

April 24, 2002

FINAL

02-0424-PO03

ADOPT SMALL SCHOOLS POLICY

PURPOSE:

The Chicago Board of Education ("the Board") believes that small schools can provide an effective means for enhancing students' academic achievement and personal growth. This policy authorizes the conversion of existing schools into several small schools and the establishment of new small schools.

HISTORY OF BOARD ACTION:

In 1995, the Board passed its first Small Schools Resolution that issued a Request For Proposals into order to establish new small schools within the Chicago Public Schools. In 1996, the Board authorized the creation of eight new small schools which had been proposed through the 1995 RFP. (See Board Report No. 96-0828-ED1).

POLICY TEXT:

I. Definitions

- A. **Small School.** A high school of no more than 500 students and an elementary school of no more than 350 student created either by converting an existing school into two or more small schools or by establishing new schools following a Request for Proposals ("RFP").
- B. **Conversion.** "Conversion" means to the process of creating, from an existing school, several separate small schools or a multiplex as defined below.
- C. **Converting School.** An existing school which has an approved conversion plan, and is in the process of converting into separate small schools.
- D. **Conversion Period.** The time during which a single CPS school is converted into separate small schools or a multiplex. At the end of the conversion period, the converting school shall be closed.
- E. **Chicago High School Redesign Initiative ("CHSRI").** An independent entity that seeks to assist in the creation of new small schools within CPS, and, especially in the conversion of CPS high schools into multiple small schools. CHSRI is governed by a board, on which the Board, the CTU and 7 foundations, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, have representatives.
- F. **Multiplex.** Two or more small schools sharing the same building and one principal.

02-0424-PO03

II. Procedures for Creating Small Schools By Conversion

A. Applying For Conversion

Any school may apply for conversion into multiple small schools by submitting and having approved a conversion plan for either:

1. Separate small schools, each with a principal, unit number, and a local governing body, which will replace the existing "converting school;" or
2. A multiplex where the existing school is converted into small schools each of which has its own unit number and governing body, but which share one principal for the building.

B. The Conversion Plan

1. All Conversion Plans must at a minimum:
 - a. Present a plan for the development of new small schools, that includes each school's mission and the specific means by which it will successfully meet students' educational needs.
 - b. Address the mechanism of dissolving a converting school gradually over a period of no more than five years, while new small schools are being formed;
 - c. Provide for an appropriate school governance structure.

2. New Positions Created through Conversion Plans

In schools undergoing conversion, the Board may fund at least one position at each conversion school whose function would be that of a school-based chancellor, who will support the educational mission of the conversion school, or a facilities manager, who will help resolve issues related to multiple schools sharing one building. The Board may also fund other positions as needed.

3. Acceleration, Modification, or Termination of Conversion Plans

If a converting school seeks an acceleration or any modification other than termination of the conversion plan, the Board will work jointly with all appropriate parties to determine the reasonableness of the acceleration or modification requested, and will modify all relevant aspects of the conversion plan accordingly.

C. Relationship of Probation, Remediation and Intervention Status to Conversion Plans

1. If a converting school is on probation, remediation, or intervention at the time it is approved for conversion, it will remain on such status, and be governed according to Board policy, until such time as the school's probation, remediation or intervention status ends, or the school closes at the end of the Conversion Period, whichever occurs first.

02-0424-PO03

2. New small schools created from a converting school will not be on probation, remediation, or intervention status at the time of their inception.
3. Any teacher at a converting school under intervention who is subjected to the dismissal procedures set forth in II(G) of the Board' Intervention Policy (Board Report 02-0327-PO1) may not apply for a faculty position at a new school created from a converting school. This prohibition shall be lifted if the dismissal recommendation brought against the teacher is withdrawn or resolved in favor of the teacher.

D. Conversion Plan Approval

Conversion plans shall be reviewed by the Office of Small Schools. Those plans meeting the requirements for small school status may be submitted to the Board for final review and approval by the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO").

E. Public Hearing

Prior to the Board's final approval of a conversion plan, the CEO or designee shall conduct a public hearing in order to solicit public comment on the plan.

