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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2011

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MAYOR EMANUEL AND CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS CEO JEAN-CLAUDE BRIZARD MEET WITH TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS ABOUT BENEFITS OF ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Jean-Claude Brizard joined United Neighborhood Organization (UNO) CEO Juan Rangel at Marquez School today to meet with parents, teachers and students to discuss the positive impact of a longer school day with additional instructional time.

"We need to provide our children with the quality education they deserve," said Mayor Emanuel. "Lengthening the school day and year at the Chicago Public Schools will give our students the tools they need to excel in school and succeed in a modern economy."

"The quantity of instruction can mean the difference between a high school dropout and a college graduate," stated CPS CEO Jean Claude Brizard. "As Mayor Emanuel has attested, a Chicago student's peer in Houston will receive the equivalent of four additional years of instruction by the time he or she graduates from high school. It is unacceptable for our students to face this sort of disadvantage."

Longer school days and years already exist in some of Chicago's most effective charter schools, such as Marquez School, which is one of the UNO charter schools. Additional instructional time will give Chicago's students the education and skills they need to achieve in the classroom and beyond.

During the roundtable discussion at today's event, Sylvia Garcia, the parent of a fifth grader at Marquez, was adamant: "Longer school days and years keep our kids in a safe environment while learning. Plus, we live in a global economy; more instructional time gives our kids the ability to succeed."

Emily Wilson, a kindergarten teacher at UNO's Rufino Tamayo School, gave her perspective on teaching during a longer school day: "We do what's best for our kids," she said. "Longer school days are a practical decision. We are here to prepare our kids to be better citizens and to acquire knowledge."

Seventh grader Lonnie Wilson spoke up to say, "Longer school days give kids who need extra help more time for it. They also give kids the opportunity for educational and personality growth." Fifth grader Andrea Martinez enthusiastically added, "Longer school days mean more learning time, which helps kids succeed."

Mayor Emanuel praised school administrators, principals and teachers throughout the UNO school system for their efforts on behalf of students.

"We cannot afford to deny students days, weeks and years of opportunity," said Mayor Emanuel.

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