



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO



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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

Chicago Public Schools

773.553.1611

**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL AND CPS CEO BYRD-BENNETT ANNOUNCE STUDENTS RECEIVE
NEARLY \$800 MILLION IN COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP OFFERS IN 2014**

College Readiness Support Leads Students to Apply for College and Scholarships

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett today announced that CPS's 2014 graduating class received nearly \$800 million in scholarship offers. As the result of a network of support, including counselors and post-secondary coaches, more students are applying for college and the scholarships that will support their pursuit of success.

"Chicago Public School students continue to raise the standard of excellence, which is leading to more students being prepared for college," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "Across the City of Chicago, our teachers, principals, and other school leaders are providing essential support for students to pursue their dreams in college, career and beyond.

College enrollment for CPS students in 2013 was 57.2 percent, an increase of 1.2 percent from 2012. More than ever, CPS graduates are applying for college and the scholarships that will carry them through their post-secondary careers.

"This year's scholarship awards represent a remarkable achievement for our students and their support networks, including their families, teachers and counselors," said CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett. "These scholarships will help to remove the financial barrier facing many of our students today and put them on a path for college and career success."

In 2013, CPS high schools reported the awarding of \$400 million in scholarship offers. In 2014, CPS high schools reported \$500 million. The Noble Street Charter School Network, which is part of CPS, also reported \$300 million in offers in 2014, the first year it ever reported. Students earned scholarships in a variety of areas, including academic, talent-based, athletic, organizational and need-based awards.

The District saw a 10 percent increase in the number of CPS high schools reporting total scholarship offers. Students are also demonstrating that they are eligible for multiple scholarship offers, which demonstrates the devoted work that many school counselors as well as college and

career coaches are providing to support students and make them aware of opportunities to apply for college scholarships.

CPS students continue to make progress in college-readiness, as evidenced by the all-time high 2014 graduation rate of 69.4 percent. Last week, Mayor Emanuel and CEO Byrd-Bennett announced the record for the District, which graduated 65.4 percent of students in SY 12-13. The SY 13-14 graduation rate continues a consistent upward trend and represents the largest two-year increase in district history. Two years ago, 61.2 percent of CPS students graduated, and three years ago, 58 percent of CPS students graduated.

In addition to setting a record high graduation rate this year, the rate for freshmen on-track to graduate for School Year (SY) 2013-2014 is the highest measure on record at 84.1 percent, up 2.6 percentage points from 2013. Since Mayor Emanuel took office in 2011, the freshman on-track rate has increased 11.5 percent.

Chicago Public Schools serves 400,000 students in 664 schools. It is the nation's third-largest school district.

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