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**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL AND GOVERNOR JB PRITZKER ANNOUNCE EXPANSION OF
UNIVERSAL FULL-DAY PRE-KINDERGARTEN TO 28 COMMUNITIES NEXT SCHOOL YEAR**

As citywide rollout of universal full-day pre-k for 4-year olds continues, DFSS will support additional investments in early childhood programs at community-based organizations

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Governor JB Pritzker, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) today announced the expansion of universal full-day pre-kindergarten programs in 28 communities across Chicago. As part of Mayor Emanuel's plan to provide universal pre-k by 2021, more than 100 new full-day classrooms will be added next school year.

"Every child in every neighborhood deserves a quality education, and that must begin in their critical earliest years," said Mayor Emanuel. "We must remain committed to expanding early education programming to ensure every student, regardless of their family's resources, gets the great start they deserve. This expansion helps us to further close the achievement gap and build stronger communities across Chicago for generations to come."

"I've worked on early childhood development and education for decades because I believe to my core that every child should be given the best possible chance for a bright future," said Governor JB Pritzker. "With a \$100 million increase in the Early Childhood Block Grant in my budget, we are proposing the largest ever one year increase in the program's history and more money for preschool than we've ever invested. This means Illinois can expand universal full-day, high-quality pre-K to 14,000 more children this year. Investing in early childhood development means taxpayers spend less and more people are contributing to our communities' health and prosperity. That's why pre-school can't be a luxury reserved only for some. It should be a right afforded to all."

As part of a \$27 million increase in CPS Pre-K spending next year, the district is opening more than 100 free, full-day pre-k classes next year. The 28 high-needs communities will include: Auburn Gresham, Avalon Park, Burnside, Calumet Heights, Chatham, East Side, Englewood, Greater Grand Crossing, Hegewisch, Pullman, Riverdale, Roseland, South Chicago, South Deering, Washington Heights, West Englewood, West Pullman; Austin, East Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Lower West Side, North Lawndale, South Lawndale, West Garfield Park, West Town and Uptown.

"Universal pre-kindergarten is a powerful equalizer that ensures every student, in every neighborhood has access to a quality education that lays the foundation for future academic

success," said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. "Access to early education has the power to transform lives and this initiative will benefit Chicago's families and Chicago's future."

As part of this expansion, the Department of Family and Support Services will add another \$50 million to support community-based organizations providing early education programs through an upcoming RFP. This investment builds on investments of both DFSS and CPS to ensure that City-administered programs are high quality and effectively preparing children for success in their early years and beyond.

"The City has worked to build universal access for all 4 year-olds, while keeping Mayor Emanuel's vision of comprehensive services for all children under five, in school and community-based settings," said DFSS Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. "This will allow families more options for their young learners."

In the first year of this ambitious plan, an additional 180 full-day CPS classrooms were added to serve the families most in need. Through the continued expansion of the programming, roughly 15,000 of Chicago's 4-year olds are anticipated to be served in the 2019-20 school year.

"This important next step in expansion brings us closer to providing high-quality pre-kindergarten to children across the City in a comprehensive, robust way," said Maria Whelan, President and CEO of Illinois Action for Children. "Illinois Action for Children is thrilled to work alongside the City of Chicago as it continues to effectively implement the Mayor's ambitious plan to expand access to early education programs both at Chicago Public Schools and with our community-based organizations."

Access to universal full-day pre-kindergarten will roll out to additional communities each year, prioritizing communities with the most children in need. By the fall of 2021 pre-k will be universally accessible for all 4-year-olds in Chicago. Before the Mayor took office, less than 6,000 4-year-olds had access to pre-K; this plan will ensure that over 23,000 children are served.

Once implemented, Mayor Emanuel will have added 4 years of classroom time for every student since taking office in 2011, starting by shifting away from the shortest school day and the shortest school year in Illinois. Universal pre-k is a critical element of the Mayor's plan to provide a full pre-k to higher education and career for all Chicago students.

Studies consistently show that full-day preschool helps prepare children for kindergarten better than half-day programs, and also better meets the needs of working families. Full day programs typically have higher enrollment and attendance rates than half-day, and research continues to show that they have more impact on student outcomes. The Mayor's aggressive plan to ensure that all children have access to this critical resource was developed in partnership with Action for Children, learning from local stakeholders and national experts to develop a robust model for Chicago.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has made early childhood education a top priority. The expansion of universal full-day pre-kindergarten for four-year-olds joins the long list of investments in early learning and education made during his administration. This includes creating

the first of its kind online preschool application to make it easier for parents to access programs and expanding access to full-day kindergarten for every student.

All current early learning site locations can be found on the City's easy-to-use, interactive online portal at www.chicagoearlylearning.org.

Chicago's Roadmap to Implementing Universal Pre-K (UPK), a report outlining the details of the four-year plan can be found at www.chilearn.org/UPK.