

June 28, 2023

RESCIND BOARD REPORT 03-03226-PO04 AND ADOPT NEW NAMING OR RENAMING OF A SCHOOL, MASCOT, LOGO, LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, AND PHYSICAL MARKER POLICY

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education (“Board”) rescind Board Report 03-03226-PO04 Naming or Renaming of Schools and adopt a new Naming or Renaming of a School, Mascot, Logo, Learning Environment, and Physical Marker Policy. The policy was posted for public comment from April 21, 2023 to May 22, 2023.

POLICY TEXT:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create a standardized community centered process and for all names associated with CPS to be culturally responsive, anti-racist, anti-bias, and promote diversity and representation within district learning environments.

I. DEFINITIONS

Anti-racism: Anti-racism is dismantling the racism, othering, colorism, and the unequal playing field students and staff may face at the classroom, school, and district levels through action.

Anti-bias: An anti-bias approach is the act of analyzing and making sense of individual histories, identities, attitudes, or stereotypes that affect one’s understanding, actions, and decisions while explicitly working to end all forms of bias and discrimination including mitigating implicit bias.

Culturally Responsive: Empowering the cultures and identities of each student and CPS stakeholder through instructional and operational change initiatives, processes and outcomes using cultural references and experiences to interrupt systems of oppression and racism with a focus on Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other most impacted communities.

Equity: CPS Championing the individual cultures, identities, talents, abilities, languages, and interests of each student by ensuring they receive the necessary opportunities and resources to meet their unique needs and aspirations. In an equitable educational system, every student has access to the resources, opportunities, supports, and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, learning path, accessibility needs, family background, family income, citizenship, or tribal status.

Learning Environment: Learning spaces include honorary rooms, stadiums, gardens, and playgrounds.

Mascot: A physical symbol or object embodying the spirit of a school community. No school mascot may represent racial or cultural caricatures. A racial or cultural caricature is a dehumanizing stereotype of a group of people based on race or other aspects of social identity.

Naming or Renaming Advisory Committee (“Committee”): A diverse and representative group of individuals to support the naming or renaming process as described below. The Committee will publish guidance to support the naming or renaming process and engage in an ongoing assessment of current and proposed school names, mascots, logos, learning environments, and physical markers. Further, the Committee will provide an annual briefing to the Board on all naming and renaming decisions.

Physical Marker: plaques, trees, or other aspects of the physical environment that can be named.

Stakeholder: Students, staff, alumni, parents, guardians, LSC members, volunteers, and residents in a respective school community.

II. NAMING REQUIREMENTS

The following section outlines requirements for what or who a CPS school can be named after as well as the criteria for initiating a naming or renaming process.

1. Criteria for Naming a School, Mascot, Logo, Learning Environment, and Physical Marker

- A. A proposed name may be a person, a place, or a thing.
- B. In selecting persons proposed for the school name, the school community should consider a person who has made significant contributions to society while embodying tenants of cultural responsiveness, anti-racism, and anti-bias.
- C. Proposed names must not be a person whose primary identification is of a religious nature.
- D. Persons proposed for the name must be deceased for at least 6 months.
- E. Persons proposed for the name must not be a relative of any employee or local school council member associated with the school, as that term is defined in the Chicago Board of Education Code of Ethics Policy.
- F. After approval by the Board, a new name or a changed name cannot be changed for ten years.
- G. Additions, annexes, other associated structures, campus parks and playgrounds are a part of the school property and may bear the name of the school. Or, the school may choose to name a part of its campus or any auxiliary space in honor of a person that is different from the chosen proposed name while reflecting the naming requirements outlined.

2. Criteria for Initiating Naming or Renaming Processes

The naming or renaming of a school, mascot, logo, learning environment, or physical marker may be initiated if at least one of the following circumstances occur:

- A. When a new school is opened;
- B. When a school community and respective CPS stakeholders choose to name or rename a school, mascot, logo, learning environment or physical marker within a school for any reason, including in response to a demographic or social change;
- C. When two or more schools have the same name (for example, an elementary school and its upper grade center), one school may request a new name while the other retains the original name;
- D. Whether a school and its branch have the same name or a different name, the name of the branch or the school may be changed; however, it is the recommendation of the Board that the names of main schools and their branches, and the unit numbers for the school and branch both remain the same to better facilitate identification;
- E. When a school is administratively divided into units with separate principals, separate local school councils, and separate unit numbers, one unit shall apply to have a distinct name within the school year following separation;
- F. When a new facility is built to replace an existing facility which will be closed, pursuant to this policy, the Local School Council (LSC) may propose a new name or retain the existing name. If a school does not have a LSC with a quorum, then the principal may initiate an amended process with representatives from the school with support from the Committee;
- G. When an educational facility is erected on the grounds of an existing facility and the new facility serves a function distinct from that of the existing one, the new facility shall be given a new name pursuant to this policy.

III. NAMING OR RENAMING PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

The following section outlines process requirements for how a naming or renaming process must be led.

