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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CPS ANNOUNCE HIGHEST-EVER COLLEGE ENROLLMENT RATE
AND STRONGEST ONE-YEAR IMPROVEMENT SINCE 2010**

*Improvements Seen Among Every Racial Group in the City; College Enrollment has Increased
by 20 Percent Since 2010*

With Chicago students' academics improving across the board, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools announced today that more students are enrolling in college than ever before, with 64.6 percent of the Class of 2017 graduates enrolling in a two-year or four-year college – a 20 percent increase from 2010 when the college enrollment rate was 53.7 percent. This is the highest year-over-year improvement since 2010, with an increase of 4.8 percentage points from 2016 when 59.8 percent of CPS graduates enrolled in college. The district also reached a near record high college persistence rate of 72.3 – signaling that more students are enrolling and staying in college.

“Chicago students are raising the bar for success, and making our city proud,” said Mayor Emanuel. “The highest-ever college enrollment means more students are using high school graduation as a milestone on the way to accomplish great things after they earn their diploma.”

“CPS continues to be a national leader in urban education as more of our graduates than ever before are enrolling in college,” said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. “From ensuring students have meaningful planning conversations through Learn.Plan.Succeed. to our robust partnerships and efforts to address summer melt, our underlying mission is clear: high school graduation is not the end goal. We are working to ensure our students have the skills to thrive after graduation, and today’s announcement shows that parents, students, and educators are united behind that mission.”

“These results suggest Chicago students recognize that City Colleges is a smart college choice that offers a quality, relevant, affordable college education with a direct path to four-year universities and careers in growing fields,” said Chancellor Salgado. “These outcomes are also a testament to our work with CPS – from the Star Scholarship to dual enrollment to our post-secondary navigators and more – that is supporting Chicago students in accessing and succeeding in college.”

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As the percentage of students attending college is increasing, the raw number of students enrolling in college is also rising, with 14,864 students enrolling in college in 2017 – an increase of more than a thousand from the previous year. The district’s growing college enrollment rate mirrors the increasing number of CPS students who are earning high school diplomas.

College Enrollment and Persistence Facts

- In 2010, the college enrollment rate was 53.7 percent. The new record rate of 64.6 percent represents a 20 percent improvement.
 - From 2016 to 2017, African American and Hispanic students improved their college enrollment rates by 2.3 percentage points and 7.2 percentage points, respectively.
 - African American students had a college enrollment rate of 55.4 percent in 2016 and a college enrollment rate of 57.7 percent in the 2016-17 school year.
 - Hispanic students had a college enrollment rate of 59.0 percent in 2016 and college enrollment rate of 66.2 percent in the 2016-2017 school year.
- The percentage of students taking advantage of opportunities at City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) has also increased, with 5.8 percent more students enrolling in CCC compared to students who enroll in other 2-year colleges. In 2016, 78.7 percent of CPS graduates who attended 2-year colleges enrolled in CCC, compared to 84.5 in 2017.
- 72.3 percent of CPS graduates who enrolled in college in 2015 remained enrolled, or “persisted,” in 2016.
 - The district sees its responsibility to not just prepare students to graduate high school and enroll in college, but also to succeed to college, which is why it is one of the few districts in the country to include persistence in its school accountability ratings.

Efforts to Bolster College Enrollment and Persistence:

Partnerships and Programs: The district has partnered and invested in programming that gives students the support they need to not only enroll in college, but also to stay in college. Notable partnerships include [OneGoal](#), which supports 4,200 students at 74 high schools during junior and senior year and through freshman year of college, and [GearUp](#) which reaches more than 14,000 students in 36 high schools with workshops, guidance, and support.

Tackling Summer Melt: In recent years, the district has focused on reducing the number of college-accepted students who end up not enrolling, known as summer melt. Summer melt is a national issue, and the U.S. Department of Education says that approximately one-third of college-bound students in the United State do not

end up enrolling. The district, with support from Thrive Chicago, has implemented several summer melt reduction strategies, including summer transition workshops, a student transition checklist, and student text nudges – a texting notification system that shares action items with students to help them successfully enroll in college. From 2016 to 2017, summer melt at district-run schools dropped by 5.6 percentage points – from 29.7 percent in 2016 to 24.1 percent in 2017.

The Star Scholarship: The Star Scholarship provides hard-working CPS graduates with free tuition and books at City Colleges of Chicago for up to three years or until they earn an associate degree. So far more than 6,000 CPS graduates have taken advantage of Star. Through City Colleges' partnerships with four-year universities, Star Scholars have an opportunity to transfer to four-year universities with additional scholarships. This means that students can attend college for free for two years and finish out their other two years at a reduced rate.

Learn.Plan.Succeed.: While Learn.Plan.Succeed. does not go into effect until 2020, the district has laid significant groundwork to support students. Learn.Plan.Succeed. is the district's groundbreaking graduation initiative to ensure every CPS student has a meaningful planning conversation with an adult, and graduates with a plan to map out their future. Supports include CCC's postsecondary navigators, additional college and career network specialists, and professional development for counselors to ensure every high school has a counselor with the Chicago College Advising Credential (CCAC).

University Partnerships: The district has also worked closely with its research and university partners, such as the Uchicago Consortium and Urban Education Institute, which have developed invaluable research into the district's college enrollment trends as well as critical online tools and student resources through the To&Through project.

Advancements in Data Gathering

While the data included in this announcement is an apples-to-apples comparison to previous years, the district recently developed a process to reflect students who enroll in college in the spring semester after high school by incorporating data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NCS). Research from the [Uchicago Consortium on School Research](#) shows that many CPS students delay immediate enrollment in college, which is why capturing this additional data from NCS is important for improving the accuracy of the district's data.

Additionally, the district also created an appeals process for schools to submit alternative documentation to verify college enrollment beyond NSC data. Some colleges and universities do not report student enrollment to NSC, including many Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and military service academies. This modification

provides schools an opportunity to offer alternative documentation to verify college enrollment to more accurately reflect their college enrollment trends. The improved methodology is being used in the school-by-school rates that will be posted at cps.edu and for SQRP rankings beginning this year. Using the new methodology, the college enrollment rate is 68.2 percent, with greater gains among every racial group.

Historical Data:

- 53.7% of the Class of 2010 enrolled in college.
- 57.8% of the Class of 2011 enrolled in college.
- 56.0% of the Class of 2012 enrolled in college.
- 58.1% of the Class of 2013 enrolled in college.
- 58.7% of the Class of 2014 enrolled in college.
- 57.9% of the Class of 2015 enrolled in college.
- 59.8% of the Class of 2016 enrolled in college.
- 64.6% of the Class of 2017 enrolled in college.

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