

**Board of Education of the City of Chicago**

**In Re: The Matter of the Proposed Reconstitution of  
Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School**

**Before  
Martin R. Castro  
Independent Hearing Officer**

**Hearing Report**

**I. Introduction**

On or about January 9, 2012, the undersigned was retained by the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) of the Chicago Public Schools to serve as an Independent Hearing Officer in this matter. On Wednesday, February 1, 2012, a hearing was convened at the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 125 South Clark Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Chicago, Illinois. The purpose of the hearing was to enable the Hearing Officer to receive public comments from concerned persons, specifically including representatives of the CEO, members of the local school council, parents, students, members of the school’s staff, the local Alderman, representatives of the Chicago Teachers’ Union, and interested members of the public, concerning the CEO’s proposal to Turnaround Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School via Reconstitution. Notice of the hearing was served on the parents, staff members, principal, and members of the local school council via U.S. Mail, and/or personal service through CPS Mail.

Pursuant to the directives provided in the document entitled “Procedures for Public Hearings on Proposed School Closure, Consolidation, Co-Location, Phase-Out,

Reconstitution, or Reassignment Boundary Change” the undersigned summarizes below the public comments and the documents received at the hearing.

**II. Relevant Statutory Provisions and Board Policies/Procedures**

The relevant statutory provisions include, but are not necessarily limited to the following, which state in pertinent part as follows:

**Sec. 34—8.3. Remediation and probation of attendance centers**

\* \* \* \*

(d) Schools placed on probation that, after a maximum of one year, fail to make adequate progress in correcting deficiencies are subject to the following action by the general superintendent with the approval of the board, after opportunity for a hearing: ...

(4) Reconstitution of the attendance center and replacement and reassignment by the general superintendent of all employees of the attendance center.

The Board’s “School Performance, Remediation and Probation Policy for the 2011-2012 School Year” provides in pertinent part as follows:

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:** That the Chicago Board of Education adopt a School Performance, Remediation and Probation Policy for the 2011-2012 School Year.

**POLICY TEXT:**

**I. Purpose and Goals**

This policy shall establish the standards and criteria for placing a school on Remediation or Probation for the 2011-2012 school year based on assessments administered in Spring 2011 and other performance data from prior school years. A school’s accountability status from the 2011-2012 school year shall remain in effect until such time as the school is notified of their new status issued in accordance with this policy.

This policy sets out a systematic means for identifying schools in need of remedial assistance and increased oversight due to insufficient levels of achievement. Section 5/34-8.3 of the Illinois School Code provides for the remediation and probation of attendance centers and for the Chief Executive

Officer to monitor the performance of each school using the criteria and rating system established by the Board to identify those schools in which: (1) there is a failure to develop, implement, or comply with the school improvement plan; (2) there is a pervasive breakdown in the educational program as indicated by various factors such as the absence of improvement in reading and math achievement scores, an increased drop-out rate, a decreased graduation rate, or a decrease in the rate of student attendance, or (3) there is a failure or refusal to comply with the provisions of the School Code, other applicable laws, collective bargaining agreements, court orders, or with applicable Board rules and policies.

The Board recognizes that an effective and fair school remediation and probation system considers student test score performance, student growth and progress trends. Therefore, this policy establishes a comprehensive system to assess school performance in order to identify, monitor and assist schools with low student test scores as well as schools with stagnant or insufficient rates of student improvement.

## **II. Scope of the Policy**

All Chicago Public Schools (“CPS”) shall be subject to this policy, except charter schools under contract with the Board. A charter school shall receive an accountability designation using the criteria hereunder for purposes of comparison to other CPS schools and public reporting. A decision to renew or revoke a school’s charter is governed by the terms of a school’s applicable performance agreement and accountability plan with the Board.

Schools newly established by the Board shall receive an accountability designation after the third year of operation or at such time as adequate measures of student achievement become available.

## **III. Definitions**

**Remediation:** An accountability designation assigned to schools where the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) determines that a school’s budget or any amendment thereto may compromise the implementation of the school’s No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Corrective Action measures or Restructuring Plan.

**Probation:** An accountability designation assigned to non-performing schools where the CEO determines, utilizing the criteria set out in this policy, that a school requires remedial probation measures as described in this policy, including increased oversight, to address performance deficiencies.

**Good Standing:** An accountability designation assigned to schools where the CEO determines, based on the criteria set out in this policy, that student performance and improvement meets or exceeds district standards.

Adequate Yearly Progress: School rating issued by the Illinois State Board of Education that identifies if students are improving their performance based on the established annual targets.

Achievement Level 1: Shall mean the rating for:

- an elementary school with a total performance score of thirty (30) or above or with at least 71% of the available performance points;...

Achievement Level 2: Shall mean the rating for:

- an elementary school with a total performance score of twenty-one (21) to twenty-nine (29) or with 50%-70.9% of the available performance points;...

Achievement Level 3: Shall mean the rating for:

- an elementary school that obtains a total performance score of twenty (20) or below or with less than 50% of the available performance points;...

Value-Added: Shall mean the metric that assesses school effects on students' academic growth, controlling for student characteristics, grade level, and prior performance through a regression methodology. Academic growth is measured by the change in scale score points on the ISAT from one year to the next.

ISAT: means the Illinois Standards Achievement Test.

ISAT Composite: means the composite score from ISAT Reading, Mathematics and Science test results.

PSAE: means the Prairie State Achievement Examination.

PSAE Composite: means the composite score from PSAE Reading, Mathematics and Science test results...

One-Year Drop-out Rate: Shall mean the percentage of students who drop-out in a given year who have not previously dropped out.

Membership Days: Shall mean the number of days that the students on a school's enrollment register should be in attendance. Membership days will end for 8th and 12th graders on the date of graduation authorized by the Board and shall be adjusted for students with medically fragile conditions.

Attendance Rate: Shall mean the total number of actual student attendance days divided by the number of total student membership days.

Advanced Placement (AP) Class: Shall mean a college-level course approved by the College Board to be designated as AP in accordance with established requirements...

AP Exam: Shall mean the end of course exam established by the College Board that is administered upon completion of an AP Class.

#### **IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM**

##### **A. Calculation of Score**

Every school shall receive a performance score based upon its level of current performance, trend over time and student growth as described in

Section V below. A school will be evaluated on each of the accountability indicators identified in Section V using best available data and will receive a score for each indicator as well as a total performance score that accounts for the school's overall performance on all accountability indicators. The total performance score will be used to determine whether a school qualifies for an Achievement Level 1, 2 or 3 rating. A school shall receive an accountability status hereunder whereby the school shall be identified as either on Probation, in Good Standing or in Remediation, as further described herein.

## **B. Determinations**

**1. Scoring Exceptions:** Schools that do not qualify for all performance points hereunder due to the following circumstances shall have their Achievement level determinations based on the percentage of available points earned rather than the actual points earned: (a) if data for the two previous years is not available for a particular metric measuring change over time, the school will not get a score for that metric; (b) if data is available but not reliable due to no fault of the school, the CEO may remove the affected metric from consideration and the school will not get a score for that metric. ISAT and PSAE scores of students who are English Language Learners in program years 0-5 will not be factored into current status or trend scores hereunder.

