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**MAYOR AND CITY OFFICIALS DISCUSS PLANS TO ENSURE SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL
TRANSITION FOR CHICAGO'S STUDENTS**

Mayor to Cabinet: "Safe Passage is Everyone's Responsibility"

Mayor Rahm Emanuel called his cabinet together today to discuss the coordinated approach the City will take to fully support the city's children, families and communities as students transition to welcoming schools this fall. Every City department and agency will work in tandem with the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) as needed to assist with ensuring a smooth and safe transition for students.

"We will not waver in our commitment for our children to have access to a quality education, regardless of where they live," said Mayor Emanuel. "The children of this city should know that they have the strength and support of the entire city behind them. From every city department to every neighbor and family, we all must play a role in making sure our children are safe and have every opportunity to succeed."

After a briefing that summarized the enrollment and population decline in neighborhoods and the extensive community engagement that informed the recommendation CPS CEO Byrd-Bennett made to the Board of Education last month, City leaders detailed ways departments will coordinate in order to support the effective implementation of this plan, focusing specifically on Safe Passage at every welcoming school.

CPD will lead a new, specialized Safe Passage Working Group which will include representatives from 16 departments who will specifically work together on securing Safe Passage routes. Once the routes are finalized by CPD and CPS, the Working Group will conduct a survey of every Safe Passage route to note any concerns and suggest any modifications that may be needed before the start of school in the fall. These include: making sure vacant buildings are secure and vacant lots are clear, ensuring street markings, such as street and bus signs, are clear and unobstructed, and confirming appropriate lighting is in place.

The Safe Passage Working Group includes representatives from: CPD, CPS, the Department of Streets and Sanitation, Chicago Department of Transportation, Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Housing Authority, Chicago Parks District, Department of Animal Care and Control, Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, Office of Emergency Management and Communications, Department of Buildings, Chicago Fire Department, 311, Department of Public Health, Chicago Budget Office, and the Department of Family and Support Services.

Photo Caption: Mayor Emanuel convenes cabinet to discuss City-wide coordination to support Chicago's students.

Photo Credit: Brooke Collins / City of Chicago

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