I. Introduction

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is committed to ensuring that every student, in every community, has access to high quality schools in order to graduate college and be career ready. This means we must put our students’ needs first, make difficult decisions, and act now to ensure our students have the best opportunity to personally realize those goals. CPS proposed school actions (including closures, consolidations, reassignment boundary changes, phase-outs, and co-locations), along with significant investments to improve our schools in the communities with the greatest need for better opportunities.

In order to ensure a quality education for students in the North Lawndale community, we proposed a school action that the Board of Education of the city of Chicago (Board) approved to close Julia C. Lathrop Elementary School (Lathrop) to complete the phase-out initiated by the Board on February 25, 2009 (see Board Report 09-0225-EX32). This action will reassign all returning students to James Weldon Johnson Elementary School (Johnson), which, after thorough review by CPS and relevant city agencies, offers a better educational opportunity for our students. The transition plan outlined below summarizes the action, identifies the academic, social, emotional, and safety supports that will be provided to impacted students, and explains the process that was provided for commenting on the action.

Since this action was proposed in December 2011, CPS has welcomed input from parents, schools, and community members and considered that feedback in this final transition plan.

II. Summary of Action

Lathrop is a neighborhood elementary school located at 1440 South Christiana Avenue, within the North Lawndale community and the Austin-North Lawndale geographic network of CPS. On February 25, 2009, the CPS Board approved the phase-out of Lathrop and planned for grade offerings to decrease by one grade per year through the 2016-2017 school year. Lathrop currently serves 83 students in 3rd through 8th grades.

CPS has been approved to close Lathrop based on the school’s chronic academic failure and the need for higher quality educational options for students in the North Lawndale community. The approved closure meets the criteria of the Chief Executive Officer’s Guidelines for School Action: Lathrop is in the process of phasing out based on a previous action by the Board. Additionally, Lathrop has received the lowest performance level (Level 3) on the Performance Policy (Board Report 10-0728-PO4) for at least two consecutive years, has an ISAT composite meets or exceeds score below its geographic network average for 2010-11, and scored below the 25th percentile on the trend and growth component of the Performance Policy in 2010-11. More specifically, Lathrop has achieved the lowest performance rating, Level 3, every year since the level 3 rating was introduced four years ago. The school’s ISAT meets or exceeds percentage is 49.6%, and its trend and growth scores are in the 8th percentile of all schools subject to the CPS performance policy.

CPS believes that the academic needs of returning Lathrop students would be better met at Johnson, located at 1420 South Albany Avenue. As a result of this action, all returning Lathrop students will be reassigned to Johnson in 2012-13 school year. By transitioning the students currently enrolled at Lathrop to Johnson, CPS believes that these students will be given access to an improved educational environment. The current
performance of Johnson (Level 2, see Appendix A for further performance information) as well as the proposed investments CPS will make in Johnson will provide students transitioning from Lathrop with access to better educational opportunities.

The geographic boundary currently associated with Lathrop will be reassigned to Johnson and Lawndale Elementary Community Academy (Lawndale), located at 3500 West Douglas Boulevard. This means that either Johnson or Lawndale, depending on the student’s home address, will be the new neighborhood school for students living in the Lathrop boundary who are not enrolled at Lathrop for the 2011-12 school year. Please see Appendix B for a map and narrative further explaining the boundary reassignment.

III. Safety and Security

CPS has consulted with its Office of Safety and Security (OSS) regarding potential safety and security issues related to the reassignment of students from Lathrop to Johnson and is prepared to address safety and security challenges that arise in these communities. OSS will partner with local community groups, elected officials, other sister agencies, and the Chicago Police Department, specifically with the Commander of the Tenth Police District, to ease the transition of students to a new school environment.

CPS will provide additional Safe Passage supports to ensure the safety of all students and staff traveling to school. Safe Passage workers wear identifiable vests and stand on designated street corners to monitor students’ safety during their travel to school in the morning and home in the afternoon. For the 2012-2013 school year, additional Safe Passage workers will be placed at the following intersections:

- One worker at Douglas Boulevard and Kedzie Avenue, and
- Four workers at Roosevelt Road and Kedzie Avenue with one on each quadrant of the intersection.

The placement of these additional Safe Passage workers is illustrated with blue stars on the map attached as Appendix B.

CPS is committed to transitioning current Lathrop safety resources to Johnson so that Lathrop students are provided with consistency and familiarity in their new school. Moreover, Johnson will be staffed with safety and security personnel in order to keep all students and staff safe within the school buildings. Additional climate team members will be deployed to the school as needed. OSS will also conduct security audits at Johnson and provide in-service trainings for school staff as needed to reinforce training on de-escalating conflict and engaging with students.

