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**MAYOR EMANUEL MEETS WITH CHANCELLOR OF UIC, INTERIM PRESIDENT OF CSU
AS STATE OF ILLINOIS CONTINUES TO FAIL TO FUND HIGHER EDUCATION**

Meeting comes after public universities across Illinois are downgraded by credit rating agencies

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel today met with Michael Amiridis, Chancellor of University of Illinois at Chicago, and Rachel Lindsey, Interim President of Chicago State University, to discuss the impact that the lack of a state budget is having on higher education in Chicago.

"The governor's unwillingness to pass a state budget isn't just harming K-12 students, it's putting the futures of higher education institutions all across the state in jeopardy," said Mayor Emanuel. "The state's self-created fiscal crisis has not only caused significant credit downgrades for our schools, it has pushed talented students and educators out of the state. We cannot allow this crisis to become the new normal. It is time for Governor Rauner to stop playing politics with our students' futures and start doing his job by introducing a balanced budget that fully funds higher education."

The State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, which tracks the level of funding provided by state and local governments to higher education, [recently released a report on fiscal year 2016 funding](#) that, for the first time in four years, cited a decline in overall state and local support for higher education nationwide, which was caused by an 80 percent reduction in support in Illinois. That's despite a marked increase in funding in 33 other states. The report further noted that Illinois' 80 percent reduction in higher education funding over the past year has resulted in a reduction of more than 46,000 full time students – 11 percent of the full time students in the state.

Last week, Standard & Poor's downgraded or warned seven Illinois universities, including City Colleges of Chicago, the University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, Eastern, Northeastern and Governor's State due to the fact that the state has not allocated any funding to public universities since last year. Last month, Fitch lowered its rating on City Colleges of Chicago's bonds at the same time it recognized that City Colleges' "budget management has been strong historically."

A photo of the meeting, held today in Mayor Emanuel's office, is attached.



Photo Credit: Brooke Collins/City of Chicago

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