**2. Accountability Status Determination:** A school with an Achievement Level 3 score hereunder shall receive Probation status. A school with an Achievement Level 1 score or an Achievement Level 2 score hereunder shall receive Good Standing status, except for the following which shall receive Probation status hereunder:

- a. A school that has not satisfied the following minimum ISAT or PSAE composite score requirement:
  - i. Elementary school minimum 2011 ISAT Composite score - 50% meeting or exceeding state standards...
  - b. A school that has not satisfied all applicable sustained academic improvement requirements set out in Section VII. as follows:
    - i. A school that has been on Probation status for 2 or more consecutive years must receive a Level 1 rating or Level 2 rating for 2 consecutive years to be removed from Probation; or
    - ii. A school where the Board has taken an action under 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3(d)(2) or (4) must remain on Probation for a minimum of 5 years or until the school has made Adequate Yearly Progress for 2 consecutive years, whichever occurs later.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a school with Good Standing status may be placed in Remediation in accordance with Section IV.B.3.

**3. NCLB School Improvement Status:** For schools not on Probation but that have either “Corrective Action”, “Restructuring Planning” or “Restructuring Implementation” status under NCLB, the CEO reserves the right to place the school in Remediation status at any time if the CEO determines that the school’s budget or any amendment thereto may compromise the implementation of the school’s NCLB Corrective Action or Restructuring Plan.

## **V. ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS, STANDARDS AND SCORING**

### **A. Elementary School Indicators, Standards and Scoring**

An elementary school may receive a total performance rating score ranging from zero (0) to forty-two (42). For the 2011-2012 school year, the current status, trend and growth indicators and standards that determine an elementary school’s performance score shall be as follows:

#### ***1. ISAT Mathematics – 6 possible points***

**a. Current Status** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on the percentage of students *meeting or exceeding* state standards as indicated by the school’s ISAT mathematics results. Current status is determined by averaging the school’s ISAT mathematics results from tests administered in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011. If the school does not have two years of data, one year of data will be used. A school shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

80% or more meeting or exceeding = 3 points

70%-79.9% meeting or exceeding = 2 points

50%-69.9% meeting or exceeding = 1 point

Under 50% meeting or exceeding = 0 points

**b. Trend** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on improvement in the percentage of students *meeting or exceeding* state standards on ISAT Mathematics. Improvement trend is determined by comparing the 2011 score with the average score of the three previous years. If the school does not have three previous years of data, the previous two years will be used. A school shall receive points as follows:

- For schools with 0%-89.9% of students meeting or exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT mathematics assessment, points are earned as follows:

No Improvement = 0 points

Improvement of at least 0.1 but under 3.0 percentage points = 1 point

Improvement of at least 3.0 but under 6.0 percentage points = 2 points

Improvement of at least 6.0 percentage points = 3 points

- Schools with 90% or more of students meeting or exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT mathematics assessment automatically earn 3 points regardless of improvement.

#### ***2. ISAT Reading – 6 possible points***

**a. Current Status** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on the percentage of students *meeting or exceeding* state standards as indicated by the school's ISAT reading results. Current status is determined by averaging the school's ISAT reading results from tests administered in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011. If the school does not have two years of data, one year of data will be used. A school shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

80% or more meeting or exceeding = 3 points

70%-79.9% meeting or exceeding = 2 points

50%-69.9% meeting or exceeding = 1 point

Under 50% meeting or exceeding = 0 points

**b. Trend** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on improvement in the percentage of students *meeting or exceeding* state standards on ISAT reading. Improvement trend is determined by comparing the 2011 score with the average score of the three previous years. If the school does not have three previous years of data, the previous two years will be used. A school shall receive points as follows:

- For schools with 0%-89.9% of students meeting or exceeding state standards on the 2009 ISAT Reading assessment, points are earned as follows:

No Improvement = 0 points

Improvement of at least 0.1 but under 3.0 percentage points = 1 point

Improvement of at least 3.0 but under 6.0 percentage points = 2 points

Improvement of at least 6.0 percentage points = 3 points

- Schools with 90% or greater of students meeting or exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT reading assessment automatically earn 3 points regardless of improvement.

### **3. ISAT Science – 6 possible points**

**a. Current Status** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on the percentage of students *meeting or exceeding* state standards as indicated by the school's ISAT science results. Current status is determined by averaging the school's ISAT science results from tests administered in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011. If the school does not have two years of data, one year of data will be used. A school shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

80% or more meeting or exceeding = 3 points

70%-79.9% meeting or exceeding = 2 points

50%-69.9% meeting or exceeding = 1 point

Under 50% meeting or exceeding = 0 points

**b. Trend** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on improvement in the percentage of students *meeting or exceeding* state standards on ISAT science. Improvement trend is determined by comparing the 2011 score with the average score of the three previous years. If the school does not have three previous years of data, the previous two years will be used. A school shall receive points as follows:

- For schools with 0%-89.9% of students meeting or exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT science assessment, points are earned as follows:  
No Improvement = 0 points  
Improvement of at least 0.1 but under 3.0 percentage points = 1 point  
Improvement of at least 3.0 but under 6.0 percentage points = 2 points  
Improvement of at least 6.0 percentage points = 3 points
- Schools with 90% or greater of students meeting or exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT science assessment automatically earn 3 points regardless of improvement.

**4. ISAT Composite - All Grades – 6 possible points**

**a. Current Status** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on the percentage of students in all grades who are *exceeding* state standards as indicated by the school's ISAT Composite. Current status is determined by averaging the school's ISAT Composite results from tests administered in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011. If the school does not have two years of data, one year of data will be used. A school shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

- 25% or more exceeding = 3 points
- 15%-24.9% exceeding = 2 points
- 5%-14.9% exceeding = 1 point
- Under 5% exceeding = 0 points

**b. Trend** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on improvement in the percentage of students in all grades who are *exceeding* state standards on ISAT Composite. Improvement trend is determined by comparing the 2011 score for all students with the average score of the three previous years. If the school does not have three previous years of data, the previous two years will be used. A school shall receive points as follows:

- For schools with 0%-89.9% of students in all grades exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT Composite, points are earned as follows:  
No Improvement = 0 points  
Improvement of at least 0.1 but under 3.0 percentage points = 1 point  
Improvement of at least 3.0 but under 6.0 percentage points = 2 points  
Improvement of at least 6.0 percentage points = 3 points
- Schools with 90% or greater of students in all grades exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT Composite automatically earn 3 points regardless of improvement.

