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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SITE
IN WEST RIDGE**

As Chicago moves to free full-day pre-k, a new CPS analysis shows students who attend preschool programs perform better on key metrics by 3rd grade

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Alderman Patrick O'Connor today joined the Department of Family and Support Services and Chicago Public Schools to announce a new early education center at Passages Elementary School – the fourth center to be announced this year. The centers provide quality early learning services, just as new data from CPS underscores the benefits of ramping up free pre-k for all the city's 4-year-olds.

“For decades Chicago children started school when they were six and had the shortest day and the shortest school year of any group of children in the country. With the gains we’ve made and by expanding free pre-k for all, they’ll now be in class at 4 and have nearly four more years of classroom time by the time they graduate,” said Mayor Emanuel. “This newest data reinforces why we’re making these investments, which are fundamentally about giving every child from every neighborhood their best chance to succeed.

“Passages welcomes families from all around the world and right here in our neighborhood, and we are committed to making sure every one of our early learners is prepared with the tools they need to excel in school and in life when they graduate,” said Craig Maki, Chief Executive Officer of Asian Human Services. “I am proud to work in a city that is proud of its diversity, and with the city to expand early education so that we can continue preparing students for kindergarten, and to support learning spaces for the whole family to succeed.”

The new early education center at Passages Elementary School in the West Ridge community will serve approximately 100 children in the 2018-19 school year, and scale up to 160 children starting in the 2019 – 200 school year. Facilities and programs will also be developed to support the whole family, including a computer lab, and programming for Adult ESL, Workforce Development and Family Behavioral Health. The center will be run in conjunction with the K-8 charter school and Asian Human Services. Passages Elementary

School is a global school open to everyone, with a focus on the needs of immigrant and refugee students.

“The early education center at Passages Elementary School will help prepare students with the quality education they need to launch a successful academic career,” said Alderman O’Connor, 40th Ward. “Passages Elementary School helps students get the great start they all deserve, and with this investment from the city they can start laying this foundation even earlier.”

As the City begins to phase in free pre-k for all 4-year-olds, a new analysis of pre-k programs conducted by Chicago Public Schools shows that students who attended a preschool program had higher academic gains than their peers. By 3rd grade, students who attended CPS pre-k programs had higher GPAs, better attendance, and higher standardized test scores than their peers with no pre-k education. This analysis evaluated outcomes of 3rd grade CPS students during the 2016-2017 school year who were enrolled in CPS-funded pre-k during the 2012-2013 school year, compared to 3rd graders who have no pre-k education.

"Early education lays the foundation for a successful academic future, and it is one of the best investments we can make in our students and our City," said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. "The growing body of research is clear: pre-kindergarten can make a difference in the lives of children and set them up for success - which is why universal pre-kindergarten in Chicago will help level the playing field for students of all backgrounds across the city."

The city is investing in four additional early education centers at Dore Elementary in Clearing, Perez Elementary in Pilsen, Gads Hill Center in Brighton Park and Little Angels Learning Center in Englewood. These projects build on investments of both the Department of Family and Support Services and Chicago Public Schools to ensure that City-administered programs are high quality and effectively preparing children for success in kindergarten and beyond. The mayor first announced early education programming sites in the 2018 budget as an initial investment to implement universal full-day pre-k for all 4-year-olds.

“We know the long-term benefits of early education,” said Department of Family and Support Services Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. “With the Mayor’s support, we are working towards universal full-day pre-k for all of Chicago’s youngest learners.”

Capital investments in early education were recently released in the CPS budget, including the first year of funding towards making pre-k universal in Chicago. Chicago Public Schools recently proposed a nearly \$1 billion in capital plan —the district’s largest single-year capital investment in more than two decades — to promote equitable access to high quality resources by investing in educational programming, overcrowding relief, facility maintenance, athletic spaces, and IT and security upgrades.

As the first step in Mayor Emanuel's ambitious plan to establish free pre-k for all 4-year-olds by 2021, CPS is expanding full-day pre-k next year to accommodate an additional 3,700 students. Across CPS and Chicago's community-based partners, roughly 15,000 of the city's 4-year-olds will have access to full-day pre-k programming. In the first year, expanded programming will focus on families of four who make less than \$46,435 per year.

Families can apply for preschool programs through the universal online application. This online site provides a single point of entry to access a comprehensive menu of over 600 programs for three- and four-year olds available under Chicago CPS, DFSS and city-administered community-based sites citywide. All locations can be found at <http://www.chicagoearlylearning.org>.

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