III. Transforming a Converting School Into Small Schools *Small Schools Small Schools*

A. The Conversion Period

The process of transforming a converting school into small schools shall take no more than five years, and shall be guided by the following:

1. The Uniform Principal's Contract and all applicable laws and Board policies and rules shall apply to principals at converting schools.
2. Teachers in a converting school shall have the same rights and privileges afforded to all teachers under Board Rules and Policies and applicable collective bargaining agreements.
3. A converting school's LSC shall retain its governance powers over the converting school until the school is closed at the conclusion of the conversion period.
4. The Board may choose to limit enrollment of a converting school, and may change the converting school's boundaries once a converting school begins the conversion process.

B. Conclusion of Conversion

At the end of the final year of a conversion plan:

1. The converting school shall be closed pursuant to the Policy on Closing and Consolidation of Schools.

02-0424-PO03

2. The LSC at a converting school shall be dissolved. Former LSC members from the converting school will be encouraged to participate in any new LSC or other potential governance structures in place at the new small schools occupying the converting school's building.

IV. Conversions Into Multiplexes

Schools may choose a conversion plan involving a conversion into a multiplex of small schools pursuant to the Guidelines for Small Schools.

V. Creation of Small Schools Through Requests For Proposals

- A. The Board may, at any time, through an established RFP process, solicit proposals for new small schools to meet targeted, specific CPS needs.
- B. The availability of suitable school facilities is a limiting condition on RFP applicants. Therefore, every effort will be made to make Board buildings, or portions of buildings available for use by small schools.

VI. Small School Operational Requirements and Conditions

The following operational requirements and procedures will pertain when small schools begin operation:

- A. A small school shall be afforded, at a minimum, its proportional share of staff and resources on the same basis as all other schools.
- B. The Office of Small Schools will assist small schools with the formation of local school councils, or other governing body, in accordance with the time frame utilized system-wide for local school council elections, unless a time period for the installation of a local school council or other governing body is otherwise approved in the Guidelines for Small Schools.
- C. New small schools may recruit city-wide, but must give priority to neighborhood students.

VII. New Small School Start-Up Costs

Subject to the availability of funds, the Board may:

- A. Deploy appropriate central office staff to assist in conversion and new school creation;
- B. Provide reasonable funding for normal start-up costs which include, but are not limited to: the purchase of student and faculty desks, tables, chairs, books and supplies, including technology;
- C. Provide a reasonable capital funding stipend, over a 3-year period, for the purpose of supporting required modifications to the physical plant necessitated by the establishment of small schools.
- D. Solicit federal, state, local and private funding to assist new small schools and all converting schools;

02-0424-PO03

- E. Help provide for educational personnel and those changes in a school's environment, such as common teacher planning time, which promote students' academic achievement.

VIII. Small School Accountability

The Office of Small Schools, in conjunction with the Office of Accountability, will help determine, monitor and assess the methods of measuring new small schools' accountability. Small schools shall be subject to the same accountability and oversight as all other CPS schools. Those small schools that satisfy the Board's accountability measures will be given up to five years to develop their educational programs.

EDUCATIONAL REVIEW: Reviewed with participation of Chief Education Officer.

FINANCIAL REVIEW: Approved, noting included references to funding availability.

LSC APPROVAL: Not Applicable.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION APPROVAL: Not applicable.

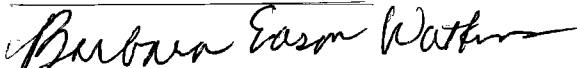
PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS: Not applicable.

LEGAL REFERENCES: None

Respectfully Submitted:


ARNE DUNCAN (by PAI)
Chief Executive Officer

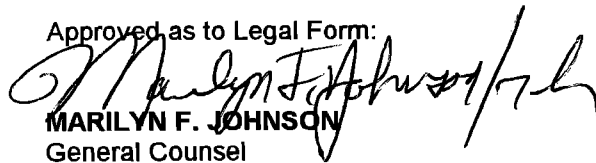
Reviewed for Consideration:


BARBARA EASON-WATKINS
Chief Education Officer

Noted:


KENNETH GOTSCH
Chief Fiscal Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:


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