**5. ISAT Composite – Highest Grade Students – 6 possible points**

**a. Current Status** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on the percentage of students in the school's highest grade level who are *exceeding* state standards as indicated by the school's ISAT Composite. Current status is determined by averaging the school's ISAT Composite results for students in the highest grade from tests administered in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011. If the school does not have two years of data, one year of data

will be used. A school shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

25% or more exceeding = 3 points

15%-24.9% exceeding = 2 points

5%-14.9% exceeding = 1 point

Under 5% exceeding = 0 points

**b. Trend** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on improvement in the percentage of students in the school's highest grade level who are *exceeding* state standards on ISAT Composite. Improvement trend is determined by comparing the 2011 score for students in the highest grade with the average score of the three previous years. If the school does not have three previous years of data, the previous two years will be used. A school shall receive points as follows:

- For schools with 0%-89.9% of students in the highest grade exceeding state standards on the

2009 ISAT Composite, points are earned as follows:

No Improvement = 0 points

Improvement of at least 0.1 but under 3.0 percentage points = 1 point

Improvement of at least 3.0 but under 6.0 percentage points = 2 points

Improvement of at least 6.0 percentage points = 3 points

- Schools with 90% or greater of students in the highest grade exceeding state standards on the 2011 ISAT Composite automatically earn 3 points regardless of improvement.

### **6. Attendance – 6 possible points**

**a. Current Status** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on its average attendance rate from the two most recent school years. To determine current status, a school's average attendance rates from the 2009-2010 school year and from the 2010-2011 school year will be averaged. If two years of data are not available, one year of data will be used. A school shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

95% or more attendance rate = 3 points

93%-94.9% attendance rate = 2 points

90%-92.9% attendance rate = 1 point

Under 90% attendance rate = 0 points

**b. Trend** - An elementary school shall be evaluated on improvement of its average attendance rate. Improvement trend is determined by comparing the 2010-2011 attendance rate with the average rate of the three previous years. If the school does not have three previous years of data, the previous two years will be used. A school shall receive points as follows:

- For schools with a 2010-2011 attendance rate of 0%-94.9%, points are earned as follows:

No Improvement = 0 points

Improvement of at least 0.1 but under 0.5 percentage points = 1 point

Improvement of at least 0.5 but under 1.0 percentage points = 2 points

Improvement of at least 1.0 percentage points = 3 points

- Schools with a 2010-2011 attendance rate of 95% or greater earn 3 points regardless of improvement.

**7. Value-Added – ISAT Reading – 3 possible points**

**Value-Added Score** – An elementary school shall be evaluated on its Value-Added scale score gain for ISAT reading and shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

At least one standard deviation above the district average in 2011 = 3 points

Greater than or equal to the district average, but less than one standard deviation above the district average in 2011 = 2 points

Below the district average, but by no more than one standard deviation in 2011 = 1 point

More than one standard deviation below the district average in 2011 = 0 points

**8. Value-Added - ISAT Mathematics – 3 possible points**

**Value-Added Score** – An elementary school shall be evaluated on its Value-Added scale score gain for ISAT mathematics and shall receive points towards its overall performance score as follows:

At least one standard deviation above the district average in 2011 = 3 points

Greater than or equal to the district average, but less than one standard deviation above the district average in 2011 = 2 points

Below the district average, but by no more than one standard deviation in 2011 = 1 point

More than one standard deviation below the district average in 2011 = 0 points

...

**VI. SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED AS NEEDING REMEDIAL ASSISTANCE**

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**B. Schools Placed on Probation...**

3. Additional Corrective Measures: Schools placed on Probation that, after at least one year, fail to make adequate progress in correcting deficiencies are subject to the following actions by the approval of the Board, after an opportunity for a hearing:...

d. Reconstitution of the attendance center and replacement and reassignment by the CEO of all employees of the attendance center;...

\* \* \* \*

Finally, the role of the hearing officer, and manner in which he or she is to receive comments, are set forth in the **“PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS ON PROPOSED SCHOOL CLOSURE, CONSOLIDATION, CO-LOCATION,**

## **PHASE-OUT RECONSTITUTION, OR REASSIGNMENT BOUNDARY**

**CHANGE.”** Those Procedures state:

1. Upon determining to recommend to the Chicago Board of Education (“Board”) that a school be closed, consolidated with another school, co-located, phased-out, reconstituted or subject to reassignment boundary change, an independent hearing officer shall be appointed consistent with 105 ILCS 5/34-230(f) to conduct a public hearing.
  - a. The hearing will commence and conclude at the time designated in the notice of hearing;
  - b. The hearing will be transcribed;
  - c. The hearing officer will be solely responsible for conducting the hearing and will conduct the hearing in an efficient and impartial manner.
  
2. The Chief Executive Officer’s Presentation
  - a. An attorney will represent the Chief Executive Officer’s proposal by making an opening statement and submitting evidence in support of the proposal to be considered by the hearing officer.
  - b. The attorney may also introduce witnesses, who will present statements regarding the proposal. The hearing officer may ask the witnesses questions to clarify any statements they made.
  
3. Public Participation
  - a. The hearing officer will receive relevant statements, comments, documents or written proposals from members of the public.
  - b. All those wishing to comment on the matter being considered will be required to sign up to do so as provided in the notice of hearing. i. Registration must be made in person by the individual who will be commenting on the proposal; and ii. An individual may not complete a speaker registration on behalf of another person.
  - c. The hearing officer will determine the order of speakers.
  - d. When called by the hearing officer to speak, the speaker shall proceed promptly to the microphone area where s/he will have two minutes to present his/her remarks and materials to the hearing officer.
  - e. The total number of persons speaking at the hearing will be subject to the sole discretion of the hearing officer.
  - f. The hearing officer may impose any other reasonable procedures or limitations necessary to ensure that the proceedings are orderly and efficient.

- g. Courteous, respectful and civil behavior is expected from all speakers and all persons attending a hearing, and individuals who are disruptive may be removed from the hearing.
4. Hearing Officer’s Written Report
- a. Following the hearing, the hearing officer will prepare and submit to the Chief Executive Officer a written report summarizing the public comments and the documents received at the hearing...

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**III. Summary of the Evidence**

**Testimony Received at the Public Hearing**

**Testimony from CPS**

**Name**

**Affiliation**

**Sharon Tiller**

**Attorney, Chicago Board of Education**

Ms. Tiller tendered to the hearing officer the CEO’s Compiled Exhibit 1, which consisted of a binder of documents submitted in support of the CEO’s Proposal. The documents consisted of the following:

1. Notice Letter to Parents/Guardians of Students at Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated November 30, 2011
2. Notice Letter to School Staff at Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated November 28, 2011
3. Notice Letters to Local School Council Members at Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated November 30, 2011
4. Internal Communications Electronic Mail to CPS School-Based Staff: entitled “Reminder about Planned Public Hearings and How to Sign Up,” dated January 5, 2012
5. Affidavit of Devin F. McFarland, Special Assistant at the Chicago Board of Education, Re: Mail and/or Personal Delivery of Notice Letters to Parents/Guardians, School Staff and Local School Council Members on or about November 30, 2011
6. 105 ILCS 5/34-18 (“Powers of the Board”), effective January 1, 2012
7. 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3 (“Remediation and Probation of Attendance Centers”)

8. Chicago Board of Education School Performance, Remediation and Probation Policy for the 2011-2012 School Year (Policy Manual Section 302.6A, Board Report 10-0728-PO4)

9. Chief Executive Officer's Procedures for Public Hearings on Proposed School Closure, Consolidation, Phase-Out, Reconstitution, or Reassignment Boundary Change

10. The written statement of Oliver Sicat, designee of the Chief Executive Officer for the Chicago Public Schools

11. The written statement of Peter Godard, Director of Performance Data and Accountability for the Chicago Public Schools. 11A is Mr. Godard's PowerPoint presentation. 11B is the Performance Policy Reports for Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated December 15th, 2008. 11C is the Performance Policy Reports for Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated September 10th, 2009. 11D is the Performance Policy Reports for Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated October 12th, 2010. 11E is the Performance Policy Reports for Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School dated September 13th, 2011.

