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**Seven Chicago Public Schools Win Grants in a \$2 Million Competition
for Next-Generation, Personalized-Learning Schools**

Chicago, Illinois, Tuesday, April 29, 2014 -- Breakthrough Schools: Chicago today announced that seven CPS schools have each won \$100,000 planning grants to develop and launch next-generation schools which provide personalized instruction. The winners include schools that will open for the 2014-2015 school year, as well as existing traditional public schools, charters, magnets, and one AUSL campus. Although their models may differ, they all share a clear vision of next-generation personalized teaching and learning in which each student is engaged and empowered to take charge of their own learning, while each educator can access robust data to pinpoint student needs, allowing them to agilely accelerate or remediate students. The result: a new cadre of next-generation schools in some of the most challenged Chicago communities.

“Personalized learning empowers teachers to provide targeted supports that match individual learning pace, unlocking the potential of each student,” said CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett. “CPS is proud that seven of our schools are being recognized with Breakthrough Schools grants for their commitment to personalized learning and a high-quality 21st century education that puts students on a path to graduate 100 percent college ready and 100 percent college bound.”

Part of a pilot program including a \$2 million competition, these grants are possible through a local-national partnership led by Chicago’s LEAP Innovations, The Chicago Public Education Fund (The Fund), and Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC). The citywide initiative aims to drive the nation’s third largest district toward a critical mass of powerful, next-generation schools, disseminating best practices so all students are prepared to succeed with 21st century skills. National funding is made possible primarily by The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation.

“Educators and innovators are working hard, nationally, to develop wholly new school models that dramatically change their students’ learning experience, making it more engaging, much more personal, more relevant, and more effectively based on what we now know,” said Andrew Calkins, NGLC Deputy Director. “This city-based extension of NGLC’s national grant making will help school designers meet that challenge through local networks of like-minded, visionary educators, which should help them develop even more promising school designs.”

The winning schools are:

- Cesar E. Chavez Multicultural Academic Center,
- Chicago Academy High School,
- Chicago International Charter School (CICS) -- West Belden,
- Great Lakes Academy Charter School,
- John C. Haines Elementary School,
- KIPP Chicago Public Charter Schools, and
- Wildwood World Magnet School.

LEAP Innovations spearheaded a partnership with The Fund to win NGLC’s national search of regions vying to become the first pilot sites for this significant program. The Fund launched a Summer Design Program in 2013 to spur educator-led innovation and a pipeline of principal-led teams. LEAP Innovations conducted intensive workshops for these school design teams and others to help them create strong planning grant applications. Breakthrough Schools: Chicago plans to build on this process and host another cohort of schools to create quality applications for launch grants and additional planning grants in the future, and is beginning to recruit for a second Summer Design Program now.

In addition to the new planning grant winners announced today, Chicago also can claim several past NGLC grantees (KIPP Chicago, Intrinsic Schools, and Foundations College Prep) who are already transforming public schools into 21st century learning experiences.

The Chicago Public Education Fund is a nonprofit organization working to build a critical mass of great public schools in Chicago by investing in talented principals and enabling effective educator teams to reinvent classroom learning. The Fund serves as a catalyst for accelerating positive learning and life outcomes for students in all of Chicago’s charter and district public schools. The Fund is a longstanding leader in identifying and scaling what works for teachers and principals, as well as for the students they serve. Visit www.thefundchicago.org.

LEAP Innovations is a Chicago-based education technology hub that advances personalized learning to prepare Americans for 21st century skills. The nonprofit organization helps to identify, pilot, research and expand the use of innovative teaching and learning technology tools from preK to early college. LEAP provides training space and programs to design next-generation schools, and drive collaboration among educators, entrepreneurs, tech companies, learning scientists, and students to share ideas and co-develop solutions for critical learning gaps. Visit leapinnovations.org.

Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) accelerates educational innovation through applied technology to dramatically improve college readiness and completion in the United States. This multi-year program provides investment capital to expand the use of proven and emerging learning technologies, collects and shares evidence of what works, and fosters innovation and adoption of solutions which will dramatically improve the quality of learning in the United States, particularly for low-income students and students of color. (www.nextgenlearning.org)

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