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**PRE-K FOR ALL: MAYOR DE BLASIO AND CHANCELLOR FARIÑA KICK OFF FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL WITH FULL-DAY PRE-K FOR EVERY FOUR-YEAR-OLD**

*65,504 children registered for opening day of pre-K – more students than in the entire school district of Boston*

*Mayor and Chancellor visit schools in all five boroughs undertaking major reforms*

*130 new Community Schools serving at-risk students launch today, an hour of extra class time each day at 94 Renewal Schools*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña today joined students, families, and educators to celebrate the culmination of the Pre-K for All expansion, starting off the day at PS 59 in Staten Island. This year, the City is providing a free, full-day, high-quality pre-K seat for every child that applied. In total, 65,504 children are now registered to attend free, full-day, high-quality pre-K – a number more than triple the 20,000 children who attended before the Pre-K for All expansion and larger than the entire school population of major cities like Boston.

A large and growing body of research has decisively demonstrated that children enrolled in high-quality, full-day pre-K are better prepared to learn and be successful in later grades. New York City parents with children enrolled save an average of \$10,000 in childcare costs and are better able to work and support a family.

“Today represents the fulfillment of a promise we made to the people of this city: that every child, regardless of their family’s means or the zip code they call home, will have access to a life-changing early education. Because of Pre-K for All, tens of thousands of children will do better in school, be more likely to graduate high school, and be better prepared for college and beyond,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “And we are taking that same commitment to raising achievement at more than 100 Community Schools, to greater parental engagement, and to provide more professional development for our educators. Let’s take this energy and momentum and make this a phenomenal school year for all 1.1 million students in our city.”

“It’s my 50th first-day-of-school, and I’m more excited than ever to see our students and families back in our school buildings and our teachers back in the front of the classroom, working tirelessly to make a difference,” said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña**. “School doesn’t start and stop with the school year – educators across this City have been working hard this summer to plan and improve their instruction, and students have participated in jobs, camps, and summer school as part of their ongoing education – but it’s still so special to be back. I wish everyone a wonderful year of learning – let’s get to work!”

“This is a milestone years in the making. For more than 65,000 kids, a door is opening to new opportunities, excitement, and learning that will help them throughout their lives. We have worked tirelessly to make sure the teachers, classrooms, and programs waiting for our children meet the highest standards for quality. We are so

proud of the system we've built and the difference it will make in the lives of an entire generation of children," said **Deputy Mayor Richard Buery**.

As the Mayor and Chancellor toured schools in all five boroughs, they focused on major reforms to raise achievement, of which Pre-K for All is just one component. Today also marks Opening Day for:

- 130 new Community Schools, which provide wraparound services like counseling, free eyeglasses, and additional tutoring to eliminate barriers to learning for at-risk students. This includes 94 Renewal Schools, which also all have extra academic support for struggling students, including an extra hour of time in class each day.
- 80 minutes each week of professional development to improve teacher quality.
- 40 minutes each week for teachers to meet and call parents, and keep them involved in their child's education. In advance of the first day of school, organizers knocked on the doors of more than 35,000 parents whose children attend struggling schools, encouraging them to get involved.
- Approximately 40 new Dual Language programs to educate students to become bilingual and bicultural.
- 126 PROSE Schools, which employ innovations like small-group learning or flexibility in scheduling. The program has nearly doubled in size and is now serving roughly 48,500 students at all grade levels.

#### **Pre-K for All, Year 2, by the numbers:**

- 65,504 four-year-olds registered for programs
- 1,850 district schools, charter schools, Pre-K Centers, and NYC Early Education Centers providing pre-K
- 180 days of education lasting 6 hours and 20 minutes
- Approximately 1,000 new pre-K lead teachers
- 84 percent of families receiving a pre-K offer to one of their top 3 choices through the new streamlined application process, and 100 percent of families offered a high-quality program
- 750 classrooms implementing new national model NYC Pre-K Explore program, using Building Blocks math curriculum and DOE interdisciplinary units of study
- Over 100 programs with Enhanced Language Instruction to support students whose home language is not English and 11 Dual Language pre-K programs

"The Administration for Children's Services is thrilled to be participating in Mayor de Blasio's signature pre-K program," said **Administration for Children's Services Commissioner Gladys Carrion**. "We are proud that more than 11,000 four-year-olds are enrolled in ACS's Early Learn Program at 325 of our centers."

"Giving young students an early start in their academic careers has been proven to provide long-term benefits," said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. "By implementing universal pre-kindergarten, this city is giving the next generation in New Yorkers a valuable advantage that will help them succeed throughout their entire lives. This program is a sound investment in New York City's future that is uplifting children and families across the five boroughs."

"This year, New York City schools continue to make progress by opening their doors to all pre-K students across the city. Along with their K-12 peers, these young scholars will be taught and supported by thousands of educators, dedicated to preparing all students through the DOE's comprehensive education plan and increasing parental engagement. I look forward to seeing these students grow and commend the Chancellor and educators citywide for their continued commitment to excellence," said **Public Advocate Letitia James**.

"Happy first day of school, Brooklyn! I am excited to visit classrooms across our borough in the months ahead to see our students' creative and innovative energies at work. From the expansion of pre-kindergarten and our community schools to the enhancement of parental outreach and professional development for teachers, I am pleased to see the City's focus on the holistic community approach we must take to advancing public education. We must be bold in exploring new pathways that will allow our students to soar in all aspects of their personal

growth, and I look forward to working with Chancellor Fariña on making that possible,” said **Borough President Eric Adams**.

“The first day of school is a wonderful day for our city’s students and families,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “As the new school year begins, we must continue the critical work of improving our schools and giving each of our city’s children the resources and opportunities they need to succeed.”