IV. Supports for Students and Schools

Lathrop currently serves 83 students in grades 3 through 8. CPS is committed to providing supports throughout the closing of Lathrop during the 2011-12 school year and ensuring a successful transition to Johnson for the 2012-13 school year.

Academic Needs of Students

To ensure Lathrop students experience a robust academic environment for the remainder of the school year, CPS will invest in additional instructional programming and personnel support at Lathrop. In order to provide Lathrop students with high-quality academic instruction throughout the transition, CPS will invest in an additional instructional leader to support Lathrop’s school staff in meeting students’ needs. The instructional
leader will ensure students are receiving the instruction they need to continue their learning throughout the end of the school year.

CPS will work with the Lathrop administration to identify and serve struggling students who require additional support in literacy and math. CPS will use assessment data to identify these students and provide them with small group and individualized instruction to boost academic achievement. Student progress will be regularly monitored to ensure supports are effective. Students at Lathrop will benefit from the targeted use of on-line supplemental instruction (e.g., Achieve 3000), that will increase students’ instructional time and engagement in learning.

Preparation and planning are key to ensuring the right supports are in place and ready for our students for the beginning of the school year. To help facilitate a smooth transition for all students, CPS will invest in a data analyst to monitor student achievement and streamline data sharing between Lathrop and Johnson. This will enable all school staff to be proactive in supporting their new students. Data reports on academic performance will be used to address the individual learning needs of incoming students. CPS will work with Johnson staff to review academic performance data and help identify gaps in the reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary and decoding skills of students. This will assist Johnson in identifying necessary supports to help all students succeed academically throughout the 2012-13 school year and beyond.

Students entering Johnson will have access to a range of academic supports and resources that were not previously available at Lathrop. Johnson, as part of the AUSL network, provides students with intensive intervention and tutoring services to ensure transitioning students will not fall behind. Advanced data systems and aligned assessments allow Johnson staff to identify the need for interventions early, and quickly get students back on track. Students transitioning to Johnson will be shifting into a high-quality instructional environment that will spur academic growth. Johnson is implementing the new Common Core State Standards to ensure a rigorous instructional program that provides students with the knowledge and skills they need to graduate college and career ready. After-school programs provide students with access to additional instructional time to further accelerate student achievement. Students at Johnson will benefit from AUSL’s in-house training program for aspiring teachers which gives them the instructional strategies and tools to meet the diverse needs of students, including those transitioning into a new school.

**Social Emotional Needs of Students**

CPS is committed to supporting the social and emotional needs of all students through the end of the 2011-12 school year, as well as during their transition to Johnson for the 2012-2013 school year. CPS’ Department of Youth Development and Positive Behavior Supports case managers will work directly with school and network administration to determine what supports should be implemented at Lathrop for the remainder of the school year to address students’ social, emotional and behavioral needs. To prepare students for the transition, all students at Lathrop will have access to small counseling groups to help them understand the change taking place, and prepare them for their new school setting. Special attention and support will be paid to supporting the social emotional needs of students in transitional living situations enrolled at Lathrop.

To give Lathrop students an opportunity to become familiar with their new school and meet their new teachers and administrators, Johnson will host an open house before the end of the year and a “Welcome Back Night” at the beginning of next school year. CPS will work with leadership and teachers at Lathrop to address concerns regarding the closing of their school and to emphasize the unique need to maintain a stable, positive and supportive learning environment for students during the period of transition.
All students at Johnson, part of the AUSL network, are taught skills related to self-management, responsible decision making, empathy toward others, establishing positive interpersonal relationships, and determining positive goals. Students will benefit from one-on-one access to Johnson’s social worker, as well as the school’s partnership with SGSA, a social emotional agency that provides student and family counseling.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities at Lathrop will continue to be provided instructional support both in the general education classroom and in small group or individual settings, in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Once students transition to Johnson, all instructional, clinical and related services will be provided in accordance with their IEPs. All specialized services, including nursing, speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work, psychology, assistive technology support, and special education instruction will continue to be provided in the manner stated on each student’s current IEP for the remainder of the school year and as each student transitions to Johnson. The additional academic supports outlined above will also be made available for all students including students with disabilities. IEPs will be revised as necessary to address any additional support needed throughout and beyond the transition.

The administration at Johnson will work with the Office of Special Education and Supports, and the current administration at Lathrop, to a full analysis of IEPs for all students be performed and that there are proper teaching, clinical and related services allocated to meet the needs of all students. Furthermore, staff at Johnson will be equipped to meet with parents of returning Lathrop students with IEPs to answer any questions or concerns regarding the transition of their student’s IEP to Johnson.

Information for every student will be carefully reviewed by the staff at Johnson and thoughtful transition planning will be executed to support successful matriculation to a new setting for all impacted students. The staff at Johnson will work with the Office of Special Education and Supports as appropriate to provide necessary professional development and supports.

Johnson is accessible to the public and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Schools designated as “accessible” all have a basic level of access, but the accessibility of floor levels, rooms and features may vary. For more information about a particular school, contact the CPS Director of ADA Policy at (773) 553-2158.

**Students in Temporary Living Situations**

The CPS Office of Students in Temporary Living Situations (OSTLS) will continue the supports currently provided to Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS) as they transition to a new school. Johnson will host one open house before the end of the year and a “Welcome Back Night” at the beginning of the next school year to provide an opportunity for students to meet their new teachers and administrators. In addition, OSTLS staff members will be available for families at Lathrop at set times one day per week from March 1, 2012 until the end of the school year, and at Johnson at set times one day per week from the beginning of the school year until October 31, 2012 to discuss school options, assist with enrollment, and facilitate students’ transfer to other schools. After discussing with families, additional supports may be provided if determined by OSTLS to be appropriate for assisting the student in the transition.
Under this action, returning STLS students may choose to attend Johnson or meet with OSTLS staff to identify another higher performing school which may be an option. For families currently enrolled in the Lathrop STLS program, younger siblings may attend the same school that their older sibling elects under this proposed action.

**English Language Learners (ELL)**
According to the Office of Language and Cultural Education (OLCE), currently Lathrop does not have any English language learners (ELLs) enrolled. Future ELL students reassigned to Johnson will receive state mandated transitional bilingual program services which include, depending on the number of ELL students enrolled, certified Bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers and/or support from OLCE.

**Transportation**
No additional transportation will be offered as a result of this action. Provisions for specific student populations (i.e. student with disabilities, students in temporary living situations and NCLB qualifying students), as determined by the CPS transportation policy, will continue to apply.

**Facilities Investments**
CPS will enhance the learning environment with facilities improvements that include fresh paint and improved flooring.

**City of Chicago Resources**
Chicago Departments and sister agencies that work with CPS students and families will work together in partnership to support the transition if this proposal is approved by the Board.

V. **Informational Briefings Regarding Choice of Schools**

All students impacted by the closure of existing phase-out Lathrop will be reassigned to Johnson. Students and families will also have the opportunity to pursue additional enrollment options through the process described below. CPS will held two sets of briefings regarding choice of schools. One set of briefings for parents to understand students’ new school assignments as well as the boundary changes associated with this school action. A separate set of briefings provided information regarding additional enrollment options available to all students and families through the Options for Knowledge process, which covers open enrollment, magnet, magnet cluster, and selective enrollment schools.

**Options for Knowledge Information Sessions & Enrollment Workshops**
While each student has an assigned home school, all students were also invited to pursue additional enrollment options through the Options for Knowledge process. CPS has provided information regarding the types of schools and programs to which students can apply (e.g., open enrollment, magnet, magnet cluster, and selective enrollment) as well as further details on the application, selection, and notification procedures. The deadline for applying to schools and programs through the Options for Knowledge process was December 16, 2011. Informational briefings were held at the following times and locations:
For all students  
December 5, 2011 from 5-7 p.m.  
West Englewood Library  
1745 West 63rd St.

For current 8th grade students  
December 3, 2011 from 5-8 p.m.  
Michelle Clark Academic Prep Magnet High School  
5101 W. Harrison St.

For current K – 7th grade students  
December 7, 2011 from 5-7 p.m.  
Whitney M Young Magnet High School  
211 South Laflin St.

December 6, 2011 from 5-8 p.m.  
Roberto Clemente Community Academy  
1147 N. Western Ave.

December 10, 2011 from 5-7 p.m.  
Austin Polytechnical Academy High School  
231 North Pine Ave.

If unable to attend an informational briefing, parents or guardians who wish to consider other enrollment options for their student can explore their options via the www.cpsoae.org website. Parents or guardians also may obtain a copy of the Options for Knowledge Guide by visiting the website, by calling (773) 553-2060, or by visiting 125 S. Clark St., 4th Floor or the Douglass Library at 3353 W. 13th Street.

As a reminder, under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), students at CPS’ lowest performing schools had the right to transfer to another school that is meeting the state standards. All parents or guardians of Lathrop students were sent a letter on November 1, 2011 outlining these rights and the application process for a NCLB Choice transfer. If you have any questions about the NCLB Choice Program, please contact (773) 553-2060.

CPS also offers an end of year application process that begins in early May 2012 and seeks to fill remaining open seats in magnet, magnet cluster, and open enrollment elementary schools. All current Lathrop and Johnson students who are still seeking alternative seats will be given first priority in the end of year process. The student must apply and submit an application to the Portfolio Office to be considered. The application can be found at www.cpsoae.org, by calling (773) 553-2060 or in person at 125 S. Clark Street.

Briefings on Student Reassignment and Boundary Changes Associated with the Proposed School Action  
CPS staff was available to provide detailed information to students and parents on the student reassignment and boundary changes associated with the school action immediately prior to the first community meeting or hearing, on January 6, 2012 from 5-6 p.m. at Collins High School, 1313 S. Sacramento.

VI. Public Comment  

Community Meetings and Public Hearings  
CPS held two community meetings and one formal public hearing regarding this proposal. Public comment was accepted during each meeting. CPS considered community feedback and amended this transition plan accordingly.
Community Meeting 1
January 6, 2012 from 6-8 p.m.
Collins High School
1313 S. Sacramento Dr.

Community Meeting 2
January 20, 2012 from 6-8 p.m.
Collins High School
1313 S. Sacramento Dr.

Public Hearing
January 27, 2012 from 8-10 p.m.
Board Chambers
125 S. Clark St., 5th floor

Further Questions and Concerns
Please call the Chicago Public Schools Quality Schools Hotline at (773) 553-5020 with any additional questions or concerns concerning the closure of Lathrop.
Appendix A: Performance Data

CPS has a policy to hold all schools accountable called the Performance, Remediation and Probation Policy. Its purpose is to effectively and fairly measure school performance. Based on the percentage of current statistics and growth points earned, schools are awarded one of three ratings:

- **Level 1** (Excellent Standing): Elementary schools receiving at least 71% of available points.
- **Level 2** (Good Standing): Elementary schools receiving between 50-70.9% of available points.
- **Level 3** (Probation): Elementary schools receiving less than 50% of available points.

For more information please visit: [http://cps.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/PerformancePolicy_FAQ.pdf](http://cps.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/PerformancePolicy_FAQ.pdf)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY11 Performance Data for Schools Subject to Action:</th>
<th>Sending School: Lathrop</th>
<th>Receiving School: Johnson</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Policy Level</strong></td>
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<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of Policy Points</strong></td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Current Status Points</td>
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<td>27.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Trend and Growth Points</td>
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<td>66.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trend and Growth Percentile Rank</strong></td>
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<td>58th</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ISAT Composite Meets or Exceeds</strong></td>
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<td>60.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NETWORK ISAT Composite</strong></td>
<td>65.1%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Proposed Boundary Changes and Student Reassignment

If the Board of Education approves the proposed closing of Lathrop to complete the existing phase-out, all returning Lathrop students will be reassigned to Johnson. For future students, the current attendance area boundaries of Lawndale, Lathrop, and Johnson will be modified according to the proposed boundaries for 2012-13 described in the map and text here.

Close
Assign Lathrop's Boundary to Lawndale and Johnson

Current 2011-12 Boundaries

Proposed 2012-13 Boundaries
Street-by-street descriptions of current and proposed attendance areas are presented below:

**Current Lawndale boundary (Grades Kindergarten through eight):**
Beginning at Central Park Ave and the B&O RR
East to Homan Ave
South to Fillmore St
East to Kedzie Ave
South to Roosevelt Rd
West to Christiana Ave
South to Douglas Blvd
West to Central Park Ave
North to the starting point

**Current Lathrop boundary (Grades three through eight):**
Beginning at Douglas Blvd and St. Louis Ave
East to Christiana Ave
North to Roosevelt Rd
East to Kedzie Ave
South to 15th St
West to Trumbull
South to 16th St
West to St Louis Ave
North to the starting point

**Current Johnson boundary (Grades Kindergarten through eight):**
Beginning at Trumbull Ave and 15th St
East to Kedzie Ave
North to Fillmore Ave
East to Whipple Ave
South to Roosevelt Rd
West to Albany Ave
South to 16th St
West to Trumbull Ave
North to the starting point

**Proposed Lawndale boundary (Grades Kindergarten through eight):**
Beginning at Central Park Ave and the B&O RR
East To Homan Ave
South to Fillmore St
East to Kedzie Ave
South to Douglas Blvd
West to Central Park Ave
North to the starting point

**Proposed Johnson boundary (Grades Kindergarten through eight):**
Beginning at St. Louis and Douglas Blvd
East to Kedzie Ave
North to Fillmore St
East to Whipple
South to Roosevelt Rd
West to Albany Ave
South to 16th St
West to St. Louis Ave
North to the starting point