

**APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
ALCOTT HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE HUMANITIES**

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING DECISION:

That the Board approve the expansion of the Alcott Elementary School with the Alcott High School for the Humanities ("AHS") as a Renaissance Performance School contingent upon Board approval of a site to be identified at a later date.

DESCRIPTION:

School Designation: AHS is scheduled to open in the fall of 2009 as an expansion to the Alcott Elementary School as a Performance School in accordance with Board's Renaissance Schools Policy, 07-0627-PO4, as amended ("Renaissance Policy").

Public Hearing: A public hearing on the opening of AHS as an expansion to Alcott Elementary School was held on October 8, 2008 at the Alcott Elementary School, 2625 N. Orchard, Chicago, IL 60614 and October 15, 2008 at the Board Chambers, respectively, in accordance with the Renaissance Policy. A summary report of the hearing is available for review. Summary report of the hearing is available for review.

Request for Proposals: In April 2008, the Office of New Schools issued a Request for Proposals to solicit responses from parties interested in starting schools under the Renaissance 2010 Initiative. Design Frameworks to operate either a charter school, contract school, or performance school were submitted by interested parties on June 2, 2008. Supplemental proposal materials for approved design frameworks were submitted on July 28, 2008. Proposals were evaluated pursuant to the standards set forth in the Renaissance Policy. Proposals were reviewed by the Office of New Schools and a Comprehensive Evaluation Team and recommendations were submitted to the Chief Executive Officer based upon those reviews and evaluations.

School Design Team: The proposal for the establishment of AHS was submitted by the Alcott High School for the Humanities design team comprised of the principal, teachers and parents of Alcott Elementary School.

School Profile: AHS is scheduled to open in the fall of 2009 serving approximately 150 students in grade 9. In subsequent years the school will add grades 10, 11, and 12 serving up to 600 students at capacity. Alcott Elementary School 8th graders may transition to the AHS as 9th graders and once a site is identified the process for the enrollment of additional students and the establishing of any attendance boundaries will be presented to the Board for approval. AHS will offer the substantive content of a Liberal Arts education with rigorous emphasis on writing and oral defense of work, embedded in a Humanities curriculum. Through the AHS curriculum, students will explore the core disciplines using methods that are largely analytic, critical, or speculative, and become acquainted with the unique perspectives of each, developing four key capacities: understanding the purpose of disciplinary expertise; understanding an essential knowledge base; understanding inquiry methods; understanding forms of communication.

Governance: The Alcott Elementary School Local School Council will continue and may be modified at a later date in order to allow for high school student representation.

Performance Plan: The operation and performance of the AHS will be in accordance with a Performance Plan to be established pursuant the Renaissance Policy and approval of the Board. At a minimum, the Performance Plan will address student academic outcomes and financial and management practices of the school.

CONTINGENT APPROVAL: The granting of the expansion of the school by the Board and the entering into an evaluation performance plan is contingent upon the ability of the school design team to meet benchmarks detailed by the Office of New Schools including but not limited to: (1) working with ONS to secure a facility and, (2) development of a comprehensive plan supporting the social and emotional learning of all students. These benchmarks will be communicated to the school design team in a formal Memorandum of Conditions with all deadlines to be met by March 15, 2009. The Office of New Schools will oversee the enforcement of these deadlines; failure to meet these deadlines may, at the option of the Board, result in the rescission of the authority granted herein and the denial of the performance school application. The Chief Executive Officer or his designee will file a report, approved by the General Counsel as to legal form, indicating the CEO's final approval or denial of the performance school application and satisfactory resolution of all material issues related to the formation of the school. The report will be filed with the Secretary of the Board on or before April 15, 2009. This final review will be conducted to determine compliance with the terms indicated above.

FINANCIAL: Using current year financial data, the General Fund cost of 150 students in 2009-10 will be approximately \$1,158,600.00. The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the 2009-2010 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY09 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

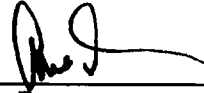
PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS: As a Performance School, AHSB will employ CPS teachers and staff. Performance Schools are subject to the collective bargaining agreements between CPS and the Chicago Teachers Union and other labor organizations, including the waiver provisions of those agreements.

Approved:



Barbara J. Eason-Watkins
Chief Education Officer

Respectfully submitted:

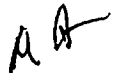


Arne Duncan
Chief Executive Officer

Within Appropriation:



Pedro Martinez
Chief Financial Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 



Patrick J. Rocks
General Counsel