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CONTACT:

Catherine Turco
Kivvit, on Behalf of To&Through
(614) 204-8092
cturco@kivvit.com

RECORD NUMBER OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS GRADUATES ENROLL IN COLLEGE

Yet College Degree Attainment Gaps by Race, Gender, and Disability Status Persist

CHICAGO – Today at the University of Chicago’s [To&Through Project](#) Convening, the [UChicago Consortium on School Research](#) will release two new reports—one on college enrollment and one on degree attainment—showing a record number of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) graduates enrolled in college in 2015, the most recent year for which data is available.

The number of CPS graduates who enrolled in either a 2- or 4-year college *immediately* after high school rose dramatically, from 50 percent in 2006 to 63 percent in 2015, and three in four CPS graduates enrolled in college within six years of graduating from high school. Yet, the new reports also show college graduation rates have remained fairly flat over the last seven years, and college degree attainment gaps by race, gender, and disability status persist.

The percent of CPS ninth-graders projected to earn a bachelor’s degree within six years of high school graduation remained steady at 18 percent in 2016, flat compared to 2015.

“Increasing college enrollment, taken together with recent increases in CPS students’ Freshman OnTrack rates, ACT scores, and high school GPAs, suggests the number of CPS graduates attaining a bachelor’s degree will rise over time. This latest research also suggests that many CPS graduates will take indirect or less traditional paths through college,” said UChicago Consortium Deputy Director, Jenny Nagaoka.

The UChicago Consortium’s new report on college enrollment reveals 2- and 4-year college transfer patterns. Notably, more CPS graduates transferred from 4-year to 2-year colleges than from 2-year to 4-year colleges. In 2015, one in four CPS graduates who first enrolled in a 4-year college transferred to a 2-year college within four years of high school graduation. By comparison, only 16 percent of CPS graduates who first enrolled in a 2-year college transferred to a 4-year college.

Degree Attainment by Race, Gender, and Disability Status

Race/ethnicity and gender gaps in 2-year college enrollment are fairly small. However, gaps in 4-year college enrollment have increased. Black and Latino college enrollees consistently have lower rates of bachelor’s degree attainment than White and Asian students, and bachelor’s degree attainment among male CPS graduates has consistently lagged behind that of female CPS graduates.

For the first time, the UChicago Consortium also studied the educational attainment of students with disabilities, which varies by disability category. In 2015, 68 percent of students with

learning disabilities graduated from high school in six years, a significant increase from 50 percent in 2006. Rates of six-year high school graduation for students with physical and cognitive disabilities remained relatively consistent between 2006 and 2015. However, across all disability categories, 2015 high school graduates were much more likely to enroll in college than 2006 high school graduates.

Equal Access to Education Attainment Data

The University of Chicago Urban Education Institute (UEI) and Network for College Success launched the To&Through Project to help close gaps in high school and college attainment with a combination of research, data, and professional learning.

Historically, data on the milestones that matter most for students' high school and college success has not been widely accessible or centralized. As part of the public launch of the To&Through Project last year, UEI created a first-of-its-kind, publically available [online tool](#) designed to make data on the milestones that matter most for students' high school and college success available to a broad range of education stakeholders in one, online hub.

Expanding on these efforts to provide equal access to data on what matters most for students' high school and college attainment, the To&Through Project has created two new toolkits to support student success.

Developed in collaboration with high school principals across Chicago, the **To&Through Communications Toolkit** is a new resource for educators designed to heighten awareness of and spark meaningful dialogue about what fosters high school and college attainment among school leaders, students, and families. The toolkit includes a collection of briefs, posters, student videos, lesson plans, and other resources. The Communications Toolkit can be found here: [link to To&Through Communications Toolkit to come by Monday, October 9].

Also, The Network for College Success worked with its partner schools to develop the **Postsecondary Success Toolkit**—a collection of protocols, reports, resources, and artifacts designed to help schools better support students' efforts to graduate from high school ready to succeed in college. The Postsecondary Success Toolkit can be found here: [link to Postsecondary Success Toolkit to come by Monday, October 9].

The To&Through Project's new research reports and toolkits will be released and discussed today at the University of Chicago's 2017 To&Through Project Convening, which will bring together more than 200 education leaders and partners from across Chicago.

“We are thrilled to convene and engage K-12 and higher education leaders, nonprofit partners, policymakers, and civic leaders in this work to improve the educational attainment of Chicago's youth. The To&Through Project is a collaborative model for change. To truly move the needle on college attainment, we need to come together as a community of education stakeholders and coalesce around research and data on what matters most for students' success,” said Urban Education Institute Chief Strategy Officer and To&Through Project Director, Alex Seeskin.

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The To&Through Project is a partnership between the **University of Chicago's Urban Education Institute** and **Network for College Success** that integrates research, data, and professional learning to help more students get to and through high school and college. In collaboration with educators, policymakers, and communities, the To&Through Project aims to significantly increase the percentage of Chicago Public Schools freshmen who graduate from high school and go on to earn a college degree, and to share the learning from Chicago with education stakeholders across the country.

The University of Chicago Urban Education Institute bridges education research and practice to foster greater equity and excellence in urban schooling. Across four units, UEI conducts rigorous applied research, trains teachers and school leaders, operates a preK-12 public school, and provides research-based tools and resources to schools in 60 major cities across 33 states. Together, UEI's units produce research- and practice-based knowledge on what matters most for school improvement and student success.

The University of Chicago Consortium on School Research at the Urban Education Institute has conducted more than two decades of research on Chicago Public Schools to discover what matters most for school improvement and student success, providing the insight and knowledge that ground The To&Through Project. Over the last 10 years, at least 13 cities have replicated the Consortium's model for place-based research partnerships, including New York City, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

The Network for College Success (NCS) at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration designs and provides professional learning and support resources to help build schools leaders' capacity to use research and data to improve student outcomes.

For more information, please visit: toandthrough.uchicago.edu.