

March 22, 2023

**PERMANENT DEBARMENT OF MANHOOD SHELTER, INC., RVD CONSULTANTS,
LOUIS C. GROSS, II, AND RAMONA DIAZ**

THE INTERIM CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER REPORTS THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Education of the City of Chicago (Board) permanently debar Manhood Shelter, Inc., RVD Consultants, Louis C. Gross, II, and Ramona Diaz (Respondents) from doing business with the Board.

The Board's Chief Procurement Officer mailed a Notice of Proposed Debarment to Respondents on September 28, 2022 initiating debarment proceedings against Respondents based on Section 2(k) of the Board's Debarment Policy.¹ Respondent Gross was convicted of a felony and did not pass the Board's background check and a "Do Not Hire" designation was placed in his record. MSI, Gross, and Diaz, however, allowed Gross to work on CPS property and with CPS students despite never passing the Board's background check process.

A CPS student was injured while participating in an MSI program that Gross oversaw in 2020. The student sued the Board because of his injuries. The Board tendered its defense and indemnification of the student's lawsuit to MSI's insurer, HISCOX. But the Board's request for defense and indemnification was denied because MSI and Gross failed to secure insurance coverage for the Board and/or provide contractual indemnity. The Board was therefore financially responsible for the defense of the student's lawsuit even though the student's injuries occurred when the student was under MSI's and Gross's supervision.

Lastly, Diaz performed vendor services to CPS under her name and under the entity, RVD Consultants. Diaz is the only employee and/or agent of RVD Consultants. The Board issued a purchase order to RVD Consultants in June 2022. Two months later the Board paid Diaz and RVD Consultants \$17,000 for services performed under Vendor Number 41255.

Respondents MSI, Gross, and Diaz, submitted a written response to the Notice as required by Section 4(d) of the Board's Debarment Policy. In the response, Respondents admit that Gross was convicted of a felony and that a student was injured while participating in an MSI program. The Interim Chief Operating Officer (COO) has reviewed the record (as defined in Section 4.5(10) of the Debarment Policy) and recommends permanent debarment of Respondents.

Based on the facts explained in the record as defined in Section 4.5(10) of the Board's Debarment Policy, the Interim COO recommends that the Board permanently debar Respondent from doing business with the Board effective immediately. All existing contracts between the Board and Respondents are terminated. Respondents are barred from doing business with CPS or working on CPS property. Respondents are barred from participating as a subcontractor, vendor, or supplier under any Board contract. Respondents are barred from being hired or employed by CPS. Finally, Respondents are ineligible for the award of any new Board business.

The Board adopts and approves the recommendation of the Interim COO.

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

AFFIRMATIVE

ACTION STATUS: Affirmative Action review is not applicable to this report.

¹ On January 12, 2023, the Board notified Diaz and RVD Consultants that it was amending its Notice to add RVD Consultants as an additional vendor and Respondent to be debarred under the Board's debarment policy in light of Diaz's position at MSI (Vice President) and the allegations explained in the Board's Notice. RVD Consultants did not dispute the Board's amendment.

FINANCIAL: None.

GENERAL

CONDITIONS: None.

APPROVED:

DocuSigned by:



CHARLES MAYFIELD

Interim Chief Operating Officer

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:

DocuSigned by:



RUCHI VERMA

General Counsel