February 19, 2014

Greetings,

Welcome to *Chicago: Ready To Learn!* - a pipeline to high-quality early childhood education programs for our city’s youngest learners.

Research has shown that a nurturing and individualized early childhood environment - one that allows children to build academic, social and emotional skills - can be the foundation for later success in school and in life. These programs also strengthen parental involvement, and connect students with vital wrap-around services such as medical and dental care.

Launched in 2013, *Chicago: Ready to Learn!* is a collaboration between Chicago Public Schools, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Department of Family Supports and Services. A significant investment in early childhood education, this initiative has expanded preschool programs across the city, helping to ensure that students have a quality start to their learning, even before they walk through our doors on their first day of Kindergarten.

As a lifelong educator, I believe strongly in the power of a high-quality early learning experience. I encourage parents to explore the more than 700 school and community-based early childhood programs that are available through *Chicago: Ready To Learn!*, as the wide variety of schedules, locations and program types should make it easy to find a preschool program that is a good fit for their family.

Please feel free to call the *Chicago: Ready To Learn!* Hotline at 312-229-1690 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Byrd-Bennett
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools