



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Chicago Pre-College Science & Engineering Program undertakes revamp of algebra programs to combat gains lost during COVID**

*Rigorously reformatted program designed to leapfrog students to post high school studies in math and science*

*Free orientation and registration September 16 at Kenwood Academy*

(CHICAGO) – It is well documented that COVID-19 harmed student learning. The same impact was felt for programs like the **Chicago Pre-College Science and Engineering Program (ChiS&E)**, the free STEM program designed to give Black and brown students entrée to post-high school opportunities in math and science. The decline was particularly evident in the algebra programs the organization offers throughout CPS. This has led the premier STEM group to do a complete redesign that also includes increasing instruction time to year-round.

The overarching goal of ChiS&E is to prepare students beginning in 6th grade to excel in algebra, propelling them into higher-level math courses like calculus by the time they are high schoolers. This, in turn prepares them for college-level math courses and lays the foundation for careers in math and science.

Before COVID students were able to work independently, and they were advancing in a manner to be on track for advanced math in high school. After the pandemic they saw that many students were not grasping the foundational skills to complete the curriculum and that overall learning was slower paced. The ChiS&E team decided to do a complete re-write of the program, beginning with the Fall session, that included ramping up instructional time to 18 weeks from the pre-covid eight weeks. Instruction is offered in two nine-week options.

The ChiS&E team responsible for the re-write included Retired CPS Teacher **Alonzo Hoskins**, Program Director **LaTina Taylor** and **Michelle Danielley**, a teacher with the program for the last six years. What the team saw was that they needed to approach instruction differently. They designed a rigorous pre-assessment and then developed a program that included reinforcing existing skills and pushing students further with enhanced offerings.

"We need to meet the kids where they are, so they are beyond algebra ready by the beginning of their high school years," said Hoskins. Focusing on algebra in 6th grade and 7th grade prepares them not just for advanced high school math but provides them a springboard for college-level math and science courses," offered Hoskins.

ChiS&E's track record shows that they are up to the task. After 14 years of operation, the program, which requires the engagement of parents, has experienced outsized success with more than 400 students participating each year. In addition to the instructional model, they also expose students to those in the upper echelons of the field who speak with the students monthly.



"I want to thank our team for seeing where these deficiencies were post Covid and addressing them by revamping our programs in a manner that will get our students back on track," said **Kenneth Hill**, president, and CEO. "These are crucial years for our students, and we want to prepare them for what comes next in both their secondary education and their careers."

ChiS&E will host their 2023 Fall Orientation and Registration event on September 16 at Kenwood Academy for grades K – 12 from 9 a.m. – 12. Parent participation is required for K – 5th graders. Courses are free for all.

Now in its 14th year of operation, ChiS&E is preparing to graduate its second class of seniors pursuing degrees in STEM at institutions across the country. Their mission remains to increase the number of historically underrepresented African American and Latino students motivated and academically prepared to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Their programs are unique in that parent involvement is required, increasing the likelihood of completion.

WHO: Chicago Science & Engineering Program (ChiS&E)

WHAT: 2023 Fall Orientation and Registration

WHEN: Saturday, September 16th , 9:00 am – Noon

WHERE: Kenwood Academy High School, 50115 S. Blackstone Ave. Chicago, IL. 60615

### **About ChiS&E**

The mission of the Chicago Pre-College Science and Engineering Program (ChiS&E) is to increase the number of historically underrepresented African American and Latino students who are motivated and academically prepared to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). ChiS&E provides highly engaging, age appropriate, hands-on science, mathematics, computer science and engineering activities and promotes careers in science and engineering. The program is a partnership between Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Colleges of Education and Engineering. Other partners include the LBJ STEM and Research Center at Texas State University, Riverbend Mathematics Center (South Bend, Indiana), and the University of Chicago School of Molecular Engineering. The program includes the following classes: Kindergarten-Little Civil Engineer, First Grade-Little Chemical Engineer, Second Grade-Little Electrical Engineer, Third Grade-Little Mechanical Engineer, Fourth Grade- Little Structural Engineer, Fifth Grade- Geometry, Sixth Grade- Additional topics in Geometry, Seventh Grade- Physics and Mathematics, Eight Grade-Computer Science-Match Program(MIT), Ninth and Tenth Grades- Algebra topics for Calculus, Eleventh Grade-Physics and Eleventh and Twelfth Grade- Topics in Bioengineering and mentorship. In addition to its Saturday programming, ChiS&E provides several summer programs. They include the following: four-week summer program for rising 6th, 7th and 8th graders at Langton Hughes Elementary School (Mathematics- Algebra, Engineering- Bots, Raspberry Pi-Computer Programming), two-week summer program for rising 9th and 10th graders with a focus on engineering problem-solving at the University of Illinois at Urbana and a two-week summer program at Notre Dame University that focuses on mathematics and engineering.

The program is free to participants, with the only requirement being that a parent must participate with their child. ChiS&E is a 501©3 tax-exempt organization.

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