

REMOVAL OF FIVE HIGH SCHOOLS FROM INTERVENTION STATUS**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:****Introduction**

During the summer of 2000, five Chicago Public Schools ("CPS") high schools, Bowen, Orr, DuSable, South Shore and Collins, were placed on intervention pursuant to the Chicago Board of Education's ("Board") Policy on School Intervention. The schools had been on probation for years because they chronically failed to promote students' academic progress as evidenced by student achievement significantly below national norms with no foreseeable prospect for improvement. Following the 2001-2002 school year, the five intervention high schools submitted to the Office of High School Development ("OHSD") materials pertaining to their performance. OHSD staff evaluated the schools using factors set forth in the intervention policy for determining when a school had made significant educational improvement that warranted removal from intervention status. Based on its evaluation, OHSD recommended that all five intervention schools be removed from intervention and returned to probation status. This recommendation does not mean that these high schools have successfully remediated the problems that caused chronic low student performance in the past. Rather, changing the status of these schools recognizes that they *finally have begun a process of educational improvement* that best can be continued through the oversight and support provided to probation schools.

Measuring Significant Educational Progress in Intervention Schools

The Intervention policy identifies a range of benchmarks that can be used to determine whether an intervention school has made significant educational progress that would warrant removal from intervention and a return to probation status. These benchmarks include both objective data and qualitative reports on the educational environment at an intervention school. When assessing the educational progress of an intervention school, OHSD staff may give certain improvement factors more weight, if doing so results in a more accurate evaluation.

All Five Intervention Schools Achieved Significant Educational Progress That Warranted Their Removal From Intervention Status

OHSD's evaluation of the intervention schools following the 2001-2002 school year indicated that all achieved significant educational progress that warranted returning them to probation status. OHSD emphasized two benchmarks in its review: (1) a substantial number of students progressed from the lowest level of achievement in reading to a higher level as measured by a designated district-wide end-of-year achievement test and (2) a substantial number of students achieved a greater rate of progress in reading than they had in the previous school year as measured by a designated district-wide end-of-year achievement test. It was appropriate to emphasize these factors because they measure the rate of yearly student progress at intervention schools in comparison with the city's other high schools.

OHSD found that the educational progress of students at the five intervention schools mirrored or exceeded that of students citywide in relation to both benchmarks. In three of the five schools - South Shore, DuSable, and Collins - the percentage of students who moved to a higher level of reading achievement as tenth graders *was greater than the citywide average*. At Orr and Bowen, the percentage of tenth graders who progressed beyond the lowest level of reading achievement was only slightly below the citywide average. Additionally, a substantial number of tenth graders at the intervention schools achieved a greater rate of progress in reading than they had as ninth graders, with the percentage of tenth grade students making positive gains ranging from 68.5% to 81.5%. Citywide, 74.3% of tenth graders showed more progress in reading than they had the previous year. A standard measure of academic progress is "a year's worth of learning for a year spent in the classroom." Again, students at the intervention schools compared favorably with those at CPS high schools citywide. Tenth graders at four of the five intervention schools achieved *at least one year of progress in reading* during the 2001-2002 school year. The average citywide rate of reading

progress for tenth graders was 1.3 years. *Three of the five intervention schools met or exceeded this rate of progress.* The fact that students at the intervention schools achieved approximately the same rates of growth in reading as their counterparts citywide constitutes significant evidence that these five schools now have improved to the point where they should be returned to probation status.

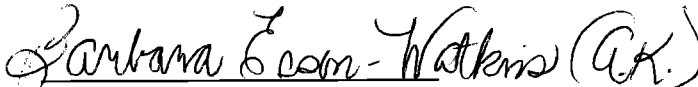
OHSD found evidence that the educational environment at the intervention schools had improved during the 2001-2002 school year. The fact that pupils in these schools achieved measured rates of improvement comparable with those citywide suggests that the implementation of professional development programs and an increased emphasis on professionalism in the schools' daily operations last year succeeded in creating educational environments more supportive of student learning. This progress also supports removing the schools from intervention and returning them to probation status.

Continued Support Must Be Provided to the Five Schools Removed From Intervention Status

The progress that Bowen, Orr, DuSable, South Shore, and Collins made during the 2001-2002 school year is heartening, yet *substantial improvement still must be made at each of these schools.* To support continued educational progress at these schools, OHSD recommends the following for the 2002-2003 school year: \$100,000 in monetary support administered through OHSD; a continuation of the monitoring and support services provided last year by OHSD; and support from the Chicago Reading Initiative and Area Instructional Offices. More generally, the former intervention schools must receive continued support in such areas as school leadership, teaching and learning strategies and techniques, literacy, management systems, professional development, small school implementation and external resources. Finally, the Office of Accountability must continue to closely monitor the yearly student performance at these schools to insure that the gains which have been made to date continue uninterrupted.¹

Approved for Consideration:


Respectfully Submitted:

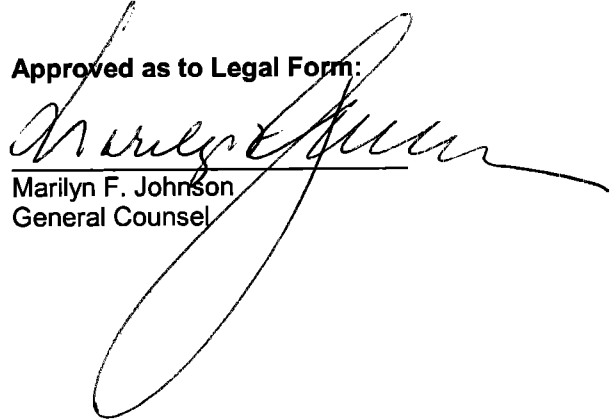

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¹These recommendations, as well as others regarding measures that should be taken if former intervention schools fail to continue improved performance, are included in an Intervention policy amendment that will be presented to the Board at its October 23, 2002 meeting.