12. The written statement of Dr. Shawn Smith, Chief of Schools for the Burnham Park and Skyway Elementary School Networks of the Chicago Public Schools. 12A is the School Improvement Planning for Academic -- Advancing Academic Achievement for Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School for 2010-2012, year 1. 12B is Board Report Number 10-1215-ED4 Approving the SIPAAA for Schools on Probation and Schools with Improvement Status dated December 15th, 2010. 12C is the School Improvement Planning for Advancing Academic Achievement, SIPAAA, for Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School 2010-2012, year 2. 12D is the Board Report Number 11-0824-ED2, approving the SIPAAA for Schools on Probation and School -- for Schools on Probation and Schools with School Improvement Status dated August 24th, 2011.

The undersigned accepted the aforementioned documents into the record of the hearing upon the motion of Ms. Tiller.

**Oliver Sicat**

**Director of Portfolio Strategy and Planning, CPS**

Mr. Sicat stated the basic case for reconstituting Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School, and testified as follows: "I am the Chief Portfolio Officer for the Chicago Public Schools. My primary responsibility is to develop and execute the strategic plan to meet our goal of ensuring all students in every community have access to high-quality schools.

I have been designated by the Chief Executive Officer, or CEO, to discuss his proposal to reconstitute Carter G. Woodson Elementary School, hereafter referred to as Woodson South. Reconstitution is commonly referred to as a turnaround. In a turnaround students are not displaced and remain enrolled at the same school and the Board of Education authorizes removal and replacement of a staff -- of all the staff at the school.

Woodson South is eligible for reconstitution under the Illinois School Code provision regarding remediation and probation of attendance centers 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3 because it has been on probation for at least one year and has failed to make adequate progress to correct its academic deficiencies. In fact, Woodson South has been on probation for four consecutive years. You will hear testimony this evening from Peter Godard, Director of Performance Data and Accountability for the Chicago Public Schools detailing the academic performance of Woodson South. You will also hear a statement from Dr. Shawn Smith, Chief of Schools for the Burnham Park and Skyway Elementary Schools Networks, who will provide you with more information regarding the basis for the CEO's proposal and for the previous supports that the District provided to Woodson South in an attempt to accelerate student achievement at the school. If this proposal is approved the CEO is also recommending that the network take over operations of Woodson South. Dr. Smith will also provide testimony tonight regarding the plan for the Woodson South turnaround developed by the network office in conjunction with the CPS Office of School Improvement. We understand that staff and families are concerned any time this kind of change is proposed. We take these decisions very seriously. When we ask the important questions around equity for all students district-wide and around our ability to provide a better education for our students immediately, we strongly believe this reconstitution is in the best interest of our students.”

**Peter Godard                      Director of Performance Data and Accountability, CPS**

Mr. Godard delineated the school’s data pursuant to the CPS School Performance Policy. He testified as follows: “I am the Director of Performance Data and Accountability for the Chicago Public Schools. In this capacity I oversee the implementation of the District's Performance, Remediation and Probation Policy or Performance Policy and compliance with state and Federal school accountability policies. I have been in this position since December 2007. I am appearing before you today to present the specific data highlighting the low academic performance of Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School. This data will be displayed on the PowerPoint presentation currently being shown. The Board of Education has adopted policies setting forth the criteria for determining when a school is subject to being placed on probation and when it can be removed from that status. Specifically, the Performance Policy is the District's School Accountability Policy. Under this policy each school receives an annual rating based on its performance on a variety of student outcome measures, including standardized test scores and student attendance. This rating is based on a point system. Points are received for the school's current level of performance and improvement over time on standardized tests and attendance, as well as the growth of individual students from year to year on the state test. There are 14 separate metrics on which schools are evaluated, each worth up to three points, for a total of 42 available points. Elementary schools that receive less than 50 percent of the total available points earn a rating of Level 3 and are placed on probation. CPS began using this structure for the Performance Policy four years ago. In all four years Woodson has been a Level 3 school. In the 2007-2008 school year Woodson received 28.6 percent of available points. In the 2008-2009 school year it received 9.5 percent of available points. In the 2009-2010 school year it received 23.8 percent of available points. In the 2010-2011 school year it received 19 percent of available points. Prior to four years ago CPS

still had a policy determining the school's accountability status. Woodson has been on probation for the past four consecutive years. The notices of Woodson's Performance Policy status for the last four school years, which were sent to the Woodson principal, are included in the binder of documents that you have received. The next slide shows the results of the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, or ISAT, for the 2010-2011 school year for Woodson, the geographic network in which Woodson is located and the District. Woodson is located in the Burnham Park Elementary Network. The term geographic network refers to the schools that are currently in the Burnham Park Elementary Network, as well as elementary schools located within the community but managed independently, such as, charter schools. The reason for using geographic network in this calculation was to show how Woodson is performing compared to all other schools in its community. As you can see, Woodson's 2010-2011 ISAT meets or exceeds composite score, which is the combined result of ISAT reading, mathematics and science assessments was 50.3 percent compared to the geographic network average of 69.9 percent and the district average of 75.6 percent. In reading the percent of Woodson students meeting or exceeding state standards was 45.7 percent compared to a geographic network average of 68.4 percent and a District average of 72.8 percent. In mathematics Woodson's performance was 56.3 percent compared to a geographic network average of 73.9 percent and a District average of 79.5 3 percent. In science Woodson's performance was 46.6 percent compared to a geographic network average of 62.6 percent and a District average of 72.4 percent. The next few slides show Woodson's performance over time on the metrics used in the Performance Policy. These slides demonstrate that the performance gap between Woodson and other schools in the network and across the District has been persistent over time and in recent years has been widening. Woodson's composite score was 1.7 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 19.6 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's composite score was 6.4 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 25.3 percentage points below the District in 2010-2011. In addition to measuring the percent of students meeting state standards, CPS also measures the percentage of students exceeding standards. In 2010-2011 Woodson's ISAT composite exceeds score was 2.9 percent compared to a geographic network average of 14.2 percent and a District average of 18.1 percent. Woodson's exceeds score was 2.4 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 11.3 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's exceeds score was 4.8 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 15.2 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011. The performance gap between Woodson and the District is consistent across subjects. Woodson's ISAT reading meets or exceeds score was 5.6 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 22.7 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's reading score was 8.4 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 27.1 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011. Woodson's ISAT mathematics meets or exceeds score was 1.3 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 17.6 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's mathematics score was 7.1 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 23.2 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011. Woodson's ISAT science meets or exceeds score was 8.6 percentage points

