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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES CHICAGO EARLY LEARNING WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIP

\$2 million investment supports Chicagoans pursuing state-certified credentials in early education

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, and the Department of Family and Support Services to announce the Chicago Early Learning Workforce Scholarship. The \$2 million investment will expand the early childcare workforce by increasing access to coursework and credentials for educators who enroll in early childhood higher education programs.

"Every child deserves a high quality education that gives them the opportunity to succeed, and that starts with a strong workforce," said Mayor Emanuel. "The Early Learning Workforce Scholarship is one of many critical investments we are making to ensure that children are ready for success starting on day one."

The Chicago Early Learning Workforce Scholarship will increase access to higher education certification programs for educators across the city to build a more diverse, trained workforce that meets the needs of the youngest learners across the city. Scholarship recipients are eligible to pursue credentials at City Colleges, University of Illinois at Chicago, the Erikson Institute and other local 4-year universities, depending on the program. Programs at these institutions will prepare educators and ensure they meet the rigorous federal, state and local credential requirements to work in Chicago's early learning programs.

"Our City-funded early learning programs serve some of our City's most vulnerable families. Making sure that we have a cadre of well-trained professionals who are representative of the communities they serve is a critical strategy, not only for early childhood education but also for community development," Commissioner of the Department of Family and Support Services Lisa Morrison Butler. "In order to ensure that children in every community are getting the types of early experiences proven to have a lifelong impact, we must make sure that we are providing adequate access to training and supports for those educators working with them."

The scholarship is eligible to both current Chicago Early Learning program staff pursuing additional education credentials and Chicago residents interested in launching a career in early childhood education. Applicants with children in Chicago's early childhood programs and individuals with financial need will be prioritized. DACA recipients are eligible. Application for the fall 2018 semester can be found at chicagoearlylearning.org/scholarship.

"Supporting the pathway for motivated individuals to enter or continue in the field of early childhood education by pursuing state credentials will help build the quality of early childhood programming across the City of Chicago," said President and Chief Executive Officer of Erikson Institute Geoffrey A. Nagle. "This is a necessary step to achieving the Mayor's vision for high quality early childhood programming throughout the City."

Increasing the early childhood workforce is vital to ensuring that Chicago has a pipeline of educators to continue to expand access to these high quality programs in communities across the city. City Colleges has early childhood educations at the Truman, Daley, Harold Washington, Kennedy-King, Malcolm-X and Olive-Harvey campuses. Truman College is City Colleges of Chicago's Center of Excellence for Education, Human and Natural Sciences, and convenes key partners in the early childhood space, K-12 partners, four-year schools, and community organizations and to ensuring its curriculum prepares students to succeed in high demand areas of education and to support the city's effort to ensure every Chicago child is taught by a well-trained educator.

"Early childhood educators are key to ensuring that Chicagoans are on a path to realize their full potential from the youngest age," said City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Juan Salgado. "This scholarship will bolster City Colleges effort to see that families across the city have access to quality early childhood education, and that would-be early childhood educators receive a relevant, affordable education from which to build their career."

Since 2011, Mayor Rahm Emanuel expanded access to high quality, full-day preschool and programming for children across the city. Last schoolyear more than 18,000 children across the city had access to a full-day of preschool—an increase of 80 percent since 2011.

A recent study tracking the progress of children in Child-Parent Centers (CPC) over the course of more than 30 years confirmed the value of high-quality early learning. Findings show that program participants who received high quality early learning programs were more likely to earn post-secondary degrees than their counterparts who were not enrolled, leading to higher earnings and better health outcomes at age 35. The study is the first to examine these effects on educational attainment through midlife, showing that program participants attained higher incomes, and experienced lower rate of serious crime, incarcerations and depression. CPC has also shown a return on investment; cost-benefit analyses have shown economic returns of 7 to 10 dollars per dollar invested. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the CPC implementation by CPS.

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