FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 12, 2022

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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT PARTNERS WITH EARLY CHILDCARE PROVIDERS AND NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY ON CHICAGO EARLY CHILDHOOD INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEM

This Partnership Will Create Real-Time, Cloud-based Data Integrating State and Local Early Childhood Across Chicago

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced the launch of the Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS) in a partnership with Northern Illinois University (NIU), Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS), Carole Robertson Center for Learning, Chicago Commons, Henry Booth House, EasterSeals Serving Chicagoland and Greater Rockford, Start Early, and Third Sector Intelligence (3Si). This cloud-based data environment would allow multiple agencies to share data under a collaborative governance structure as 'Data Governors' and create citywide visibility into the early childhood education landscape.

"Research has proven time and time again that early learning is one of the best ways to set our children up for long-term success both within and outside of the classroom," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Through the Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System, we will be able to better understand and create initiatives that have the most positive impact on children. I want to thank NIU, 3Si and the pioneering early childhood providers for partnering with our city on this incredibly important initiative, which will bring more transparency and efficacy to our early learning efforts."

Starting this summer, CECIDS will bring together data from across systems and programs in near real-time, allowing for citywide and neighborhood level analyses as well as program-specific dashboards to serve a variety of audiences, including families, program administrators, funders, advocates, and policymakers.

"CECIDS will allow us to have a 360 view of Chicago children and their families to pair resources to needs, and build a citywide strategy where we all use data to continuously improve the quality of services and ultimately generate better outcomes for children. I am excited that we've arrived at this moment," said Bela

Moté, CEO of the Carole Robertson Center for Learning and CECIDS' inaugural Co-Chair.

The first of its kind in Chicago, CECIDS is a leading exemplar in integrated data systems in Illinois and nationwide. CECIDS will be a resource for the Every Child Ready Chicago initiative (ECRC), a public and private partnership of cross-sector early learning experts building an equitable, high-quality prenatal to five ecosystems. To maximize impact and collaboration, ECRC will expand its membership to serve as the Birth to Five Action Council for the City of Chicago. CECIDS will also be a key resource for this body, as it seeks to better prepare communities for the expansion of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services by improving data while amplifying authentic family voice in planning and policy design.

CECIDS builds on foundational investments by the Robert R. McCormick Foundation and Crown Family Philanthropies in recent years to modernize the city's early childhood data infrastructure at DFSS and CPS. The DFSS data warehouse construction began in 2019, with a collaboration between the Office of Mayor Lightfoot and the McCormick Foundation. The CPS Department of Early Childhood Education has a roadmap to streamline and integrate its own early childhood data, to contribute to the goal of providing comprehensive, citywide views.

"The private and public collaboration that has created this new data system will help strengthen our services and outcomes for our youngest learners for generations," said CPS CEO Pedro Martinez. "This system will help us better gauge school readiness and determine how we can best invest our resources to support our future CPS graduates and leaders."

"For years, the Department of Family and Support Services has been a key player in strengthening our children's academic foundation, As the largest Early Head Start / Head Start provider across the city, CECIDS will give us a much better understanding of how to effectively support programs and providers with a clear, unified and real-time view of children's needs across the City" said Cerathel Burgess-Burnett Deputy Commissioner of the Children Services Division at DFSS.

"Fragmentation and complexity have long impeded progress in early childhood, so this initiative to provide transparency into how we're doing by all 175,000 of our youngest children has exciting potential to pinpoint inequities, galvanize collective problem-solving and catalyze improvement," said Timothy Knight, President and CEO of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation. "Important things happen when researchers, communities, families, policymakers, advocates and elected officials are empowered with good data to take smart action."

Alongside the new Data Governors, the Mayor's Office will ensure a community-driven process for establishing guiding principles for data access and use. CECIDS will be a place for Chicago's early childhood stakeholders, which will rely on the data as their "go-to" reliable, single source of accurate and real-time data on the needs of children and families across Chicago.

Northern Illinois University's P-20 Research and Data Collaborative
The NIU P-20 Research and Data Collaborative brings together the resources and expertise of teams across the university to deliver nationally-leading solutions in public sector data management, analytics, research, and reporting. The CECIDS project is led by NIU's Education Systems Center, which has supported the governance and launch of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and regional education data collaboratives, the Illinois Interactive Report Cards team, which serves as the home of the award-winning Illinois Report Card website, and the Early Childhood Transformation Team, which was recently established by Governor Pritzker in partnership with NIU to implement recommendations from the Commission on Equitable Early Care and Education Financing.

Third Sector Intelligence (3SI)
Third Sector Intelligence (3Si) is a technology and consulting firm that provides expertise and support to the early childhood sector in data and analytics, cloud technology, and software development. 3Si works exclusively with the not-for-profit sector; past and present clients include over 30 states, local governments, research universities, philanthropies, and not-for-profit institutions. 3Si also maintains the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) Network, which is a coalition of governments who engage 3Si to actively maintain ECIDS using analytic and technological best practices.

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