“In just two years, the number of citywide enrolled students in Pre-K across schools and community-based organizations has more than tripled. With more than 65,000 children currently enrolled in full-day pre-K, we have a huge opportunity to support and invest in education in the early stages of our children’s development,” said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.** “I look forward to working alongside Mayor Bill de Blasio and Chancellor Carmen Fariña to promote and drive enrollment to this vital program.”

“Every child deserves a pre-K seat, and this year’s expansion has ensured high-quality, universal access for every four-year-old in New York City,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “Early childhood education is invaluable in shaping our children's future, and as both an elected official and, more importantly, as a parent of a four-year-old starting pre-K today, I laud the administration for hauling this promise into reality.”

“The fact is that the solution to so many of the challenges we face as a City can be found in a successful school. We are looking forward to a successful school year and we are particularly excited about the opening of our most technologically advanced school, PS 62, the first net-zero energy school in the Northeast. We have built strong relationships with our school communities, and recognize the importance of the Mayor and Chancellor’s initiatives in the expansion of pre-K, establishment of Community Schools, increased time for professional development, and providing more family access in our school buildings,” said **Staten Island Borough President Jimmy Oddo**.

“Our students and teachers are going to have a great year. We have done the ground work – creating universal pre-K, and creating time in the school day for professional development and parent outreach. We are giving resources to our struggling schools and finding ways to celebrate excellence. We have put these pieces in place. We are doing the hard work. We are moving our schools forward. We are all going to have a great year,” said **Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers**.

“Our members look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio, Chancellor Fariña, and our dedicated teachers to ensure New York City’s 1.1 million public school students enjoy a productive academic year,” said **Council of School Supervisors and Administrators President Ernest Logan**.

“On behalf of our members, I’m honored to join Chancellor Fariña in welcoming back our kids to a new school year. Our members are passionate and dedicated to helping children cross the street safely, eat breakfast and lunch, and get to class on time; and providing them the support they need to get through the school day. We look forward to collaborating with the Chancellor in supporting our kids and engaging parents. I look forward to creating a stronger partnership between our members and the administration so that we can make this school year outstanding,” said **Shaun D. Francois, President of Local 372, District Council 37**.

“I am happy that Mayor De Blasio is recognizing the great pre-K program at the YMCA in my Long Island City district,” said **State Assembly Education Chairwoman Catherine Nolan**. “Expansion of pre-K is very important and needed in western Queens.”

“We are off to the start of another great school year,” said **City Council Education Committee Chairperson Daniel Dromm**. “We have much to look forward to including 65,000 new Pre-K for All students coming into the system who will benefit from an early childhood education. I look forward to working closely with the administration on its Renewal Schools/Community Schools program. Together we can have a tremendous, positive impact on the lives of all New York City public-school students.”

“The first day of school is always an exciting day here in New York City, and this year is even more invigorating. The success of the universal pre-K expansion throughout my district and our City will undoubtedly create a strong educational foundation for thousands of students this school year. I am proud to have supported the UPK program expansion and look forward to continued efforts to improve our schools and the learning of all of New York City’s 1.1 million students,” said **State Senator Marty Golden**.

“It is with great delight that I join Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña to welcome back to class public school children across our great city. This year is particularly special given that thanks to the Pre-K for All expansion, the City has provided a free, full-day seat for all pre-K students who have applied. This means that three times as many of the youngest New Yorkers can be on their way to becoming scholastic stars. This will be a most positive development in our efforts to improve our public education system,” said **Assembly Member Nick Perry**.

“The expansion of pre-K continues to provide transformational opportunities to Bronxites, including students and families of color, and gives them the tools for success. It allows our South Bronx children to ascend from the cradle to the career. When we invest early in our children, it allows us to grow hope for economic opportunities, education, and equality and transform the South Bronx into the urban metropolis in our world,” said **Assembly Member Michael Blake**.

“With thousands of children enrolled in universal pre-Kindergarten, this year’s first day of school is an especially exciting one for families on Staten Island. Our continued investments in education are investments in our city’s future. I hope that for all students, today marks the beginning of a year that will continue to open their eyes, broaden their horizons, and prepare them to make the world a better place,” said **Council Member Deborah Rose**.

“The start of a new school year is always an exciting time for millions of students, parents, and educators across the City of New York. Under the leadership of Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña, the New York City Department of Education has launched several initiatives that have expanded access to Pre-K and ensures that all students will receive a high-quality education. It is our shared responsibility as parents, educators, and community stakeholders to provide the resources and opportunities that will empower students for success within and beyond the classroom. As the next generation of leaders, it is critical that we continue to invest in their growth and development as competitive, global citizens,” said **Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo**.

To kick off the school year, the Mayor and Chancellor will continue visiting schools on five-borough tours. The Mayor will visit pre-K classrooms at Get Set Kindergarten in Brooklyn and the Long Island City YMCA in Queens before joining principals to tour the John F. Kennedy Educational Campus in the Bronx, where all students are starting their first day without any disruption to instruction. The Mayor will wrap up the day with dismissal at PS 9 in Manhattan.

Following her visit to PS 59 on Staten Island, the Chancellor will make her way to PS 29 in Brooklyn, where she will visit the first-grade classroom where she started her career in 1965. She then visits a Spanish Dual Language kindergarten class at PS 212 in Queens, one of the City’s new and expanded Dual Language programs that promote bilingualism and biculturalism. The Chancellor then will tour the medical and mental health clinic and peer-to-peer mentoring program at Morris Academy for Collaborative Studies High School, a Bronx school that has just become a Community School. The Chancellor will close her day at a Renewal School, Renaissance School of the Arts in Manhattan.

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