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MAYOR EMANUEL CUTS RIBBON AT RAVENSWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

"Green Not Gray" Playground Renovation Promotes Sustainability and Creates Urban Oasis Play Area

Mayor Rahm Emanuel cut the ribbon today at Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) Ravenswood Elementary School playground. The new playground renovation includes an outdoor classroom amphitheater; an artificial turf field and surrounding track; a pre-kindergarten obstacle course; learning gardens; landscaping and shaded areas; a sport court; as well as artistic features such as furniture and climbing structures.

"Ravenswood Elementary School and its community came together to support this project and make it a reality," said Mayor Emanuel "This 'Green Not Gray' playground will set a new standard for sustainability while providing students a place to learn and grow. On everything from parks to playgrounds to pre-kindergarten, the City of Chicago will continue making these important investments for our children's future."

The school's students, parents and community members developed the "Green Not Gray" playground, which controls storm water runoff and creates urban oasis with arts-focused play area for 500 school children and neighborhood families.

Funding for this \$1.5 million project came from a variety of sources, including the City of Chicago, the 47th Ward Aldermanic Office, the State of Illinois and a grant from the Illinois Green Infrastructure. Ravenswood Elementary School was one of 13 communities across Illinois to be awarded the Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant, and the only Chicago recipient.

The new Ravenswood Elementary School playground compliments the *Chicago Plays!* playground renovation program launched by Mayor Emanuel. The Chicago Park District will rebuild, repair and/or refurbish 325 playgrounds in communities across Chicago. Last year, 50 playgrounds were rehabilitated through the program. In 2014, 92 playgrounds will be refurbished through the *Chicago Plays!* program and an additional 11 soft surface playgrounds will be rehabbed.

Ravenswood Elementary School also recently received air conditioning as part of the first phase of a multi-year plan to install air conditioning systems in every CPS classroom. The first phase of the plan was completed on time and under budget at 57 CPS schools. With this investment, a total of 154 schools have received air conditioning in the past two years.

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Photo Captions: Mayor Emanuel Cuts Ribbon At Ravenswood Elementary School Playground

Photo Credit: Patrick Pyszka // City of Chicago