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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CPS ANNOUNCE NEW INITIATIVES TO HELP SENIORS
TRANSITION TO AND THROUGH COLLEGE**

With more students graduating college-bound than ever before, CPS is implementing new programming to prepare them for the next phase of their education

With more CPS students graduating high school and attending college than ever before, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Chief Education Officer Janice K. Jackson today set an ambitious new academic achievement goal and launched two new efforts aimed at helping students succeed as they prepare to enter college.

“More than ever, Chicago’s students are breaking records—from high school graduation, to college enrollment, and college completion—proving that when we invest in their education that they will succeed and exceed our greatest expectations for them,” said Mayor Emanuel. “An unprecedented 40 percent of Chicago’s graduates are earning some sort of college credit, and we are launching these new programs to ensure that more students than ever have the tools and confidence to be successful on day one of their college experience.”

By 2019, the Mayor and CPS will aim to have half of all CPS high school students earning college credit while they are still at CPS schools through programs like Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, IB and STEM programs. This new goal is particularly bold, considering that five years ago just 56.9 percent of CPS students were even graduating high school.

Last year nearly 40 percent of CPS students earned one or more of the following college or career credentials: early college credit, a 3+ on an AP exam, a 4+ on an IB exam, an approved career certification, or a JROTC program completion certification. This represents an increase from roughly 30 percent the year before.

By setting new expectations for students to access the District’s wide menu of college and career credentials while they are still in high school, CPS will provide more of its students with exposure to the rigorous coursework that they will encounter in college, credits that apply toward their degree, and the confidence they need to succeed once they get there.

“Chicago’s students have been making phenomenal progress in the classroom and outpacing their peers in districts around the country,” said Dr. Janice K. Jackson. “With more of our graduates than

ever before enrolling in college today, it's now about getting them through to the finish line, so that they can earn a degree and seize the jobs of tomorrow.”

Two new CPS programs will also help students succeed on their way to college.

First, this year CPS will pilot a senior seminar curriculum in 13 high schools helping more than 2,000 seniors as they prepare to enter college. This seminar, designed by a CPS citywide high school working group and Thrive Chicago, will launch at the following schools next year:

- Al Raby High School
- Amundsen High School
- Corliss High School
- Farragut Career Academy
- Goode High School
- Harlan High School
- Harper High School
- Hubbard High School
- Hyde Park Academy
- Julian High School
- Kelvyn Park High School
- Phoenix Military Academy
- Schurz High School

Second, to ensure college bound high school graduates follow through on their plans to enter college in the fall, CPS is directly engaging 6,600 recent graduates with text messages to remind them of key milestones related to enrollment, financial aid, and counseling, throughout the course of this summer. The effort is particularly important because research indicates nearly 40 percent of high school graduates nationwide who are planning to go to college fail to show up in the fall.

Since Mayor Emanuel took office in 2011, CPS has raised its graduation rate by more than 11 percentage points, and the class of 2016 is on-pace to break records yet again with a more than 70 percent graduation rate. And already today, more than 40 percent of CPS graduates are enrolling in four-year colleges according to the latest research from the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (CCSR). These and other academic gains at CPS are attributed to the hard work of teachers, principals and students – as well as a long list of investments to strengthen high schools in CPS under Mayor Emanuel. Those include the expansion of opportunities to earn early college credits and career credential courses, through AP coursework, Early College STEM programming, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment courses through a partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago.

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