above the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 16 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's reading score was 1.6 percentage points above the District average in 2005-2006 and 25.8 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011. The Value-Added metric, which is a component of the Performance Policy, compares student academic growth on the ISAT at a school with the growth of similar students across the District. This is done through a regression methodology that controls for nine student-level factors, including grade level, prior performance on the ISAT, free or reduced lunch eligibility, race or ethnicity, mobility, participation in the Students in Temporary Living Situations Program, Individualized Education Program or IEP status, English Language Learner Status and gender. Controlling for these factors allows us to see how much impact the school had on its average student over the past year. Because we control for prior performance this metric allows us to identify schools with low test scores where growth is rapid and schools with high test scores where growth is slow. The Value-Added metric is a standardized measure with a mean of zero. Standardization means that the score is reported in standard deviation units which is a measure of how far away the school's score is from the District average. A positive number means that students at the school are growing at a faster pace than similar students in the District. For example, a positive 1 indicates that the school is one standard deviation above the mean, meaning the school students are growing at a faster pace than approximately 84 percent of 24 schools in the District. A score near zero means that students at the school are growing at about the same pace as similar students in the District. And a negative score means that students at the school are growing at a slower pace than similar students in the District. Woodson's reading value-added score was .6 in 2010 and negative 2.4 in 2011. Its mathematics value-added score was negative .7 in 2010 and negative .7 in 2011. This means that on average students at Woodson grew at a below average pace in both reading and mathematics in 2011. As a point of reference Woodson's 2011 value-added score for reading was in the bottom 1 percent of scores in the District. And the 2011 value-added score for mathematics was in the bottom 25 percent of scores in the District. To conclude, Woodson Elementary School is on probation in accordance with state law and the Performance Policy. The school has low performance, this performance is consistently low across subject areas and the school is not making progress in catching up to the District.”

**Dr. Shawn Smith    Chief of Schools for the Burnham Park and Skyway  
Elementary School Networks, CPS**

Dr. Smith testified concerning the efforts made to assist Woodson as follows: “I am the Chief of Schools Chief, Chief or COS, for Chicago Public Schools Burnham Park and Skyway Elementary School Networks. Chicago Public Schools are divided up into networks previously known as areas. Network offices are run by a chief, previously known as the Chief Area Officer, and provides support and oversight for the schools assigned to them on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer. Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School, Woodson South, is within the Burnham Park Elementary School boundary, and I am responsible for the support and oversight of Woodson South on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer. I have been the Chief of Woodson South School

since August 1st, 2009. Before beginning I would like to clarify that throughout my testimony whenever I refer to the network I will be collectively referring to staff from both the former area and current network offices. By way of background over the last 14 years I have worked in a number of capacities within public school education, including elementary and middle schoolteacher, assistant principal, principal and deputy in the autonomous school's office before becoming Chief in August of 2009. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary School Education, a Masters Degree in Middle School Education and a Doctorate from the University of Southern California in Urban Education Policy and Leadership. The CEO has asked me to appear at this hearing today to convey to you and the parents, staff members of Woodson South, Local School Council members, as well as interested members of the public in attendance information relevant to the proposal to reconstitute Woodson South. Woodson South is located at 4414 South Evans Street and currently serves approximately 350 students in grades kindergarten through grade 8. As you have already heard Woodson South has been on probation for the past four consecutive school years. Woodson South is in School Improvement for failing to meet the Illinois State Board of Education's required standards for minimum student performance on state assessments and standardized tests. A review of student performance data shows Woodson South is achieving well below the District average and is not making sufficient progress in remediating these outcomes. Accordingly, the Chief Executive Officer is recommending the reconstitution of Woodson South. The District has supported Woodson South over the last several years with the following programmatic, professional development and mentoring supports: For the past two school years the District has provided oversight of Woodson South's discretionary budget to ensure funds are allocated in line with the goals for improved student outcomes. This is done through the School Improvement Plan for Advancing Academic Achievement, otherwise known as SIPAAA. Copies of the SIPAAA for the last two years are located in your binder at Tabs 12A and 12C. The SIPAAA is created with input from several stakeholder groups including parents, school staff, school administration and others. Representatives from these groups identify key areas where the school needs improvement, plan interventions to support 4 the school and allocate funds accordingly. The Chief not only provides input in the creation of the SIPAAA but also approves the SIPAAA upon completion. The Board of Education also approves the SIPAAA. And copies of the Board Reports adopting Woodson South's Sepias for the last two years are located in your evidence binder at Tabs 12B and 12D. During the 2009-2010 school year the network allocated \$54,937 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA, funds directly to Woodson South, which was more than any other school in Area 13 was allocated. These funds were used to provide additional staff development and training. During the 2009-2010 school year the network provided professional development supports to Woodson for its grades 3 through 5 teachers, its coach and principal in the form of three area-wide professional development sessions. Additionally, network personnel visited the school on multiple occasions to assist Woodson staff with implementation strategies. In addition to the ARRA funds the network provided funds to pay substitute teachers so that Woodson South's permanent teaching staff could engage in regular professional development collaboration. To further support Woodson teachers the network purchased a writing curriculum created by the Developmental Study Center entitled Being a Writer. For the past two school years the network has provided

professional development to Woodson South staff in the areas of literacy, math and science in an effort to improve instruction. The network provided professional development in support for Woodson South staff on using data to improve instruction. The network data analyst assisted Woodson staff in analyzing student assessment metrics to determine what factors contributed to the data results. After contributing factors were determined the network assisted in identifying instructional solutions and concrete action plans. Over the past two years network personnel have conducted multiple school visits to assist school staff in assessing student needs and improving instruction. I have participated in instructional learning walkthroughs with the principal and leadership team as well as the goal of setting conversations over a two-year period. Despite all of these supports Woodson South has not adequately improved student outcomes. Accordingly, the Chief Executive Officer is recommending that Woodson South be reconstituted to accelerate student achievement. In a reconstitution students will not be displaced from the school, instead a new team of administrators, faculty and support personnel will be staffed at the school. If the Board approves the proposed reconstitution of Woodson South, the network in conjunction with the Office of School Improvement, OSI, will hire the new administration and staff. Current employees at Woodson South will be invited to apply for positions for the fall of 2012. A team of OSI subject matter experts will work with the network office to hire the Woodson South administration and build a staff of committed and experienced professionals who will work relentlessly to accelerate student achievement at the school. Throughout the hiring process applicants are scored on a rubric and proceed through multiple interview stages, including a group interview, a sample lesson review or a school visit and a community panel interview. The OSI hiring process seeks to provide Woodson South students with qualified administrators, teachers and support personnel that will lead to enhanced educational programming for students. Additionally, network staff will consult with OSI to develop a plan for improving student achievement at Woodson. The plan will be based on the OSI turnaround model which contains strong evidence-based strategies that are built on local and national expertise and District experiences. Specifically, the Woodson South turnaround plan will include the following strategies: Conduct multiple meetings with community groups and parents to ensure that they are aware of the school's key issues and help to make decisions for the future of the school in a collaborative effort that pulls together the energies of multiple stakeholders to improve the school. Invest in physical upgrades in the school over the summer so that students return to an environment that communicates a new start. Continue to invest in new curriculum programs and technology to help build a healthy climate and culture in the school. Continue to provide professional development and training in core curriculum areas to improve instruction and student achievement. Train staff and classroom management techniques and discipline programs and coaching teachers on how to improve their classroom management skills. Continue to focus on using data to improve instruction and student achievement by ensuring that academic, social-emotional and behavioral goals are met. In conclusion, there is an urgent need to accelerate student achievement at Woodson South. The Chief Executive Officer believes that a turnaround by reconstitution will accelerate student achievement and the network and in consultation with OSI is prepared to implement turnaround strategies to provide Woodson South students with better educational opportunities.” Dr. Smith, in response to a question from the hearing officer further stated: “ ... I think the question was why

was there a spike in achievement during the 2007 academic year. So just for the record I was not the Chief of Schools at that time, nor was I employed by Chicago Public Schools. But in hearing I think some of the evidence from the community and the school and the staff as well as CPS, I believe it's my understanding that Woodson was a receiving school of other students from another school that year. It was also the year I believe the LSC hired a new principal within a 12-month period there. And that principal was only at the school for I believe less than two years until they appointed a new principal which is the current principal now. That principal at the time also did not have a valid Illinois Administrative Certificate.”

### **Testimony from the public**

**Pat Dowell**

**Alderman, 3rd Ward**

Alderman Dowell testified as follows: “It is that time of year again when the Board of Education must make some difficult decisions that will certainly be met with much opposition from the affected communities. Although the 3rd Ward was spared for any type of school action as defined by CPS school action guidelines and required by Senate Bill 630, there is a proposal to make Woodson South an OSI turnaround. Everyone who is part of the Woodson community wants to see Woodson South become a higher performing school, there's no question about that. However, many of us are concerned about the loss of Principal Littlejohn and her assistant principal, Ms. Davis. The improvements they have made at Woodson may not be immediately recognizable with the performance metrics used by CPS but will certainly be obvious in the years to come. They are only in their second year of leadership at Woodson South, which means that there's currently only one year of performance data relevant to their tenure. I am sure someone with experience with turnaround schools you can understand, Mr. Hearing Officer, that it takes longer than one or two years to turn around a troubled school. One of the qualities both Ms. Littlejohn and Ms. Davis have that immediately come to mind is that they understand how problems in the school can originate from outside of the school. Certainly improving the climate in and around the school are important first steps towards creating an optimal environment where children can learn. Ms. Littlejohn and Ms. Davis have developed important relationships with my office, the Office of Safety and Security, the Chicago Housing Authority, the 2nd Police District and other community stakeholders to address serious safety issues that were impacting both the school and the surrounding community. As a result many of these issues that distracted students from learning and created quality-of-life issues for residents have been mitigated. Having to rebuild these relationships with new leadership would certainly be a huge setback. In the short time that they have been at Woodson Principal Littlejohn and Assistant Principal Davis have launched research-based professional development initiatives, they've begun using interim assessments on teaching practices. They strategically tailor before and after school tutoring programs and are analyzing student work samples to further assess teachers and student progress. These efforts will definitely translate into higher performance marks in the future and makes them both uniquely qualified to evaluate which teachers should stay at Woodson. If the turnaround of

Woodson is approved by the Board of Education, I believe it is imperative that Ms. Littlejohn and Ms. Davis be given more time to continue making the above-mentioned improvements and have significant input into the rehiring process. Considering Ms. Littlejohn was thoroughly vetted by Woodson's LSC from a field of over 120 candidates less than two years ago. Her continuance would be more in line with new community engagement strategies recently developed by CPS. In addition, I want to say that Woodson South needs more support from CPS. As far as I know there's been \$200,000 allocated for a playground, we need more than a playground. \$390,000 for academic support, and ... \$190,000 in capital improvements. And according to what turnarounds get I believe they get close to \$1.3 million, this is woefully inadequate for support from CPS. And I would be hopeful that if this decision goes through to turn around Woodson South that the commensurate amount of resources be earmarked for that school and Ms. Littlejohn and Ms. Davis are given the opportunity to do their job.”

**Nona Burney**

**Member, Bronzeville Community Action Council**

Ms. Burney testified that the Bronzeville Community Action Council was authorized by CPS to prepare a comprehensive strategic plan for all community schools, including Woodson. She stated that they presented this plan to the CEO in October but have yet to hear from him. She stated that they are concerned about any school actions taken without feedback and involvement from their community. She requested a moratorium on the proposal until the community can be engaged in the process. She presented the hearing officer with a copy of the strategic plan, which is summarized below.

**Vivonell Brown, Jr.**

**Teacher, Woodson**

Mr. Brown testified that he has been a teacher at Woodson since 1992 and when he started there, it was considered one of the best schools in Region 13. This changed in 2007 when they received a new principal. He stated that this principal reassigned more experience teachers, caused veteran teachers to leave and hired inexperienced teachers at Woodson. He also stated that the school was under-resourced. He stated that many great teachers still work at Woodson and their experience should not be thrown away.

**Jessalyn Tyran Jackson**

**Parent**

Ms. Jackson stated that she is a parent who has volunteered at Woodson since 2007. She stated that the children cannot learn Spanish because there are no Spanish teachers. She stated that the children cannot learn music because the school lacks instruments. She stated that there are good teachers at the school, but they lack the equipment they need.

**Lakisha Moore**

**Parent**

Ms. Moore stated that there are excellent teachers at Woodson, as well as parents who are very active. She stated that in order for the students to receive a quality education they must receive funding and textbooks.

**Cherry Washington****Teacher**

Ms. Washington is the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at Woodson. She testified that beginning in 2007 with the then-new principal, teachers were fired, budgets were cut, classrooms were overcrowded, there were not enough textbooks and equipment. She stated that these conditions affect the test scores. She stated that the evaluations of teachers who protested these conditions were lowered. She stated that they should be given time to raise the test scores using new staff and resources.

**Bettye Jones****Teacher**

Ms. Jones testified that she is a kindergarten teacher at Woodson and her children, who now volunteer there, previously attended Woodson. She stated that she has a good rapport with parents. She believes they are already in turnaround mode and have been since 2007. She stated that the current principal Ms. Littlejohn and the assistant principal, Ms. Davis have worked to bring decent programs to the school. She testified that the school lacks supplies and that she, like other teachers, spend about \$2000 a year of their own money to buy supplies. She stated that the system is failing them because they do not have the necessary resources and training.

**Myra Johnson****Staff member**

Ms. Johnson was in charge of supplies. She believes the funds at the school were not properly spent since the teachers did not have the supplies, books or copy paper they needed.

**LaChresha Sylvestal****Parent/Chair, Local School Council**

Ms. Sylvestal testified that the school does not have any money and the teachers ask the parents to send copy paper to the school. She stated that they have very good teachers at the school. She also stated that when the current principal and assistant principal came they put the school in turnaround mode so the school does not need to be turned around.

