Chicago Public Schools’ (“CPS”) Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”), Jean-Claude Brizard, publishes the following Guidelines to help the public and all interested stakeholders better understand the criteria for school actions. All proposals presented to the Board for consideration will reflect a commitment that the students and schools impacted receive higher quality educational options. Issuing these Guidelines is consistent with the recently enacted Illinois Public Act 097-0474 requiring that the CEO publish guidelines outlining the criteria for certain types of school actions.

For the 2011-2012 school year, the CEO will consider the criteria specified below when recommending any of the following school actions governed by Public Act 097-0474:

● reassignment boundary change,
● phase-out,
● co-location,
● school closure, or
● school consolidation.

I. CRITERIA

ACADEMIC CRITERIA

When a school receives the lowest performance level (Level 3) on the Performance Policy for two consecutive years, the school may be subject to a school action.

If a school is being considered for a school action based on the factor identified above, the school will be excluded from consideration if it meets any of the following minimum performance criteria:

(a) an elementary school that had an ISAT composite meets or exceeds score at or above its geographic network average in the previous school year;
(b) a high school with a 5-year cohort graduation rate at or above its geographic network average in the previous school year; or
(c) any school that scored at or above the 25th percentile on the trend and growth component of the Performance Policy in the previous school year.

In making a decision on which school actions to propose to the Chicago Board of Education (“Board”), the CEO will also consider other information including, but not limited to: student safety data, school culture and climate, enrollment estimates, the quality of the school facility, family and community feedback, or whether the school has recently undergone any school actions, changes in academic focus or actions taken pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3.
OTHER CRITERIA

The CEO may also recommend a school action:

1. If the school is in the process of phasing out based on a previous action by the Board; or
2. If two elementary schools within 0.5 miles of each other individually offer less than Kindergarten through eighth grades and can be reconfigured to a single Kindergarten through eighth grade school; or
3. To co-locate a Board approved new or existing school.

In making a decision on which school actions to propose to the Board, the CEO will also consider other information including, but not limited to: student safety data, school culture and climate, enrollment estimates, the quality of the school facility, family and community feedback, or whether the school has recently undergone any school actions, changes in academic focus or actions taken pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3.

II. NOTICE AND SCHOOL TRANSITION PLANS

On or before December 1, 2011, the CEO will give notice of any proposed school action. Notice will be provided to the principal, staff, local school council, parents or guardians, Illinois State Senator, Illinois State Representative, and Alderman for the school or schools that are subject to the proposed school action. Notice will include the date, time, and place of the two public meetings and one public hearing being held to elicit public comment on the proposal. Notice will be given at least 30 calendar days prior to a public meeting or hearing. Also, no action will be taken by the Board until at least 60 days after notice of the proposal is given.

Along with notice of the CEO’s proposal, the CEO will issue a draft school transition plan. The draft school transition plan will include, but is not limited to, the following: (1) services to support the academic, social, and emotional needs of students; supports for students with disabilities, homeless students, and English language learners; and support to address security and safety issues; (2) options to enroll in higher performing schools; (3) informational briefings regarding the choice of schools that include all pertinent information to enable the parent or guardian and child to make an informed choice, including the option to visit the schools of choice prior to making a decision; and (4) the provision of appropriate transportation where practicable.

Depending on the unique circumstances of the proposed school action, the following investments may be made and outlined in the draft school transition plan: school safety analysis, social and emotional supports, academic program investments, art and music programming, afterschool programming, professional development, additional administrative positions, school based health clinics and capital improvements.
III. DEFINITIONS

“5-year cohort graduation rate” means the percent of freshman graduating within 5 years.

“ISAT composite” means the score of the combined ISAT reading, math and science tests.

“Performance Policy” means the Board of Education of the City of Chicago’s School Performance, Remediation and Probation Policy, 10-0728-PO4, establishing 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. The score and status are determined following an evaluation of key indicators that assess a school’s current performance, trend over time and student growth.

"Phase-out” means the gradual cessation of enrollment in certain grades each school year until a school closes or is consolidated with another school.

“Reassignment boundary change” means an attendance area boundary change that involves the reassignment of currently enrolled students.

“School action” means any school closing; school consolidation; co-location; boundary change that requires reassignment of students, unless the reassignment is to a new school with an attendance area boundary and is made to relieve overcrowding; or phase-out.

“School closing” or “School closure” means the closing of a school and assigning all the students enrolled at that school to one or more designated receiving schools.

“School consolidation” means the consolidation of two or more schools by closing one or more schools and reassigning the students to another school.

“Trend and growth component of the Performance Policy” means the percent of points earned on the trend and student growth metrics on the Performance Policy.