



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 2, 2011

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**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL AND CPS CEO JEAN-CLAUDE BRIZARD ANNOUNCE KEY INVESTMENTS
IN THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS' BACK-TO-SCHOOL INITIATIVES**

Go door-to-door to highlight the importance of attendance on the first day of school

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Jean-Claude Brizard today announced key investments that supported CPS' Back-to-School initiatives and went door-to-door in the Auburn-Gresham community to remind parents and students about the first day of school.

"Excellence in education starts with excellent attendance, and the support CPS's Back-to-School initiatives have received from our city's business and community leaders confirms just how invested Chicagoans are in our students' success," said Mayor Emanuel. "This is a shared goal for all of Chicago and I am heartened by Chicagoans' commitment to making this important investment in Chicago's future."

Today's door-to-door visits are part of a comprehensive back-to-school school campaign to promote strong attendance habits during the 2011-2012 school year. Early Start Schools (Track E) begin on Monday, August 8th and Regular Start Schools (Track R) begin on Tuesday, September 6th.

The new corporate sponsors that have agreed to support CPS's back-to-school efforts through generous donations include:

- Wal-mart Stores Inc. committed \$25,000 to support the CPS Door-to-Door campaign;
- Clear Channel Communications Inc. committed to promoting CPS's back-to-school messages through radio, digital, and billboard platforms with in-kind contributions valued at \$120,000;
- Target Corp. committed \$3,000 to the school with highest first week attendance in a high-truancy area;
- Harris Bank committed \$12,000 to sponsor the Safe Haven end of summer back-to-school rally;
- and Chartwells-Thompson Hospitality committed \$45,000 to purchase Back to School Kits, which include notebooks, pencils, erasers, and other vital school supplies.



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Last week, Groupon offered a special deal in support of CPS's back-to-school campaign which allowed Chicagoans to purchase school supply kits for low-income students. Groupon's deal raised \$15,000 to purchase more than 1,200 Back to School Kits.

Other corporate sponsors of CPS's back-to-school efforts include Fleishman-Hillard, Peoples Gas, Comcast, Discover, HMH Foundation, Loop Capital, PNC Bank, Bank of America, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Foundation, the Chicago Tribune Foundation, The Museum of Science and Industry and Loop Capital.

As part of its comprehensive back-to-school comprehensive campaign, CPS is utilizing grassroots tactics, advertising, and social media strategies, including:

- Door-to-door outreach;
- Robo-calls to households of CPS students;
- Targeted literature drops at CTA stations, bus stations and neighborhood festivals;
- Phone bank calls targeting parents;
- A CTA ad campaign;
- Text messages and e-mail notifications; and
- Google and Facebook ads.

"I know from personal experience as a teacher and a principal that being in the classroom on the first day sets the tone for the rest of the school year and increases a student's chance for success," said CPS CEO Jean-Claude Brizard. "That is why we are working energetically and creatively make sure that our message about the importance of excellent back-to-school attendance comes through loud and clear to parents and students across Chicago."

CPS encourages parents to check with their school and visit www.cps.edu/firstday to be sure they know the correct start date for their child's school. For more information, parents can call CPS's back-to-school hotline at (773) 553-3CPS (3277). They can also contact their school directly to confirm start dates.

The Chicago Public Schools serves approximately 409,000 students in more than 675 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school system.

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