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**CLERK VALENCIA HOSTS FIRST EVER NEXT GENERATION CITY COUNCIL FOR CPS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

*City Clerk and CPS Team Up to Expose Young People to City Government Through Hands-On Day of City Council Simulations*

Today, more than 50 students from across eight CPS high schools participated in Chicago’s first ever Next Gen (Next Generation) City Council. The event brought together CPS ninth through twelfth graders from across the City to spend a day modeling a City Council meeting by creating and voting on model legislation in City Council Chambers,

“Growing up, there were not a lot of elected officials that looked like me,” said City Clerk Anna M. Valencia whose office spearheaded the day. “The goal of this program is to show students that it is possible to one day be in these seats of power. It is incredibly important to listen to the next generation of our city’s community and civic leaders and let them know that their voice not only matters but that we hear them.”

Starting in January, each of the eight school’s Civics class participated in a City Hall visit where they met with civic and community leaders and discussed solutions to issues that impacted their community. The culmination of this work is today’s Next Generation City Council where participating students from the Civics classes were chosen by ‘running for office’ within their classrooms and were elected by their peers to represent one of 50 Aldermen, City Clerk and Mayor for the day. The visits to City Hall complement CPS’ “Participate” Civics Curriculum that helps student develop the critical knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to be active and engaged participants in our democracy.

Civic and community leaders from the Obama Foundation, Chicago Police Department, Northwestern University, Boy Scouts of America, Ladies of Virtue, Chicago Public Schools, the Pritzker Foundation, Mikva Challenge, St. Anthony Hospital, Polished Pebbles, CAIR-Chicago, Americorps, the University of Illinois, the Resurrection Project and the All Stars Project of Chicago all participated in the day.

Boeing, Chicago Public Schools, Black Dog, Lyft, Spins, Kitchfix and the Obama Foundation sponsored the event providing transportation, meals and materials for the students.

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