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MAYOR EMANUEL AND CPS EXPAND NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT CAPSTONE SCHOOLS AS CPS STUDENTS LEAD NATION IN CAPSTONE DIPLOMAS AND REACH KEY SUCCESS MILESTONES

CPS to Expand AP Capstone Diploma Program to Six Additional Schools in the 2019-2020 School Year as CPS Students Earn More Capstone Diplomas than any District in the Nation; CPS Students Also Reached Key Milestone With More than 50 Percent of Students Passing at Least One Exam During the 2017-2018 School Year

CHICAGO – Mayor Emanuel and Chicago Public Schools today announced an expansion of the Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone program — an intensive diploma program that challenges students to excel in a variety of college-level courses — to six additional high schools throughout the city. CPS has worked to expand access to the rigorous diploma program in recent years, and last year CPS students earned more AP Capstone Diplomas than any school district in the nation. Additionally, newly released data for the 2017-2018 school year shows that the percent of CPS students earning a 3 or higher on an AP exam has reached and exceeded 50 percent for the first time — an increase of nearly 17 percentage points since 2011 when 34 percent of CPS students earned a 3 or higher on the AP exam. Students who pass AP exams with a score of 3 or higher are eligible for college credit while still in high school, making college more affordable while preparing students to succeed in rigorous postsecondary courses.

"Chicago's students are leading the nation in Advanced Placement Capstone Diplomas, and they are making our city proud," said Mayor Emanuel. "By expanding this promising program, we are ensuring more students graduate high school with the knowledge and skills that will give them a head start in college and beyond."

"CPS students continue to raise the bar for academic success and lead the nation in AP achievements as more students are taking exams, earning credit, and jumpstarting their future while still in high school," said CPS CEO Dr. Janice K. Jackson. "Every student in Chicago has the ability to succeed far beyond our doors and we will continue to invest in AP and college-level programming so that more and more students are able to make the college dream a reality."

CPS Students Lead the Nation in AP Capstone Diplomas

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AP Capstone is an intensive diploma program that requires students to earn a score of 3 or higher in both AP Seminar and AP Research courses, and four additional AP exams. AP Seminar and AP Research assessments go beyond exams to include academic papers, multimedia presentations, and defense of findings in order to prepare students for college and career success through the development of critical thinking, academic research, collaboration, presentation, and time management skills.

During the 2017-2018 school year, 213 CPS students earned the AP Capstone Diploma – more students than any other district in the nation. More than 1,100 schools participated in the AP Capstone program worldwide with approximately 4,800 students earning the AP Capstone Diploma.

Fifteen CPS schools are currently authorized to offer the AP Capstone program, and beginning in 2019, 21 high schools will qualify to offer students the opportunity to earn the AP Capstone Diploma. The following six schools will add AP Capstone beginning next year:

- Back of the Yards College Preparatory High School
- CICS – ChicagoQuest High School
- Hubbard High School
- Kelly High School
- Lake View High School
- Mather High School

“This is great news for the students and families of Chicago. Thousands more Chicago students from all backgrounds will have the chance to tackle college-level work and earn valuable college credit before graduating high school,” said College Board CEO David Coleman. “We’re especially thrilled at the growth of AP Capstone, which teaches the kind of real-world skills — critical thinking, collaboration, time management and communication — that students need in college and in the workplace. The College Board is proud to work with the Mayor and the Chicago Public Schools to open greater opportunity for all students.”

Reaching Key AP Milestones

In addition to leading the nation in AP Capstone diplomas, the district has reached record high levels of success for increasing AP access and attainment during the 2017-2018 school year. For the first time ever, more than 50 percent (50.5 percent) of CPS students who took an AP exam scored a 3 or higher, and more than 24,000 students took at least one AP exam. Each year since 2011, the number and percentage of unique students taking and passing AP exams has risen, even as the district’s enrollment has declined.

“Our students are reaching key milestones for AP participation and attainment – demonstrating that they are more prepared for college than ever before,” said CPS Chief Education Officer LaTanya D. McDade. “By raising expectations, expanding college readiness initiatives, and providing more opportunities for students to earn the college

credits that help make higher education accessible, we are working to ensure all of our students can reach their vast potential”

CPS Advanced Placement Achievements:

Since Mayor Emanuel took office in 2011, AP participation and attainment has significantly increased, resulting in more students earning early college and career credentials.

- The number of students taking AP exams increased by nearly 53 percent, or 8,350 students;
- The number of students receiving a “3” or higher on at least one AP exam more than doubled and reached 50 percent for the first time in the 2017-2018 school year;
- The number of exams taken has increased by 57 percent, or 14,491 exams;
- CPS was the largest district to earn a spot on the AP Honor Roll in 2018;
- CPS is the only large urban school district to earn a spot on the AP Honor Roll for six consecutive years; and
- CPS was named the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) District of the Year in 2018 and is the only district of any size to receive the award more than once.

Chicago Public Schools serves 361,000 students in 644 schools. It is the nation’s third-largest school district.

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