

**APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT
WITH THE YOUTH CONNECTION CHARTER SCHOOL**

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING DECISION:

Approve the renewal of the Charter School Agreement with the Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS) for an additional 5-year period. A new Charter School Agreement applicable to this renewal term is currently being negotiated. The authority granted herein shall automatically rescind in the event a written Charter School Agreement is not executed by the Board and the YCCS governing board within 120 days of the date of this Board Report. The renewal agreement authorized herein will only take effect upon certification by the Illinois State Board of Education. Information pertinent to this renewal is stated below.

CHARTER SCHOOL: Youth Connection Charter School
10 W. 35th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60616
Phone: (312) 328-0799
Contact Person: Sheila Venson, Executive Director

OVERSIGHT: Charter Schools Office
125 S. Clark St., 12th floor
Chicago, Illinois 60603
Phone: (773)553-1535
Contact Person: Greg Richmond, Director

ORIGINAL AGREEMENT: The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 97-0723-EX9) is for a term beginning August 1, 1997 and ending June 30, 2002. The Agreement authorized Youth Connection to operate a multiple-campus charter school serving dropouts throughout the Chicago. The YCCS Agreement with the Board limits their enrollment to no more than 1850 students. YCCS operates 25 campuses through sub-contracts with vendors throughout the city. YCCS is governed by a single board with uniform policies that apply to all vendors regarding admissions, curriculum, school calendar, student assessments, performance goals, student discipline and employment policies.

CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL: YCCS submitted a renewal proposal on January 29, 2002 to continue the operation of a multi-campus charter school serving dropouts throughout the city. YCCS proposes increasing the number of students it serves to 1900 in 2002-03 and then by an additional 300 students each year until it reaches 3200 students in 2006-07.

CHARTER EVALUATION: The Charter Schools Office and the Office of High School Development established a Renewal Evaluation Committee ("Committee") that reviewed and evaluated YCCS's renewal proposal as well as the school's past academic, financial and operational performance. The Committee used the same evaluation process and performance standards that have been applied to other charter schools up for renewal consideration. The Committee visited YCCS campuses, reviewed the school's written application, interviewed the school's leadership and reviewed the schools. The Committee determined that the school is making reasonable progress towards achievement of those academic standards and should be authorized to continue operating as a charter school. The Committee also noted that YCCS turned away 1500 students last year due to the cap on its enrollment. At the current rate of reimbursement of \$5279 per student, the increase of 200 students would cost the Board \$265,000 in 2002-03 and an additional \$1.5 million each year thereafter.

RENEWAL TERMS: The term of YCCS's charter is being extended for five (5) years commencing July 1, 2002 and ending June 30, 2007. YCCS shall be authorized during the renewal term to operate a multiple campus charter school with an enrollment not to exceed 1900 students in 2002-03, 2200 in 2003-04, 2500 in 2004-05, 2800 in 2005-06 and 3200 in 2006-07. The actual enrollment for each year shall be determined by the CEO in consultation with YCCS.

AUTHORIZATION: Authorize the General Counsel to include relevant terms and conditions in the written Charter School Agreement which shall reflect resolution of any and all outstanding issues between the Board and the governing body of the charter school including, but not limited to: enrollment, funding, educational program, school management companies, financial controls and practices, accountability and evaluations, the number of campuses and the conditions for Board approval of new campuses. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the Charter School Agreement. Authorize the Director of Charter Schools to issue a letter notifying the Illinois State Board Of Education of the action(s) approved hereunder and to submit the approved proposal and signed Charter School Agreement to the Illinois State Board of Education for certification.

LSC REVIEW: Approval of Local School Councils is not applicable to this report.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: Not applicable.

FINANCIAL: The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the 2002-2003 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY02 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

GENERAL CONDITIONS:

Inspector General – Each Party to the agreement shall acknowledge that, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1, the Inspector General of the Board of Education has the authority to conduct certain investigations and that the Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary to conduct those investigations.


Conflicts – The agreement shall not be legally binding on the Board if entered into in violation of the Provisions of 105 ILCS 5/34-21.3 which restricts the employment of, or the letting of contracts to, former Board members during the one-year period following expiration or other termination of their terms of office.

Indebtedness – The Board's indebtedness Policy adopted July 26, 1995 (95-0726-EX3), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.


Ethics – The Board's Ethics Code adopted September 27, 1995 (95-0927-RU3), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

Approved:

Respectfully submitted:



Barbara J. Eason-Watkins
Chief Education Officer



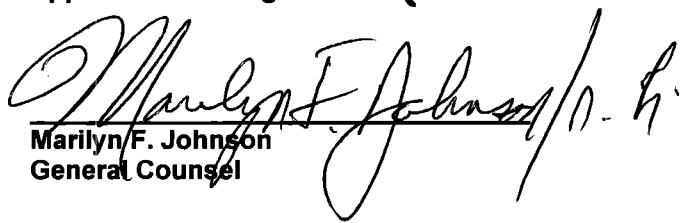
Arne Duncan
Chief Executive Officer *roy PAD*

Within Appropriation:



Kenneth C. Gotsch
Chief Fiscal Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 



Marilyn F. Johnson
General Counsel