

**CLOSE FARREN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, CONSOLIDATE FARREN INTO BEETHOVEN
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ADJUST THE ATTENDANCE AREA OF BEETHOVEN**

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education approve the closing of Farren Elementary School ("Farren") (Unit 3300), located at 5055 South State Street and its consolidation with Ludvig Von Beethoven Elementary School, located at 25 West 47th Street, for academic reasons in accordance with the Policy on the Closing of Schools, 04-0225-PO2, and adjust the attendance areas of Beethoven Elementary School to include the attendance area of Farren Elementary School in accordance with the Policy on the Review and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries, 05-0622-P01.

DESCRIPTION:

Pursuant to the Board of Education's Policy on the Closing of Schools, 04-0225-PO2 ("Closing Policy"), and following a public hearing, the Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools ("CEO") may recommend to the Board the closing of schools for any of the reasons stated in the Closing Policy.

School Closing Criteria

In accordance with the Closing Policy, the CEO employed the following inclusion criteria to identify schools for possible closing at the end of the 2005-2006 school year due to chronic academic underperformance:

1. **Probation.** The school has been on academic probation for at least one year;
2. **2004 Scores.** The school has a Composite Score on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) of 25.0% or fewer students meeting or exceeding state standards and a Reading Score on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) of 25.0% or fewer students at or above national norms for the 2004-05 school year;
3. **4-Year Average Scores.** The school has a 4-year average ISAT Composite Score of 25.0% or fewer students meeting or exceeding state standards and a 4-year average ITBS Reading Score of 25.0% or fewer students at or above national norms for the 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years; and
4. **Student Gains.** The school has a four-year average students' gain index of less than 0.9 on the ITBS Reading Test for the 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years. A gain of 1.0 means a student has made one year's progress.

The additional criteria employed to exclude elementary schools from consideration for possible closing for academic reasons at the end of the 2005-2006 school year were the following:

1. There is no space available at a better-performing school to send students affected by the closing that is located within close proximity;
2. The school is a Chicago Teachers' Union/Chicago Public Schools Fresh Start school;
3. The school's principal has been serving for less than two (2) years; or
4. The school has students who had been previously re-assigned there from another school due to a prior Board action in the last two (2) years.

Farren Elementary School satisfied the school closing inclusion criteria for the following reasons:

1. **Probation:** Beginning with the 1996-1997 school year and including the current school year, Farren has been on academic probation for nine (9) out of the past (10) school years, having been off probation for only the 2002-2003 school year.
2. **2005 Scores:** The school's 2004-2005 ISAT Composite Score was 22.3% of students meeting or exceeding state standards; the school's 2004-2005 ITBS Reading Score was 14.8% of students at or above national norms.
3. **4-Year Average Scores:** Over the past four school years, the school's ISAT Composite Scores were: 26.2% in 2001-2002; 23.5% in 2002-2003; 26.8% in 2003-2004; and 22.3% in 2004-2005.

These scores give the school a 4-year average ISAT Composite Score of 24.7%.

Over the same period, the school's ITBS Reading Scores were: 28.8% in 2001-2002; 24.6% in 2002-2003; 28.3% in 2003-2004; and 14.8% in 2004-2005.

These scores give the school a 4-year average ITBS Reading Score of 24.1%.

4. **Student Gains:** The school's 4-year average student gains index on the ITBS Reading Test between the 2001-2002 and 2004-2005 school years is .71, which is .29 less than a full year's worth of growth as defined by the ITBS National Gains Index.

Exclusionary Criteria

Farren did not meet any of the Exclusion Criteria for the following reasons:

1. There is available space at a better-performing school (Beethoven Elementary School) located within close proximity;
2. Farren is not a Chicago Teachers' Union/Chicago Public Schools Fresh Start school;
3. The principal of Farren has been serving more than two (2) years; and
4. The closing of Farren will not result in moving students who had previously been reassigned to Farren from another school due to a prior Board action within the last two (2) years.

Racial Impact Analysis and Enrollment Projections

In accordance with the Closing Policy and the Modified Desegregation Consent Decree, the Office of Demographics and Planning conducted a racial impact analysis including 3-year enrollment projections. The analysis determined that the proposed closing of Farren and the assignment of all of its students to Beethoven would have no significant impact on the racial composition and stability of those schools. In terms of racial composition and stability, the option of maintaining the status quo offers neither an advantage nor disadvantage over the option of closing the school. While other possibilities were examined, no alternatives affected the resulting racial ethnic distribution of students. A copy of this report is available for review.

Public Hearing

Following proper notice, the public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed closing of Farren was held on February 6, 2006. An independent hearing officer appointed by the Chief Executive Officer presided at the hearing and received comment and supporting documentation. The hearing was transcribed by a certified court reporter. The hearing officer has prepared and submitted a report of the proceedings to the Chief Executive Officer. A copy of the Hearing Officer's Report is available for review. After receiving the Hearing Officer's Report, the Chief Executive Officer has determined to recommend

that the Board close Farren Elementary School at the end of the 2005-2006 school year, consolidate it into Beethoven Elementary School and adjust the attendance area of Beethoven to include the attendance area of Farren.

Attendance Area Adjustments

The CEO recommends adjusting the attendance area of Beethoven Elementary School as follows:

Adjust the Attendance Area Boundaries of Ludwig Von Beethoven Elementary School (Unit 6540)

Grades kindergarten through eighth:

Beginning at the Dan Ryan Expressway and 44th Street
East to State Street
South to 49th Street
East to Wabash Avenue
South to 51st Street
East to Michigan Avenue
South to Garfield Boulevard
West to NYC Railroad (at 116 West)
North to 47th Street
West to the Dan Ryan Expressway
North to Starting Point

**LSC
IMPLICATIONS:**

Pursuant to the Closing Policy, the Local School Council of Farren will be dissolved effective the end of the 2005-2006 school year as the result of the closing of Farren. The consolidation of Farren and Beethoven Elementary Schools will have no effect on the Beethoven Local School Council.

**PERSONNEL
IMPLICATIONS:**

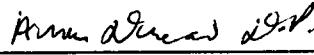
Pursuant to the Board's "Consolidation of Schools Policy" (05-1221-PO1) regularly certified and appointed teachers currently assigned to Farren will be reappointed to Beethoven consistent with CPS staffing formulas. Any displaced appointed teachers will be laid off or reassigned in accordance with CPS collective bargaining agreements, rules and policies. Other Farren staff will either be laid off or reassigned in accordance with collective bargaining agreements, Board rules and policies. Those personnel laid off will be eligible to apply for positions at other schools.

Approved for Consideration:



**Barbara Eason-Watkins
Chief Education Officer**

Approved:



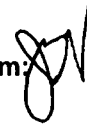
**Arne Duncan
Chief Executive Officer**

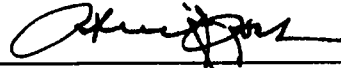
Within Appropriation:



**John Maiorca
Chief Financial Officer**

Approved as to Legal Form:





**Patrick J. Rocks
General Counsel**