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**Barbara Byrd-Bennett**  
Chief Executive Officer

March 21, 2014

Administrators, Faculty, Staff and LSC Members at  
Dvorak Technology Academy  
3615 West 16th Street  
Chicago, IL 60623

**Re: Proposed Reconstitution of Dvorak Technology Academy**

Dear Administrators, Faculty, Staff and Local School Council Members:

As Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), I am committed to ensuring that every child in every neighborhood receives a high-quality education that prepares them to be 100% college-ready, 100% college-bound.

From investments in early childhood education and a full school day to ensuring there are strong principals and teachers in our schools, we are working each and every day towards ensuring that all children have the resources and supports they need to be successful in the classroom. This can sometimes mean making difficult decisions, particularly when a school is struggling academically.

Over the last 6 years, Dvorak Technology Academy (Dvorak Tech Academy) has been an underperforming school and has not made the progress necessary to be removed from probation. This is why we are proposing to reconstitute this school. In other words, we will make Dvorak Tech Academy a “turnaround” school for the 2014-2015 School Year, providing students with the opportunity to access a high-quality education and get on a path to success in the classroom.

As a former teacher and principal, I have lived through the process of turning around academically-challenged schools, and I can assure you that CPS has made this decision in an effort to create a culture of success that will give all students at Dvorak Tech Academy the high-quality education they deserve.

Below you will find more information about this proposal and why we are considering Dvorak Tech Academy as a turnaround for SY 14-15.

### **Our Proposal**

We are proposing that Dvorak Tech Academy, located at 3615 West 16th Street, be turned around at the end of the current school year in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3(d)(4). Dvorak Tech Academy has been on probation for 6 consecutive years and has failed to make adequate progress to address the deficiencies that placed it on probation. CPS is proposing to turnaround Dvorak Tech Academy based on the school’s low academic performance and the need to provide higher quality educational options for students in the community. If the Chicago Board of Education approves the turnaround of Dvorak Tech Academy Elementary School, I will recommend that the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) partner with the Board to provide educational services at the school.

### **Details for Current Students**

The turnaround of Dvorak Tech Academy will have no effect on the enrollment of any current students or any students eligible to enroll. All current students will remain enrolled in the school after it is turned around.

## Details for Administrators, Faculty and Staff Members

If the Board approves this proposal, all current administrators, faculty and staff members assigned to Dvorak Tech Academy will be displaced at the end of the 2013-2014 School Year in accordance with Board policies and any applicable contracts and collective bargaining agreements. You will be supported through this process by the Talent organization. You will receive invitations to participate in future networking and hiring events limited to displaced teachers, and may be encouraged to reapply for your current position as well. If you have human resources questions or concerns, please contact us at (773) 553-4748 (HR4U).

A brochure with important information regarding the benefits available to affected administrators, faculty and staff members is enclosed for your information and future reference.

CPS has also implemented an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that provides a safe, confidential environment to access grief counseling during job loss with a trained professional. This service is completely free, absolutely confidential, and available to all employees and members of their households, 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. EAP specialists have masters-level training and a minimum of 3 years of counseling experience.

To access EAP services, which also include mediation and financial services support, please:

- **Call 1-800-711-6087.** When prompted, press '2' for members. You will be asked for your Member ID and you can say "I don't know it" to proceed. Lastly, please press '1' for EAP [(TDD) Dial 711 and enter number above];

or

- **Visit <http://liveandworkwell.com> online.** Web Access Code: 'CPS'.

## Details for Local School Council Members

If the Board approves this proposal, the Local School Council at Dvorak Tech Academy will remain intact, but certain powers may be impacted in accordance with any applicable laws and policies. For more information, please contact the Office of Local School Council Relations at (773) 553-1400.

## Public Comment on this Proposal

A **public hearing** has been scheduled so that public comment may be heard on this proposal:

Wednesday, April 9  
5:30pm - 7:30pm  
CPS Central Office  
125 South Clark Street

Prior to the public hearing, a **community meeting** will be held to receive input. The community meeting will be held:

Wednesday, April 2  
6:00pm – 8:00pm  
Dvorak Technology Academy  
3615 West 16th Street

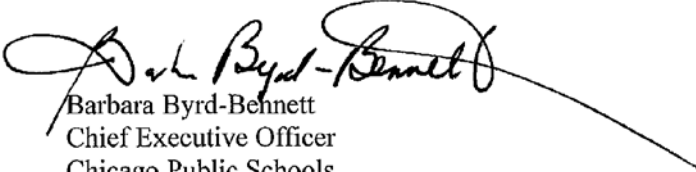
I encourage you to share your thoughts on this proposal at the community meeting or the public hearing. If you wish to speak publicly, you will need to sign up on the day of the hearing or meeting at the hearing or meeting location. Speakers may sign up from one hour before the designated start time until one hour after the start of the hearing or meeting. You

will have two minutes to speak, unless the hearing officer provides an extension. The hearing and meeting will conclude at the stated end time or following the comments of the last person who has signed up to speak, whichever occurs first.

After the public hearing, I will review a written report from the hearing officer. At that time, I may recommend that the Board consider and approve the reconstitution of Dvorak Tech Academy. You will be notified of the final decision after the Board of Education vote on April 23, 2014.

If you have any questions or concerns, visit [www.cps.edu/qualityschools2014](http://www.cps.edu/qualityschools2014), or call (773) 553-4748 (HR4U).

Sincerely,



Barbara Byrd-Bennett  
Chief Executive Officer  
Chicago Public Schools

Encl.