

**REMOVE AND REPLACE THE PRINCIPAL OF BOUCHET MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY
AND TERMINATE THE PRINCIPAL'S CONTRACT**

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the principal of Alexander Bouchet Math & Science Academy (Bouchet) be removed and replaced pursuant to Section 34-8.3(d) of the Illinois School Code and that his contract be terminated pursuant to Section V the Board's Uniform Principal's Performance Contract.

DESCRIPTION:

I. Legal Framework

The Illinois School Code grants the Board authority to establish guidelines to determine the factors for placing an attendance center on probation. 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3(b)(4). Pursuant to that statutory authority, in April 2003, the Board adopted an accountability system for all Chicago Public Schools (Accountability Policy, 03-0423-PO03).

In accordance, with the accountability system, after the 2002-2003 school year, the Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools (CEO) placed Bouchet on probation because fewer than 25% of its students scored at or above national norms in Reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and met or exceeded state standards on the composite Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). In February 2004, the Board amended its accountability system, increasing the number of years schools must remain on probation to a minimum of two, and requiring higher levels of achievement for removal from probation (Amended Accountability Policy, 04-0225-PO3).

In the 2003-2004 school year, Bouchet failed to make sufficient progress for removal from probation under either the Accountability Policy or the Amended Accountability Policy. In particular, Bouchet did not meet expectations because it failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress on the ISAT and also failed to meet the benchmark for Average Student Gain on the ITBS. Bouchet students showed significantly less gain on average per year than their peers in Chicago and in other districts in the state.

The School Code provides that when a probation school fails to make adequate progress to correct deficiencies within one year, the CEO, with the approval of the Board and after an opportunity for a hearing, may remove and replace the probation school's principal. 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3(d)(1). Pursuant to Section V of the Board's Uniform Principal's Performance Contract, a principal's contract may be terminated before the expiration of its four-year term based upon the principal's removal pursuant to Section 34-8.3(d).

II. Hearing on Principal Removal

Pursuant to the "Guidelines for the Removal and Replacement of Principals of Schools on Probation" and the "Procedures Governing Principal Removal Hearings," Robert E. Lewis, Bouchet principal, and the Bouchet Local School Council were duly notified that the CEO was contemplating the removal of Mr. Lewis as principal pursuant to Section 34-8.3(d) to further the school's educational improvement. Mr. Stephen Pugh, Esq., an independent hearing officer, presided over the Bouchet principal removal hearing on August 10, 2004, in an efficient and impartial manner.

The Law Department, representing the CEO, presented testimony, evidence and legal argument to support a recommendation to remove Mr. Lewis. Mr. Lewis, who was represented by counsel, presented testimony, written and documentary evidence and legal argument in opposition to his removal.

The independent hearing officer has submitted a written report to the CEO summarizing all relevant evidence offered during the hearing, making findings of fact, and recommending the removal of the Bouchet principal.

III. Chief Executive Officer's Recommendation

The Chief Executive Officer has reviewed the Hearing Officer's findings of fact and recommendation and hereby recommends that Mr. Robert E. Lewis be removed and replaced as the principal of Bouchet Math & Science Academy. The CEO further recommends termination of Mr. Lewis' current Uniform Principal's Performance Contract, with a term beginning July 1, 2002, and ending June 30, 2006, upon the Board's approval of his removal as Bouchet principal. These recommendations are based upon the following factors:

- A. During the 2003-2004 school year, the Area Instruction Officer made repeated attempts to work with the Bouchet principal to improve instruction. Despite those efforts, the principal failed to effectively and/or sufficiently develop, implement or comply with the school improvement plan;
- B. The Bouchet principal failed to comply with the directives and recommendations of the Area Instruction Officer; and
- C. Bouchet failed to show satisfactory improvement in reading and math scores on the ITBS and the composite ISAT. Bouchet students showed significantly less gain on average per year than their peers in Chicago and in other districts in the state.

If the Board adopts the Chief Executive Officer's recommendation to remove the Bouchet principal, the following actions will occur:

- 1. the Chief Executive Officer will appoint an interim principal for Bouchet, based upon the recommendations of the Chief Education Officer. This interim principal will serve at the pleasure of the Chief Executive Officer; and
- 2. until Bouchet makes sufficient academic progress over two consecutive years to be removed from probation, the local school council shall have no authority to select a new four-year contract principal.

LSC REVIEW: LSC approval is not applicable to this report.

FINANCIAL: The interim principal position will be filled at a cost within current budget appropriations.

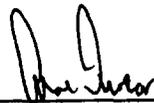
PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS: An Interim Principal will be selected, who will serve at the pleasure of the Chief Executive Officer. Until the school comes off probation, the Local School Council of Bouchet Math & Science Academy will have no authority to select a new four-year contract principal.

Approved for Consideration:



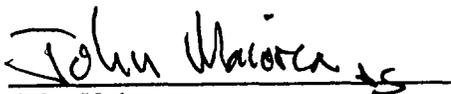
Barbara Eason-Watkins
Chief Education Officer

Respectfully submitted:



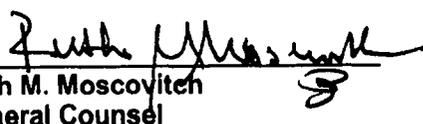
Arne Duncan
Chief Executive Officer

Noted:



John Maiorca
Chief Financial Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 


Ruth M. Moscovitch
General Counsel