**Elisabeth Kreydich****Teacher**

Ms. Kreydich has been a teacher at Woodson for 9 years. She teaches low-income, special needs students. She testified that as a special education teacher she is often speaking for others who cannot speak for themselves. She read a statement from a parent of a special needs student who was unable to attend the hearing: "I'm a proud Carter G. Woodson parent. My son has been there for three years now and I feel that he's come a long way and has benefitted so much from the school staff. My son is a special needs child and wasn't doing anything pretty much. Since being there he started to communicate, to talk, he's progressed in interacting and socializing with other children and even gained basic computer skills. I ask you not to close or fire or turn around this school staff but to please continue to work with them and offer bettering the school with





home and therefore they cannot do their homework. She testified that the students have also experienced a number of teacher deaths and other changes and that is confusing the children. She also testified that too many parents are not invested in the students' education.

**Charletta Johnson**

**Teacher**

Ms. Johnson is a third grade teacher with a Master degree in Early Childhood Education. She says the students are pushed to learn data for the exams without an opportunity to process the information or to develop their skills. She stated that the Woodson staff did everything they were told to do and that they are superior teachers.

### **Summary of Documents Received**

#### **Documents Submitted By CPS**

The CEO, through the Law Department, submitted several documents to the hearing officer that were received and made a part of the record in this case. Those documents included: 1) copies of the notice letters advising of the hearing sent to the school communities including the Principals, LSCs, parents, and teachers and staff, and an affidavit regarding the same; 2) a copy of the Board's Policies on Performance; 3) the Procedures for the Hearing; 4) a copy of the relevant statutory provisions; 5) the CPS witnesses' written testimony and related Power Point presentation; 6) Performance Policy Reports for Woodson for 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011; 7) School Improvement Planning for Advancing Academic Achievement for Woodson, 2010-2012, Year 1; 8) Board Report No. 10-1215-ED4, Approving the SIPAA for Schools on Probation and Schools with School Improvement Status, dated Dec. 15, 2010; 9) School Improvement Planning for Advancing Academic Achievement for Woodson, 2010-2012, Year 2; and 10) Board Report No. 11-0824-ED2, Approving the SIPAA for Schools on Probation and Schools with School Improvement Status, dated Aug. 4, 2011.

### **Documents Submitted In Opposition To The Closing**

1. Written Statement of Claudine Walker read into the record by Ms. Darlene Washington.
2. Written Statement of Marlene Hampton read into the record by Ms. Elisabeth Kreydich.
3. Individual Teacher: Interim Graphs with student details for Woodson South submitted by Ms. Pamela Henning.
4. "A Day in the Life of Carter G. Woodson Elementary School," an excellent photo booklet showing the students staff and teachers at the school performing their duties.
5. Letter from Vivonell Brown, Jr. in opposition to the proposal to Turnaround Woodson South, also signed by numerous other persons believed to be staff and students of Woodson South.
6. Written statement of D. Washington stating that there are limited supplies, inadequate materials and supplies, revolving door of administrators and teachers and disruptive environment at Woodson due to directive to reduce suspension rate. Also, no air conditioners at the school.
7. Written statement of LL Spearman consistent with his testimony at the hearing.
8. Written statement of Cynthia Phanord consistent with her testimony at the hearing.
9. Written statement of Pamela Henning consistent with her testimony at the hearing.

10. Letter from Kathleen Murray of the Chicago Teachers Union, dated Feb. 2, 2010, with attachments. The letter states that Woodson is in an upward trajectory due to 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade test scores. 8th grade had 88.5% in reading, 92.3% in math and 90.4% composite score. She states that CPS' probation policy of combining 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade scores misses the variability among different grades. She also references swings in student enrollment over the years and how that placed burdens on the schools. She also references a 50.1% student mobility rate at Woodson South. Request that the turnaround proposal not be approved.
11. Letter from a student advising that they do not have enough books in their classrooms, and those that they do have are very old. They also don't have many books in the library. Says the teachers at Woodson are good.
12. "Bronzeville Community Action Council Education in Bronzeville: A Vision," dated Sept. 2011. The document recommends the following elements:
  - A community of Bronzeville Schools that works together, shares resources and takes collective responsibility for the success of all Bronzeville children;
  - A variety of rigorous school and extracurricular options for children and families (dividing the area into 4 quadrants of 10 schools each, including charter and parochial schools);
  - A system for helping families access and make well-informed decisions about school and extracurricular enrollment and social services;

- Rich student experiences from early childhood education through high school that build on Bronzeville’s history and culture and utilize the community’s resources;
- Comprehensive supports for families located in schools that help parents help their children to be successful;
- High quality early learning opportunities for children from birth through grade 3 in school and in the community;
- Robust support for teachers and school leaders to improve the quality and rigor of instruction;
- Community governance structure that represents the interests of the Bronzeville community, facilitates collaboration among schools and other service providers, and communicates progress to all stakeholders; and
- Effective and efficient use of existing new resources to support Bronzeville schools (includes facilities, people, funding).

### **STATEMENT OF FINDINGS**

1. Proper notice of the Public Hearing was given as required by Illinois law and the Procedures for Public Hearings on Proposed School Closure, Consolidation, Phase-out, Reconstitution or Reassignment Boundary Change. The purpose of the Public Hearing was to give representatives of the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”), members of the local school council, parents, students, members of the school’s staff, the principal, representatives of the Chicago Teachers’ Union, and interested members of the public, an opportunity to comment on the CEO’s proposal to Turnaround Carter G. Woodson South

Elementary School via Reconstitution.

2. On Wednesday, February 1, 2012, a public hearing was held at the Board of Education, 125 South Clark, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Chicago, Illinois. The public hearing required to be conducted prior to reconstituting a school has taken place in this case, and all of the other aspects of the applicable Board's Policies have been fully complied with.

3. Under the statutory scheme contained in Section 5/34-8.3 (d) of the Illinois School Code, the CEO and the Chicago Board of Education are granted the authority to take certain corrective measures with respect to schools with academic deficiencies. One of those measures is placing schools on probation, which allows the CEO and the Board to take additional corrective actions intended to correct the school's academic deficiencies. Any school placed on probation is subject to several courses of action by the CEO, with the approval of the Board, after an opportunity for hearing. Section 5/34-8.3 (d) (4) specifically includes "Reconstitution of the attendance center and replacement and reassignment by the general superintendent of all employees of the attendance center" as an action available to the CEO in said cases.

4. Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School is located at 4414 South Evans, Chicago, IL 60653.

5. If approved by the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, the following would occur as a result of the reconstitution of Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School: All students currently enrolled in Woodson or eligible to enroll in Woodson this coming fall would continue as students at the school; All staff including the faculty would be removed and replaced; Woodson and its new administration and staff would be supported by the Burnham Park and Skyway Elementary School Networks

in conjunction with the CPS Office of School Improvement.

6. None of the “Exclusion Factors” that would prohibit Woodson from being eligible to be a turnaround school in a manner that is consistent with State Law, and the Board’s applicable Policies and Guidelines adopted pursuant thereto, are applicable here.

7. Woodson South is in School Improvement for failing to meet the Illinois State Board of Education's required standards for minimum student performance on state assessments and standardized tests.

8. A review of student performance data shows Woodson South is achieving well below the District average and is not making sufficient progress in remediating these outcomes.

