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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 10, 2014

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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF HIGH-QUALITY EARLY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING TO 2,200 CHILDREN

City of Chicago Wins Two Competitive Education Grants from the Federal Government for More Than \$37 Million to Provide Early Learning and Comprehensive Services in Areas of Highest Need

Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today the City of Chicago won two competitive federal government grants, totaling more than \$37 million, to expand high-quality early educational programming to 2,200 children in neighborhoods with the greatest need. President Barack Obama, along with Secretaries Arne Duncan and Sylvia Mathews Burwell showed their commitment to America's youngest students by announcing these awards and as well as new private-sector commitments to early childhood education at the White House Summit on Early Education today.

"Early childhood education is an essential investment in the future of our children," said Mayor Emanuel. "As we continue to raise the standard of excellence, we must ensure that every child, across every neighborhood receives a world class education and that must begin with our youngest learners."

The first grant awards Chicago Public Schools (CPS) with more than \$22.3 million over four years through the Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with the State of Illinois. This federal funding will enroll 1,100 4-year olds in full-day high-quality pre-kindergarten programming and comprehensive services in high-need areas of the City.

The grant will establish 10 new pre-kindergarten classrooms, serving 200 students in the Brighton Park and Albany Park neighborhoods, as well as expand 45 existing pre-kindergarten classrooms from part-day to full-day in the Englewood, Humboldt Park, Austin, North Lawndale, Auburn Gresham, Roseland/Altgeld Gardens, Bronzeville, and Back of the Yards neighborhoods.

The City also won \$14.9 million through the Department of Health and Human Services Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program, funding an additional 1,100 infant and toddler seats for 0-3 year olds in high-need areas of the City. This award will help expand programs for our youngest learners by 18 percent through center-based and family child care home programs.

Last October, Mayor Emanuel announced that the City of Chicago closed the gap on pre-kindergarten education for 4-year old children from low income families. Currently there are nearly 1,500 4-year old children in Chicago who qualify for the federal free or reduced lunch program, but

do not attend at least a half-day of pre-kindergarten. Beginning in School Year 2015-2016, CPS will provide pre-k education to these students through a \$9.4 million capital investment at 10 neighborhood schools, as well as a \$4.5 million state capital grant to support new community based programs. In the same month, Mayor Emanuel also announced 2,620 CPS students will have access to high-quality early childhood education as a result of a Social Impact Bond program.

In February 2013, Mayor Emanuel and CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett announced that for the first time all 30,700 CPS kindergarten students will have a full-day, high-quality start to their education. That \$15 million investment fulfilled Mayor Emanuel and CEO Byrd-Bennett's commitment to make full-day kindergarten a reality. While Illinois school districts are not required to fund full-day kindergarten, Mayor Emanuel and CPS have increased access to full-day kindergarten by 50 percent since 2011.

While early childhood service provision in Chicago is considered a national model, Mayor Emanuel has made closing the gap of service delivery in all neighborhoods and raising the bar of quality a top priority in his education agenda. To accomplish the goal of having every child in the City of Chicago ready to learn by kindergarten, the City has embarked on an ambitious effort to achieve three distinct goals:

1. Increase access: serve the most at-risk children in high-quality programs.
2. Raise the quality of early childhood programs in Chicago.
3. Bolster transparency and accountability across the educational services spectrum.

Quality early childhood programs will help ensure that every student graduates with a world-class education, ready to enter college or a career.

The expansion of quality pre-school 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 school graduation rate of 69.4 percent in 2014, up from 58 percent just 3 years ago.

Parents interested in enrolling their children in early learning programs should visit www.chicagoearlylearning.org for more information.

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