across the city will have access to a full-day of preschool—an increase of 80 percent since 2011. The additional five sites will accommodate more than 600 additional children across the selected communities.

To improve accessibility, the City of Chicago launched a universal preschool application that serves as a one-stop-shop to help parents find programs, assess program quality, and understand their child's eligibility for their desired site. This online site provides a single point of entry to access a comprehensive menu of over 600 programs for three- and four-year olds available under Chicago CPS, DFSS and city-administered community-based sites citywide. All locations can be found on the City's easy-to-use, interactive online portal at <http://www.chicagoearlylearning.org>.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has made full-day early learning opportunities a priority. Studies have shown that a high-quality, full-day preschool is a critical start to long-term success. Studies have shown that at-risk children who have access to high quality, full-day preschool programs are more likely to graduate from high school, and less likely to be arrested for a violent crime or become a teen parent.

The expansion of quality full-day early learning programs joins the long list of education improvements under Mayor Emanuel's leadership, including universal kindergarten, longer school day and expanded educational programs at the high school level. Collectively, these efforts have resulted in an all-time high graduation rate of 73.5 percent – growing more than 16 percentage points since 2011 when just over half of CPS students earned a high school diploma.

###