9. The District has supported Woodson South over the last several years with the following programmatic, professional development and mentoring supports: For the past two school years the District has provided oversight of Woodson South's discretionary budget to ensure funds are allocated in line with the goals for improved student outcomes. This is done through the School Improvement Plan for Advancing Academic Achievement, otherwise known as SIPAAA

10. During the 2009-2010 school year the network allocated \$54,937 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA, funds directly to Woodson South, which was more than any other school in Area 13 was allocated. These funds were used to provide additional staff development and training. During the 2009-2010 school year the network provided professional development supports to Woodson for its grades 3 through 5 teachers, its coach and principal in the form of three area-wide professional development sessions.

11. Additionally, network personnel visited the school on multiple occasions to assist Woodson staff with implementation strategies.

12. In addition to the ARRA funds the network provided funds to pay substitute teachers so that Woodson South's permanent teaching staff could engage in regular professional development collaboration.

13. To further support Woodson teachers the network purchased a writing curriculum created by the Developmental Study Center entitled Being a Writer.

14. For the past two school years the network has provided professional development to Woodson South staff in the areas of literacy, math and science in an effort to improve instruction. The network provided professional development in support for Woodson South staff on using data to improve instruction. The network data analyst assisted Woodson staff in analyzing student assessment metrics to determine what factors contributed to the data results. After contributing factors were determined the network assisted in identifying instructional solutions and concrete action plans.

15. Over the past two years network personnel have conducted multiple school visits to assist school staff in assessing student needs and improving instruction.

16. Dr. Smith has participated in instructional learning walkthroughs with the principal and leadership team as well as the goal of setting conversations over a two-year period.

17. Despite all of these supports Woodson South has not adequately improved student outcomes.

18. The Board of Education has adopted policies setting forth the criteria for determining when a school is subject to being placed on probation and when it can be

removed from that status. Specifically, the Performance Policy is the District's School Accountability Policy. Under this policy each school receives an annual rating based on its performance on a variety of student outcome measures, including standardized test scores and student attendance. This rating is based on a point system. Points are received for the school's current level of performance and improvement over time on standardized tests and attendance, as well as the growth of individual students from year to year on the state test. There are 14 separate metrics on which schools are evaluated, each worth up to three points, for a total of 42 available points. Elementary schools that receive less than 50 percent of the total available points earn a rating of Level 3 and are placed on probation.

19. CPS began using this structure for the Performance Policy four years ago. In all four years Woodson has been a Level 3 school.

20. In the 2007-2008 school year Woodson received 28.6 percent of available points. In the 2008-2009 school year it received 9.5 percent of available points. In the 2009-2010 school year it received 23.8 percent of available points. In the 2010-2011 school year it received 19 percent of available points.

21. Prior to four years ago CPS still had a policy determining the school's accountability status. Woodson has been on probation for the past four consecutive years.

22. The notices of Woodson's Performance Policy status for the last four school years, were sent to the Woodson principal.

23. Woodson's geographic network is the Burnham Park Elementary Network. The term geographic network refers to the schools that are currently in the Burnham Park Elementary Network, as well as elementary schools located within the

community but managed independently, such as, charter schools.

24. Woodson's 2010-2011 ISAT meets or exceeds composite score, which is the combined result of ISAT reading, mathematics and science assessments was 50.3 percent compared to the geographic network average of 69.9 percent and the district average of 75.6 percent. In reading the percent of Woodson students meeting or exceeding state standards was 45.7 percent compared to a geographic network average of 68.4 percent and a District average of 72.8 percent. In mathematics Woodson's performance was 56.3 percent compared to a geographic network average of 73.9 percent and a District average of 79.5 3 percent. In science Woodson's performance was 46.6 percent compared to a geographic network average of 62.6 percent and a District average of 72.4 percent.

25. The performance gap between Woodson and other schools in the network and across the District has been persistent over time and in recent years has been widening.

26. Woodson's composite score was 1.7 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 19.6 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's composite score was 6.4 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 25.3 percentage points below the District in 2010-2011.

27. In addition to measuring the percent of students meeting state standards, CPS also measures the percentage of students exceeding standards. In 2010-2011 Woodson's ISAT composite exceeds score was 2.9 percent compared to a geographic network average of 14.2 percent and a District average of 18.1 percent.

28. Woodson's exceeds score was 2.4 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 11.3 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's exceeds score was 4.8 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 15.2 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011.

29. The performance gap between Woodson and the District is consistent across subjects.

30. Woodson's ISAT reading meets or exceeds score was 5.6 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 22.7 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's reading score was 8.4 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 27.1 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011. Woodson's ISAT mathematics meets or exceeds score was 1.3 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 17.6 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's mathematics score was 7.1 percentage points below the District average in 2005-2006 and 23.2 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011. Woodson's ISAT science meets or exceeds score was 8.6 percentage points above the geographic network average in 2005-2006 and 16 percentage points below the geographic network average in 2010-2011. Woodson's reading score was 1.6 percentage points above the District average in 2005-2006 and 25.8 percentage points below the District average in 2010-2011.

31. The Value-Added metric, which is a component of the Performance Policy, compares student academic growth on the ISAT at a school with the growth of

similar students across the District. This is done through a regression methodology that controls for nine student-level factors, including grade level, prior performance on the ISAT, free or reduced lunch eligibility, race or ethnicity, mobility, participation in the Students in Temporary Living Situations Program, Individualized Education Program or IEP status, English Language Learner Status and gender. Controlling for these factors allows CPS to see how much impact the school had on its average student over the past year.

32. The Value-Added metric is a standardized measure with a mean of zero. Standardization means that the score is reported in standard deviation units which is a measure of how far away the school's score is from the District average. A positive number means that students at the school are growing at a faster pace than similar students in the District. For example, a positive 1 indicates that the school is one standard deviation above the mean, meaning the school students are growing at a faster pace than approximately 84 percent of 24 schools in the District. A score near zero means that students at the school are growing at about the same pace as similar students in the District. And a negative score means that students at the school are growing at a slower pace than similar students in the District.

33. Woodson's reading value-added score was .6 in 2010 and negative 2.4 in 2011. Its mathematics value-added score was negative .7 in 2010 and negative .7 in 2011.

34. Woodson grew at a below average pace in both reading and mathematics in 2011.

35. Woodson's 2011 value-added score for reading was in the bottom 1 percent of scores in the District. And the 2011 value-added score for mathematics was in

the bottom 25 percent of scores in the District.

36. Woodson Elementary School is on probation in accordance with state law and the Performance Policy.

37. Woodson Elementary School has low performance and this performance is consistently low across subject areas and the school is not making progress in catching up to the District.

38. In spite of the additional measures afforded to the staff at Woodson Elementary School, students have continued to perform below standards set by both the State of Illinois and the Chicago Public School system as a whole.

39. Illinois law, and all the Chicago Public School Policies applicable to the CEO's proposed action in this case have been complied with in their entirety, specifically including, but not limited to the School Performance Policy for the 2011-2012 school year.

### **Recommendation**

The Hearing Officer hereby recommends that the Board approve the CEO's proposal to Reconstitute Carter G. Woodson South Elementary School.

**FURTHER THE HEARING OFFICER SAYETH NOT.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin R. Castro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martin R. Castro  
Hearing Officer

February 10, 2012