

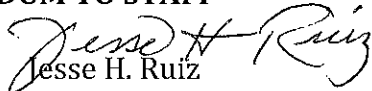


42 West Madison Street, 3rd Floor • Chicago, IL 60602

Jesse H. Ruiz
Interim Chief Executive Officer

April 18, 2015

MEMORANDUM TO STAFF

From: 
Jesse H. Ruiz

Re: Immediate actions to restore public trust

Yesterday I had the honor of being nominated to serve as Interim Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools. I accepted the call to service to build on the incredible progress you have made over the past four years, and to lead us through the challenges facing our organization. Those who know me know that I care deeply about public education, which is why I eagerly accepted the responsibility of managing and leading CPS during this transition.

As you are aware, the District is faced with a number of financial challenges and we owe it to the children we serve and the taxpayers we represent to ensure we are acting in the best interest of both. I would like to make you aware of three directives I plan to pursue on my first day in office.

First, I will be engaging an outside firm to do an independent review of the contracting process. Their task will be to evaluate the process by which the SUPES contract was approved, and whether reforms to the overall contracting process need to be made. Every dollar is critically needed in our classrooms and we need to ensure not a single penny is wasted. Our process needs to be as strong as it can be in light of the financial challenges our District faces and our responsibility to those we serve.

Second, I have ordered a halt to sole-source contracts pending the findings of this independent audit. It is critical that the District maintain the public trust, and I do not think we can initiate these contracts until we have independent verification that they adhere to the highest ethical standards.

Third, I have asked CPS legal counsel to prepare options to terminate the SUPES contract if any wrongdoing is found, and examine what recourse we would have if there was fraud in the execution of the contract.

As public servants, our highest priority is ensuring integrity and honesty in everything we do. I hope these actions will make clear to both you and the public that we take this responsibility seriously, and that we will actively work to ensure CPS is focused solely on improving educational opportunities for our children.

/JHR