



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 13, 2014

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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CPS CEO BYRD-BENNETT ANNOUNCE COMPLETION OF TWO ANNEXES  
TO ALLEVIATE OVERCROWDING AT TWO NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

*The Mayor and CPS have Addressed Overcrowding at 33 Neighborhood Schools across the City*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett announced both Hale and Edison Park Elementary Schools opened new annexes after winter break to alleviate overcrowding at schools that were ranked as the 14th and 16th most overcrowded, non-charter schools.

"Investing in local schools to alleviate overcrowding across our City is part of our strategy to ensure every child in Chicago is 100 percent college ready and 100 percent college bound," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said. "For our students to live up to their full potential, we as adults must live up to our full responsibilities to them, which is why we are continuing to invest in what works, reforming what doesn't and bringing our schools into the 21st century."

The Mayor attended a ribbon cutting at Hale Elementary School with parents, students, and teachers to celebrate the more supportive learning conditions. Before the annex, Hale's permanent space utilization was 161 percent with 872 students when it was only built for 540. Earlier this school year, Hale was using modular units, but the school was still overcrowded at 116 percent. The new annex will allow the school to remove the modular units and accommodate all current students.

The new annex provides three floors of classrooms and one computer lab, one resource room, an administrative room, a library, gymnasium and auditorium. The annex cost of \$15 million was paid out of CPS construction funds.

"Lack of space makes the work of being a principal a continual exercise in lose-lose dilemmas – do they choose having a library or lunchroom; an auditorium or an algebra class?" CEO Byrd-Bennett said. "We didn't settle for time constraints on our children's education, which is why we fought for and won a full school day, so we shouldn't settle for space constraints either."

The Mayor also attended a ribbon cutting at Edison Park Elementary School, which had a utilization rate of 157 percent and was built to accommodate 300 students and currently has 469 students. The new annex will allow the school to accommodate 570 students including all current students in the school building and the planned growth in attendance. The school was previously a regional

gifted school but due to neighborhood demand, CPS moved the gifted program and started a neighborhood school at the building.

The new two-story annex includes 14 classrooms, one science lab, one resource room, an administrative room, a library and a gymnasium. The project cost almost \$14 million out of CPS capital construction funds.

These investments are all part of a larger modernization strategy led by the Mayor's office and by CPS to eliminate overcrowding, which, as the Mayor has reiterated, crowds out our children's futures. In the past two years, the Mayor's office and CPS have addressed overcrowding at 33 local schools and has remained firmly committed to working with individual communities to find innovative ways to relieve overcrowding at other local schools.

Some examples of these improvements include:

A new elementary school in the Southwest Side: The Southwest community is receiving a new elementary school, since Peck and Pasteur both are 201 percent and 187 percent overcrowded respectively. CPS has addressed overcrowding at the schools through mobile units and leased space with at least 20 additional classrooms at each school, and is working with the principals to address educational programming improvements at each school like computer labs and science labs when the new school opens.

A new elementary school in the Far South East Side: Gallistel and Addams are among the most crowded CPS schools in the district. This new school will both relieve the overcrowding at these schools and give parents another quality school option.

A new annex for Wildwood in Edgebrook: The new annex at Wildwood School will address overcrowding at this high performing magnet school with an IB program, which is currently operating at 175 percent capacity.

The Mayor has also addressed overcrowding issues at other schools such as Bell, Columbia Explorers, Dever, Dirksen, Durkin Park, Edgebrook, Hale, Lincoln, Little Village, Lock, Onahan, Oriole Park, South Loop, Smyser, and Stevenson.

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