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**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL, CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND SUCCESS BOUND ANNOUNCE
SUMMER READING INITIATIVE**

New summer reading initiative will keep students academically engaged during the summer months

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined Chicago Public Schools and Success Bound, an initiative of the Lefkofsky Family Foundation to announce a new Summer Reading Initiative to keep 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students academically engaged over the summer months. The program will launch at 50 schools this year and is expected to grow in subsequent years.

"Chicago students do not take breaks during the summer months; they crack into books that help them start the new school year on the right foot," said Mayor Emanuel. "Summer reading programs are proven to help kids long after summer is over, and that is why we will implement and expand the Summer Reading Initiative."

For the Summer Reading Initiative, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teachers will assign contemporary, culturally relevant summer reading to incoming students, which creates early relationships between students and teachers while helping foster independent reading. Approximately 8,500 books will be provided to students free of charge before the school year ends, and the reading assignments will dovetail with the Summer of Learning theme.

The Summer Reading Initiative builds on the success of Chicago Public Library's Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge, which last summer engaged more than 110,000 students who read more than 108 million minutes and completed more than 1.3 million learning activities.

The Summer Reading Initiative will be funded by Success Bound and private donors. The Lefkofsky Family Foundation joined CPS and the University of Chicago to create Success Bound to help students take ownership of their learning and successfully transition to high school and beyond.

"Every child deserves a great education and the support and tools necessary to ensure they can be successful in school and beyond," said Liz Lefkofsky, Founder and Executive Director of the Lefkofsky Family Foundation. "We are pleased to partner with the city and CPS to help strengthen and prepare our city's students for the next academic year."

The Summer Reading Initiative is designed to support the Balanced Literacy Initiative, which works to enrich classroom literary experiences and develop reading skills among CPS students in grades Pre-k through grade 2. The Summer Reading Initiative will support those efforts by helping build

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early relationships between students and teachers as they transition to the next grade while encouraging independent reading over the summer.

“Studies show that increasing access to books can support reading achievement for low-income students, and this initiative will make a positive impact by expanding access to thousands of our students,” said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. “By providing books and supporting students’ transition to the next grade, this initiative will help students arrive from summer prepared, engaged, and ready to succeed.”

Schools selected to participate in the initiative serve majority low-income students, participate in the CPS Balanced Literacy Initiative, and have demonstrated a need for additional literacy support. The 50 schools will also partner with Chicago Public Library neighborhood branches to facilitate student and family engagement with the CPL Summer Learning Challenge and the Summer Reading Initiative.

In 2012, Mayor Emanuel launched Rahm’s Readers Summer Learning Challenge to encourage students to read 20 minutes a day and participate in learning activities. All CPL branches participate in the summer challenge, now an award-winning program that serves as a national model for summer learning. In 2015, CPL became the first - and to this day the only - public library system in the nation to receive the National Summer Learning Association’s Founders Award for Excellence in summer learning.

“The most effective summer reading programs blend access to books with supportive adults who can spark and guide children’s interest in the pleasure of non-school reading,” said Matthew Boulay PhD, Founder and CEO of the National Summer Learning Association. Through this new initiative and its many creative community partners, Chicago continues to lead the way in reimaging learning during one of the most inequitable times of year for many young people – summertime.”

Summer reading programs are designed to prevent the “summer slide” where children can lose up to three months of math and science learning during summer months if they do not remain engaged in learning. A Chapin Hall analysis of Rahm’s Readers Summer Learning Challenge found that, on average, children participating in the program demonstrated 15 percent greater reading gains and 20 percent greater math gains over and above their peers who did not participate in the program.

CPL’s Director of System Wide Children’s Services Elizabeth McChesney co-authored “Summer Matters: Making All Learning Count” (ALA Publications), a guide based on the Library’s approach to summer learning with partner institution MSI. A second book will be released in 2019.