

ACTION ITEM

Re Architecture and Design Charter High School d/b/a Charter High School of Architecture and Design; Memorandum of Understanding

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Charter School Law, 24 P.S. § 17-1701-A, *et seq.*, the Board of Education of The School District of Philadelphia (“School District”) granted a charter (“Charter”) to the Board of Trustees of Architecture and Design Charter High School d/b/a Charter High School of Architecture and Design (“CHAD” or “Charter School”) to operate a charter school for a four-year term commencing in 1999; and

WHEREAS, the School Reform Commission (“SRC”) renewed the Charter for five-year terms in 2003, 2008, and 2013; and

WHEREAS, the SRC, by Resolution No. SRC-4, approved on June 21, 2018, issued a Notice of Nonrenewal of CHAD’s Charter; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Agreement to Close Charter School and Cancel Nonrenewal Hearing, dated June 13, 2019 (the “Agreement”), CHAD will permanently close effective June 30, 2020 and surrender and forfeit its Charter; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 3 of the Agreement, the School District and CHAD have worked together to explore the establishment of an architecture and design school or program managed and operated by the School District (the “New School”); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 3 of the Agreement, the School District and CHAD have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) to document the currently agreed upon details regarding the development of the New School; and

WHEREAS, the parties will enter into a separate closure agreement to address their responsibilities with respect to CHAD’s closure; and

WHEREAS, each party is committed to ongoing cooperation and communication to support the development and long-term success of the New School; now be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute and deliver a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) which represents the following goals and priorities for the New School agreed to between the School District and CHAD:

1. **Academic Curriculum:**

a. *CHAD's Curriculum for the 2019-2020 School Year.* In anticipation of the significant changes related to CHAD's closure and the development of the New School, CHAD will not make any significant modifications to its core curriculum during the 2019-2020 school year.

b. *New School Curriculum.* The New School will have a design thinking-focused mission and curriculum model, which aligns with both the original mission of CHAD, including its focus on increasing opportunities for underrepresented communities to engage with and have professional opportunities in the architecture and design professions, and the School District's High School Plan. The New School, as currently envisioned, will have architecture and design pathways as well as design-thinking principles embedded in core courses.

c. *Future Grade Configuration.* Both parties are interested in expanding the New School to include grades 7 and 8 in the future but recognize that further research, development, and planning are necessary.

2. **Student Admissions:**

a. *Transition of Current CHAD Students.* Students enrolled at CHAD during the entire 2019-2020 school year will not be required to reapply for admission in order to enroll at the New School.

b. *2020-2021 School Year.* To allow sufficient time for the planning and development of future programming, the New School will not accept a ninth grade class during the 2020-2021 school year.

c. *Enrollment of Future Students.* When the New School opens up enrollment, School District students will have an opportunity to apply for admission through the School District's School Selection Process. The New School will be considered a Citywide Admission School which accepts students from across the city. The New School may have admissions criteria based on an on-site interview, submission of student portfolio or artwork samples, a writing sample, and a visual/artistic aptitude test. Admissions criteria will not be based on students' attendance history, disciplinary record, report card grades, or standardized test scores.

3. **Staff:** The School District will seek to hire teachers and other staff for the New School who have demonstrated interest in design-thinking curriculum and relevant professional experience. All current CHAD staff are eligible to apply for employment at the School District and to request placement at the New School. The School District will select staff for the New School in accordance with its collective bargaining agreements, policies, and procedures.

4. **Advisory Board:** The School District will create an advisory board to support the mission, vision, operations, and community partnerships at the New School. All current CHAD Board members will have an opportunity to participate on this advisory board. The parties will

collaborate to formalize the structure of the advisory board as well as the relationships between the School District and CHAD's related entities, including the Designing Futures Foundation.

5. **Location:** The parties are participating in ongoing discussions and due diligence related to the location of the New School. They will share information with the CHAD community as soon as reasonably possible.

6. CHAD acknowledges and represents that the CHAD Board of Trustees has approved the MOU at a duly advertised public meeting on September 24, 2019;

7. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the parties will continue to collaborate to develop and finalize the plans for and programs to be implemented at the New School. The parties understand and agree that unforeseen circumstances may require changes to the plans outlined in this MOU. Each party commits, however, to regular and ongoing communication with the other party, CHAD families and staff, and the Philadelphia community about any changes to the plans described herein and the development of the New School;

and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MOU shall not take effect unless and until such MOU has been signed by the President of the Board of Education and by the President of the CHAD Board of Trustees.