



Board of Education

Office of the Board
1 North Dearborn Street
Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602

Board Report

24-1220-RS2

Agenda Date: 12/20/2024

RESOLUTION TO MAINTAIN ACERO ATTENDANCE CENTERS

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois enacted the Charter Schools Law as Public Act 89-450, effective April 10, 1996, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Board's mission is to provide a high-quality public education for every child in every neighborhood, and the Board has laid out a vision for the future of Chicago's students, parents, and communities; and

WHEREAS, the Board's charter selection process seeks to charter schools that share its mission, vision, and aspirations for students by creating new and innovative educational techniques and programs within the public school system; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Board of Education entered into a Charter School Agreement with Acero Charter Schools, Inc. ("Acero") on February 19, 1998, and has renewed the Charter Agreement thereafter, with the current Agreement effective for the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to its current Charter Agreement, Acero has operated fifteen Campuses and Attendance Centers predominantly serving Latinx students; and

WHEREAS, by notice dated October 9, 2024, Acero notified the Board of the "closure of as many as seven (7) Attendance Centers," which identifies seven campuses only as "subject to" closure; and

WHEREAS, Acero asserted in its notice that closures are "in the best interests" of Acero's continued operations and financial security; and

WHEREAS, if permitted to close seven (7) Attendance Centers at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, approximately 2,000 students will be displaced from their public school, and approximately 270 educational staff will be laid off of work; and

WHEREAS, closing seven Attendance Centers could cause substantial disruption and harm to the education of Acero's students and employment of its staff; and

WHEREAS, Acero's announced closures are inconsistent with the educational mission of the Board and call into question whether the Board should renew Acero's Charter School Agreement in 2026;

WHEREAS, Acero has not met with the Board of Education to discuss the future of Acero students and their schools;

WHEREAS, Acero parents, teachers, and staff have come before the Board on several occasions to express their desire to keep their schools open and continue their childrens' education at these campuses;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO THAT:

1. The CEO and Chief Portfolio Officer are directed to create a detailed plan to transition the following Acero Schools into District run schools beginning in the 2026-2027 school year. Such plans should involve District support for parents and staff to maximize retention of teachers, staff, and students as these schools transition.

1. Cisneros
 2. Casas
 3. Fuentes
 4. Tamayo
 5. Santiago
2. The District's Chief Portfolio Officer and staff will meet with Acero leadership in a timely fashion to ensure that the needed steps are taken to maintain the seven (7) campuses listed above as Acero schools for the 2025-2026 school year. The Board directs the District staff to work on any needed Memorandum of Understanding with Acero to cover the deficit to operate the seven (7) campuses for the 2025-2026 school year. The Board and District will take into account operational savings, other potential revenue, and Acero's unspent reserves.
 3. Acero's closure of Paz and Cruz must include the provision of any and all support and information necessary to ease the transition for the two (2) schools which Acero will be closing at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Additionally, the Paz and Cruz campuses will be evaluated by CPS for viability to become District-run schools. The District will provide regular and timely updates to the Board regarding their evaluation.
 4. Acero's cooperation in these matters may be considered in whether to renew Acero's Charter Agreement for another term.