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MAYOR EMANUEL, CHANCELLOR HYMAN, AND CEO BYRD-BENNETT ANNOUNCE 3,100 STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO ENROLL IN FREE COLLEGE COURSES NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

Expansion Brings the Total Number of CPS Students Enrolling in College-level Courses to 4,100, Exceeding the Mayor's Previously Announced Goal

With Chicago Public Schools (CPS)' freshman on track rate to graduate rising to 82% and City Colleges of Chicago's (CCC) graduation rate steadily increasing, Mayor Emanuel, CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett, and City Colleges Chancellor Cheryl Hyman are continuing to make strategic investments to expand quality learning opportunities for students that will prepare them for college and a career. Starting in school year 2014-2015 (SY 14-15), 3,100 CPS students will be able to enroll in free college-level courses at City Colleges. This expansion would bring the total number of CPS students enrolling in college courses to 4,100, exceeding the Mayor's goal of 4,000 students having access to college-level classes by SY 15-16.

"Throughout our education system, we are creating a pathway for students to gain early exposure to college and build the skills they will need to succeed in today's workforce," said Mayor Emanuel. "Not only are more Chicago students on track to graduate high school, many of our students already have earned college credit that will put them on an accelerated path to success in college and a career. This program is an important strategy to reach our goal that every student is 100 percent college ready and 100 percent college bound."

In 2011, there were 300 seats available for CPS students to participate in the Dual Enrollment program, which allowed qualified high school students to take college courses at any of the seven City Colleges of Chicago, free of charge, and earn credit that can be applied to a degree program at one of the City Colleges of Chicago or transferred to a four-year college or university upon graduation. Through this expansion, there will be 3,100 dual enrollment seats available to CPS students, a ten-fold increase from when the Mayor first took office.

"We are committed to ensuring Chicago students receive quality, relevant, affordable higher education that puts them on the path to further college and a career," said Chancellor Hyman. "The dual enrollment program is a natural extension of our mission, providing Chicago high school students the opportunity to save both time and money towards their degree and preparing them to make a strong transition to college life."

The Dual Credit program, where students enroll in college-level courses taught by qualified CPS teachers on high school campuses will serve 1,000 students next school year. Dual Credit courses are expected to be available at 38 CPS high schools next school year, up from just five in the program's initial year. The Mayor launched this program in 2011.

"CPS and the City Colleges of Chicago are partners in the success of Chicago's next generation," said CPS CEO Barbara Byrd Bennett. "I am enthusiastic about our collaboration and the expansion of the dual enrollment program that will offer thousands more students access to free, rigorous, college-level curriculum and a head start for post-secondary success."

The City, CPS, and CCC are currently working on a growth strategy to meet the District's enrollment goal, adding dual credit coursework at currently under-represented CPS schools and possibly raising caps on dual enrollment seats at the most in-demand CCC campuses.

Approximately 25 percent of CPS students matriculate to City Colleges of Chicago. In addition, 50 percent of CCC associate degree candidates are CPS graduates.

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