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MAYOR EMANUEL, CTA TO OFFER STUDENTS FREE CTA RIDES ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Popular "First Day, Free Rides" Program Encourages Student attendance

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) President Dorval R. Carter, Jr., today announced CTA will again this year provide all students and accompanying adults with free bus and train rides on the first day of Chicago Public Schools' school year, which is Tuesday, September 5, 2017.

First launched in 2011, Mayor Emanuel's "First Day, Free Rides" program is designed to encourage school attendance. Last year it provided approximately 128,000 free rides to students and parents or guardians.

"Convenient and reliable transportation is an important factor in a student's success in the classroom," Mayor Emanuel said. "Thousands of Chicago Public Schools students rely on public transportation to travel to and from their classes, and by providing free rides on the first day we can get them started on the right note."

Each year, CTA transports thousands of students every day to school and to extracurricular activities. Whether catching a bus to class, football practice or a debate tournament, students can be confident that CTA will take them where they need to go.

"Knowing how important school attendance is to a child's education, we hope this gesture will help Chicago area students succeed," said CTA President Carter. "We at CTA are proud to offer free public transit to students and their accompanying adult on the first day of school and look forward to supporting their academic success all year long."

"Going back to school is one of the most exciting times of the year, and it's critical to make sure students return to school to start the year right," said CPS CEO Forrest Claypool. "We're proud of our partnership with the CTA for their free ride program, and their ongoing low-cost fare program helps countless students and families who rely on public transit to get to and from school affordably."

CTA this year will continue to offer its low 75-cent fares for elementary and high school students Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. when school is in session.

The CTA's 75-cent student fares are the result of efforts made by Mayor Emanuel and the CTA in 2013 to ensure transit is even more affordable during the school year. Beyond school hours, elementary students ages 7-11 pay reduced fares of \$1 on the bus and \$1.10 on rail. Passengers who are 12 and older pay the full fare of \$2 on bus and \$2.25 on rail. For more information about student fares, please visit:

<http://www.transitchicago.com/students/> .

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