

**APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CATALYST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND APPROVE ENTERING INTO A SCHOOL MANAGEMENT & PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT WITH CATALYST SCHOOLS, AN ILLINOIS NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION**

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:**

That the Board approve the establishment of the Catalyst Elementary School located at 116 North LeClaire, Chicago, IL 60644 and approve entering into a School Management & Performance Agreement with Catalyst Schools, an Illinois not for profit corporation, for the operation of the Catalyst Elementary School. The School Management & Performance Agreement is currently being negotiated. The authority granted herein shall automatically rescind in the event a written School Management & Performance Agreement is not executed by the Board and Catalyst Schools within 120 days of the date of this Board Report. Information pertinent to this agreement is stated below.

**SCHOOL**

**OPERATOR:** Catalyst Schools, an Illinois not for profit corporation  
53 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 541  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Contact Person: Cecilia A. Mowatt

**OVERSIGHT:** New Schools Development Department  
125 S. Clark, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Phone (773) 553-1535  
Contact Person: Hosanna Mahaley Johnson

**DESCRIPTION:**

School Designation: Pursuant to the Board's Policy to establish Renaissance Schools, #05-1026-PO2, as amended ("Renaissance Policy"), the Catalyst Elementary School will open in the fall of 2007 and is designated a Contract School as described in the Renaissance Policy. The Board hereby designates Catalyst Elementary School as an alternative school pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4b.

Public Hearing: A Public Hearing on the opening of Catalyst Elementary School as a Renaissance Contract School was held on November 10, 2005 in accordance with the Board's Renaissance Policy. The hearing was recorded. A summary report of the hearing is available for review.

Request for Proposals: In May 2005, the Department of New Schools Development issued a request for proposals to solicit responses from parties interested in starting schools under the Renaissance 2010 initiative. Proposals to operate either a charter, contract or performance school were submitted to the Board on August 19, 2005. Proposals were evaluated pursuant to the standards set forth in the Renaissance Schools Board Policy. Proposals were reviewed by the New Schools Development Department and a Comprehensive Evaluation Team and recommendations were submitted to the Chief Executive Officer based upon those reviews and evaluations.

Enrollment: Catalyst Elementary School will be a neighborhood school that will enroll students through a blind lottery. Catalyst Contract School will enroll approximately 60 students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> for the 2007-08 school year. In the following years, the school will grow to serve grades K-8 and may serve up to 270 students.

Attendance Boundaries: The Department of Demographics and School Planning and the New Schools Development Department will work with the Catalyst Elementary School and the Austin community to develop overlay school attendance boundaries that will provide priority for enrollment for students living within such boundaries. The establishment of an attendance boundary is subject to Board approval.

**Curriculum:** Catalyst Elementary School will provide quality elementary educational choice to urban students who have not been adequately served by existing educational institutions through the use of a curriculum and instruction that focuses on reading and math. The special features will be a back to basics approach that focuses heavily on reading and mathematics, while other basic courses will also be taught.

**Governance:** A school governing body will be established in a timely manner pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4b.

**School Management Description:** At a minimum, the School Management & Performance Agreement will address student academic outcomes and financial and management practices of the school and shall reflect resolution of any and all outstanding issues between the Board and the school operator including, but not limited to: site location, enrollment, funding, educational program, financial controls and practices, Board Rules and Policies, academic accountability and evaluations. In accordance with the Board's Renaissance Policy, each Contract School shall comply with applicable Board Policies unless the Board approves and exemption or an alternative policy.

**TERM:** The term of the School Management & Performance Agreement shall commence July 1, 2006 and end June 30, 2011. Catalyst Schools' School Management & Performance Agreement and Catalyst Elementary School's designation as a Renaissance Contract School will expire on June 30, 2011 unless renewed or terminated earlier by the Board.

**COMPENSATION:** Catalyst Schools will be paid on a per-pupil basis for the operation of the Catalyst Elementary School.

**AUTHORIZATION:** Authorize the General Counsel to include relevant terms and conditions, including any indemnities to be provided to the school operator, in the written School Management & Performance Agreement. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the School Management & Performance Agreement.

**FINANCIAL:** Using current year financial data, the General Fund cost of 200 students in 2007-08 will be approximately \$355,500. The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the 2007-2008 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY07 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

**PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:** Catalyst Schools will employ all teachers and staff necessary to operate Catalyst Elementary School.

**Approved for Consideration:**



Barbara Eason-Watkins  
Chief Education Officer

**Within Appropriation:**




John Maiorca  
Chief Financial Officer

**Approved:**



Arne Duncan  
Chief Executive Officer

**Approved as to Legal Form**



Patrick Rocks  
General Counsel