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Jean-Claude Brizard

Chief Executive Officer

November 30, 2011

Parent or Guardian of a Student at
Dyett High School
555 E. 51st Street
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Re: Proposed Phase-Out of Dyett High School

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), nothing is more important to me than making sure your child is getting access to a high quality education. My team is dedicated to ensuring that every child in every community can be successful in the classroom and graduate ready for college and career – which is why I am writing to you today.

There are too many schools in Chicago failing our children. Across the District, only 7.9% of 11th graders last year tested ready for college, while achievement gaps for African American and Latino students remain in the high double-digits. As adults, we all have a responsibility to make sure that we are putting the academic needs of our children before all else. To do so requires some very difficult but necessary choices to boost the academic achievement of our kids.

For too long, Dyett High School (Dyett) has been one of the schools not meeting the needs of its students. Over the last few years, Dyett has been a chronically underperforming school with a graduation rate that is far below that of other schools in its area and is among the lowest academic scoring schools in the district. This is why we are proposing today, after a very lengthy and thoughtful process, to phase-out Dyett. This means that current ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students would continue to attend Dyett, but the school would not enroll new students next school year.

I know this may be difficult for you to hear because of the connections you have to this school, but I ask that you give us the opportunity to explain this decision and urge you to take a few moments to carefully review the draft transition plan on this phase-out that your child will soon bring home, which will go into far greater detail about the reasons for this decision.

Dyett will still receive the district-wide supports that the district is providing to schools citywide that focus on improving student learning and ensuring that your child receives the quality education they deserve. At Dyett and schools across the district, we are making significant investments in core areas:

- Providing a longer school day with additional instructional time for students;
- Using new, more rigorous curriculum that meet Common Core State Standards to better prepare your child for college;

Below you will find more details about these proposals, which aim to provide students with access to a better educational environment where they can thrive and succeed.

Guidelines

I have released Guidelines for School Actions (guidelines) that helped focus our attention on the district's lowest performing schools and the communities most in need of better performing school options. The guidelines can be accessed online at www.cps.edu/qualityschools. I considered the criteria specified below when recommending schools for action, such as reassignment boundary changes, phase-outs, co-locations, school closures, and school consolidations:

- 1) If a school received the lowest performance level (Level 3) on the CPS School Performance, Remediation, and Probation Policy (Board Report 10-0728-P04) for two consecutive years and was not excluded from consideration based on the minimum performance criteria listed in the guidelines; or
- 2) If a school is in the process of phasing out based on previous action by the Board; or
- 3) If two elementary schools within 0.5 miles of each other individually offer less than Kindergarten through eighth grades and can be reconfigured to a single Kindergarten through eighth grade school; or
- 4) To co-locate a Board approved new or existing school.

Our Proposal

Our proposal is to phase-out Dyett High School, located at 555 E. 51st St., over the next three years by reducing one grade level each year until the end of the 2014-2015 school year and changing the attendance area boundary. This proposal meets criteria 1 above because Dyett has achieved the lowest performance rating, Level 3, every year since the Level 3 rating was introduced four years ago.

Furthermore, Dyett was not excluded from consideration as it did not have a 5-year cohort graduation rate at or above its geographic network average in the previous school year, nor did it score at or above the 25th percentile on the trend and growth component of the CPS Performance Policy in the previous school year. In other words, CPS is proposing to phase-out Dyett based on the school's chronic low academic performance and the need for higher quality educational options for students in the community.

Details For Current Students

If the Board approves this proposal, Dyett will not enroll incoming ninth grade students for the 2012-13 school year, and will reduce its grade offerings by one grade every school year thereafter until the end of the 2014-2015 school year. Current ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students will continue to be assigned to Dyett for the 2012-2013 school year. Students who are enrolled in Dyett during the phase-out process will receive continued investments to support their academic achievement. A draft transition plan outlining these supports has been sent home from school with students. Copies are also available in the school's main office and at www.cps.edu/qualityschools.

If you have any questions concerning this proposal, please call the CPS Quality Schools Hotline at 773-553-5020.

Details For The Attendance Area Boundary Of Dyett

I am also proposing to reassign Dyett's attendance area boundary to Wendell Phillips Academy High School (Phillips), located at 244 E. Pershing Rd., at the end of the 2011-12 school year. In other words, rising ninth grade students who would have been assigned to Dyett will now be assigned to Phillips based on the student's home address.

Public Comment On The Proposal

Two community meetings and one public hearing have been scheduled to receive public comment on the proposal.

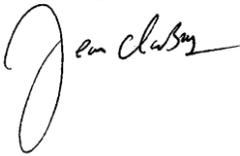
COMMUNITY MEETING #1	COMMUNITY MEETING #2	PUBLIC HEARING
Friday, January 06, 2012 Charles A. Hayes Center 4859 S. Wabash Ave. 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm	Friday, January 20, 2012 Charles A. Hayes Center 4859 S. Wabash Ave. 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm	Friday, January 27, 2012 125 S. Clark Street, 5 th Floor Board Chambers Chicago, Illinois 60603 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

I invite you to share your feedback on this proposal at the community meetings and public hearing. You may also provide alternate proposals or other suggestions. If you wish to comment at the community meetings or hearing, you must sign up to speak on the day of, at the designated location, beginning one hour before the designated start time and ending one hour after the start of the meeting or hearing. You will have two minutes to speak, unless the hearing officer or meeting organizer provides an extension. The hearing will conclude at the stated end time or following the comments of the last person who has signed up to speak, whichever occurs first.

After the community meetings and public hearing, I will review a written report from the hearing officer. At that time, I may recommend that the Board consider and approve the proposal for Dyett at its meeting on February 22, 2012.

I can assure you that we will not take action on any school without careful consideration for what is best for our students, and that my team and I will work to make any transition as smooth as possible. If you have questions or concerns, please call the CPS Quality Schools Hotline at 773-553-5020.

Sincerely,



Jean-Claude Brizard

CC: David Vitale, Board President
 Noemi Donoso, Chief Education Officer