



**Jean-Claude Brizard**  
Chief Executive Officer

November 30, 2011

Parent or Guardian of a Student at  
James R. Doolittle Jr. Elementary School  
535 E. 35<sup>th</sup> St.  
Chicago, Illinois 60616

Parent or Guardian of a Student at  
Chicago High School for the Arts  
521 E. 35<sup>th</sup> St.  
Chicago, Illinois 60616

**Re: Proposed Co-location of Chicago High School for the Arts with James R. Doolittle Elementary 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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.

This is why we are proposing to co-locate Chicago High School for the Arts (Chi Arts) with James R. Doolittle Jr. Elementary School (Doolittle) in the same CPS facility located at 535 E. 35th St. Should this co-location take place, we will work with you, the staff and your community to make this a smooth transition.

At Doolittle as well as schools across the district, we are making significant investments to boost the academic achievement of our students:

- Providing a longer school day with additional instructional time for teachers and students;
- Using a new, more rigorous curriculum that meets Common Core State Standards to better prepare your child for college;
- Expanding access to quality preschool programs that put students on the path to academic success from day one of their education.

The proposal outlined below is one of the tools we hope to use to provide students with better, higher quality school options.

**Guidelines**

I have released Guidelines for School Actions (“guidelines”). The guidelines can be accessed online at [www.cps.edu/qualityschools](http://www.cps.edu/qualityschools). I considered the criteria specified below when recommending schools for action, such as reassignment area 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 expand the location of ChiArts, currently at 521 E. 35<sup>th</sup> St., into the same CPS facility as Doolittle, located at 535 E. 35th St. as per criteria 4 above.

**Details For Current Students**

If the Board approves this proposal, the enrollment of students who are currently attending, or eligible to attend Doolittle, will not be affected. All students currently attending Doolittle, together with new students accepted to attend Doolittle, will remain enrolled in Doolittle. Students accepted to attend ChiArts will report to the facility at 535 E. 35th St. next school year for specific instruction as determined by ChiArts administrators. In other words, the two schools will operate within the same facility, and the proposal will have no effect on either school’s current or proposed enrollment.

CPS will add supports to ensure that students have a smooth, safe adjustment and to guarantee effective operation of both schools in the same facility. 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](http://www.cps.edu/qualityschools).

If you have any questions concerning the proposed co-location of, please call the CPS Quality Schools Hotline at 773-553-5020.

**Public Comment On The Proposal**

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

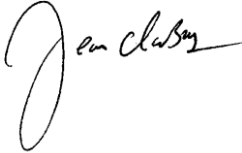
<b>COMMUNITY MEETING #1</b>	<b>COMMUNITY MEETING #2</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING</b>
<b>Friday, January 06, 2012</b> Dunbar High School 3000 S. King Dr. <b>6:00 pm to 8:00 pm</b>	<b>Friday, January 20, 2012</b> Dunbar High School 3000 S. King Dr. <b>6:00 pm to 8:00 pm</b>	<b>Thursday, January 26, 2012</b> 125 S. Clark Street, 5 <sup>th</sup> Floor Board Chambers Chicago, Illinois 60603 <b>5:30 pm to 7:30 pm</b>

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 co-location of ChiArts with Doolittle at its meeting on February 22, 2012.

I can assure you that we will not take any action 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean-Claude Brizard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jean-Claude Brizard

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