Process for Naming or Renaming a School, Mascot, Logo, Learning Environment, or Physical Marker

- A. *Naming or Renaming Request:*** Before the LSC or sitting council adds naming or renaming as an agenda item for consideration at a regularly convened LSC or sitting council meeting, the principal or designee of a respective school should meet with the Committee.
 - i. If a school does not have a functioning LSC, then the principal may initiate an amended process with support from the Committee utilizing a sitting council of students, parents, caregivers, and community members with an interest in the new school to consider suggested names and facilitate discussion concerning the school's name.
 - ii. Any CPS stakeholder may submit a request to change the name of a school, mascot, logo, learning environment, or physical marker to the school's LSC and principal.
 - iii. The LSC must consider the request by placing it on the agenda of one of their regularly scheduled meetings and voting on whether the school will proceed with the request.
- B. *Equity Plan Requirement:*** All schools leading a naming or renaming process must have a documented Equity Plan. The plan may also be reflected in the Continuous Improvement Work Plan of a respective school. Schools may use the Naming or Renaming Request Form to complete the Equity Plan requirement.
- C. *Types of Naming Changes***
 - i. **New School:** Prior to selecting a name for a new school, the school community should develop a sitting council of students, parents, caregivers, and community members with an interest in the new school to consider suggested names and to facilitate discussion concerning the school's name. A school is given a geographic name in partnership with the Committee and the respective Network Chief until a permanent name is established. The final decision for a new name is determined by the Board.
 - ii. **Existing School:** The final decision for a school renaming process is determined by the Board.
 - iii. **Mascot, Logo, Learning Environment, and Physical Marker:** Schools engaging in naming or renaming processes for a school mascot, logo, learning environment, and physical marker must follow the same process requirements as outlined for changing a school's name with the support of the Committee and does not require approval from the Board.
 - iv. **Program Focus Area:** If a school has been awarded a program designation through a CPS process (i.e. STEM, Arts, Classical, etc) and would like to formally change their name in CPS systems, then they should reach out to the Committee for guidance and an abbreviated process. If they have not gone through a CPS process, they must reach out to the Committee for guidance.
- D. *Community Engagement Requirements:*** Naming a school is an intentional school community decision, and should not be made arbitrarily or in haste. Student, parent/caregiver, CPS alumni, and staff voice from a respective school community must be prioritized in any naming or renaming process. School communities should include all voices with a focus on most impacted stakeholders including Black, Latinx, Indigenous, people of Color, women, and LGBTQ community members. If the LSC or sitting council votes to proceed with the request, the LSC must begin community engagement.
 - i. Prior to selecting a school name or changing an existing school name, the LSC or sitting council shall designate dates and times for convening a minimum of four

- school community meetings, which are subject to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.
- ii. The purpose of such meetings is to allow school-community input regarding suggested names and to facilitate discussion concerning the basis for a proposed change of school's name.
 - iii. Student Leadership: In each school, principals or a designee should engage the student population in a survey to identify and rank proposed names prior to proceeding to an LSC or sitting council vote as applicable.
 - iv. Reporting: The Naming or Renaming Request Form, including a summary of comprehensive engagement, must be submitted to the Committee prior to proceeding to an LSC or sitting council vote. The school community may receive guidance, upon request, from the Committee.
 - v. The Committee is available to provide guidance and support to school communities on structuring community engagement.
- E. LSC or Sitting Council Vote:** After the community engagement is complete, the LSC or sitting council must consider the results of the community engagement by placing a discussion on the agenda of one of their regularly scheduled meetings. The LSC or sitting council must vote on the proposed name change.
- i. If the LSC or sitting council votes to proceed with the name change, the LSC should submit the Naming or Renaming Request Form to the Committee and the school's Network Chief.
- F. Committee or Board Vote:** Once the Committee receives the Naming or Renaming Request Form, the Committee will review the form to ensure the process and criteria outlined in this Policy has been followed.
- i. If the Committee accepts the form, the Committee will send it to the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Education Officer for review.
 1. If the proposed name or name change is for a school name, the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Education Officer must decide whether the name change must be presented to the Board.
 2. If the proposed naming or renaming process is for anything other than the school name itself, the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Education Officer delegate authority to approve the name change to the Committee.
 - ii. If the Committee rejects the form, the Committee will send it to the LSC Chairperson for the LSC to re-engage in the process.
 - iii. If the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Education Officer approve the proposed school name, it must be submitted to the Board for final approval.
 - iv. All new school names which are approved by Board action will take effect at the beginning of the subsequent school year.

IV. Financial Resources

- A. The school district must make budgetary decisions to ensure schools undergoing name changes are financially and equitably resourced to address infrastructural needs related to respective naming or renaming processes.
- B. The school district will support schools over time in updating infrastructure based on available funding and using equity criteria reflecting the CPS Equity Framework. For more information, refer to the Naming or Renaming Guidebook.

CROSS REFERENCES: Amends 03-0326-PO04

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