

APPROVE THE GRANTING OF A CHARTER AND ENTERING INTO A CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH CHRISTOPHER HOUSE, INC., AN ILLINOIS NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING DECISION:

Approve the granting of a charter and entering into a Charter School Agreement with Christopher House, Inc., for a five-year period. The Charter School Agreement 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 charter school's governing board within 120 days of the date of this Board Report. The agreement authorized herein will only take effect upon certification by the Illinois State Board of Education. Information pertinent to this agreement is stated below.

SCHOOL OPERATOR: Christopher House, Inc.
2507 N. Greenview Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60614
Phone: 773-472-1083
Contact: Lori A. Bass, Chief Executive Officer

CHARTER SCHOOL: Christopher House Charter School
2250 N. Latrobe
Chicago, Illinois 60639
Phone: 773-472-1083
Contact: Lori A. Bass, Chief Executive Officer

OVERSIGHT: Office of New Schools
125 S. Clark, 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603
773-553-1530
Contact Person: J. Terence Patterson, Acting Executive Officer

DESCRIPTION: The Charter Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/27A-1 et seq., as amended) provides that up to 70 charter schools may be operated in the city of Chicago. Proposals to operate charter schools are submitted to the Board for evaluation pursuant to the standards set forth in 105 ILCS 5/27A-8, and the Board convenes a public meeting to obtain information to assist in its decision to grant or deny each proposal and report its action to the Illinois State Board of Education. The State Board determines whether the approved charter school proposal and the proposed contract satisfy the provisions of the Charter Schools Law and, if so, certifies the charter school.

The agreement incorporates an accountability plan where the school is evaluated by the Board each year based on numerous factors related to its academic, financial and operational performance.

CHARTER APPLICATION PROPOSAL: The Christopher House Charter School (Christopher House) proposal was submitted by Christopher House, Inc. and received by the Board in August 2010. Christopher House Charter School will provide a continuum of high-quality educational services that responds to children's development stages with increasing academic rigor; intensive parent education, social/emotional support for student and family support; an extended school-day and school year as well as after school academic enrichment services; arts integration that celebrates cultural traditions and promotes academic achievement; commitment to daily physical fitness and wellness education to promote discipline and healthy lifestyles; and comprehensive, measurable assessment of students' educational, social and emotional development starting as early as infancy. Christopher House will provide the educational and support services to meet and exceed high expectations and prepare students with the skills, knowledge and experiences to ensure school and lifetime success. The school is slated to open in the fall of 2012 at a site to be determined serving 120 students in grades K-1. At capacity, the school will serve 540 students in grades K-8. A public hearing on charter school submissions submitted in 2010, as required by statute, was held on December 13, 2010.

CONTINGENT APPROVAL: Approval to open the charter school and the execution of a Charter School Agreement are contingent upon a final review and approval of the charter school proposal, an assessment of the District's need for this charter school based upon demographics and student demands, any required subsequent public hearings, Board approval of the proposed school site, and Board approval of an addendum to the existing lease agreement (authorized by Board Report 09-0722-OP2) to operate a charter school at the facility for a term not to exceed five years. A final review of this charter school proposal will be conducted by the Chief Executive Officer on or before April 15, 2012 to determine final approval or denial of the new charter school proposal and satisfactory resolution of all material issues related to the opening of the new charter school. The obligation to secure and prepare an independent facility for the charter school is the responsibility of the charter school. The Board is not undertaking any responsibility for securing a facility in the event the charter school is unable to do so.

TERM: The term of the Christopher House charter and agreement shall commence July 1, 2012 and end June 30, 2017.

AUTHORIZATION: Authorize the General Counsel to include relevant terms and conditions, including any indemnities to be provided to the charter school, 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: site location, enrollment, educational program, financial controls and practices, academic accountability and evaluations. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the Charter School Agreement. Authorize the Executive Officer of the Office of New 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 Council is not applicable to this report.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: Not applicable.

FINANCIAL: The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the 2012-2013 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY12 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 June 26, 2006 (96-0626-P03), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

Ethics — The Board's Ethics Code adopted June 23, 2004 (04-0623-PO4), as amended from time to time shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

Approved for Consideration:

J. Terence Patterson
Acting Executive Officer

Within Appropriation:

Diana S. Ferguson
Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully submitted:

Terry Mazany
Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:

Patrick J. Rocks
General Counsel