

**APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH  
CATALYST SCHOOLS**

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

Approve the renewal of the Charter School Agreement with Catalyst Schools for an additional 4-year period. A new Charter School Agreement applicable to this renewal term will be 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 renewal is stated below.

**SCHOOL OPERATOR:** Catalyst Schools  
5608 West Washington Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60644  
Phone: (773) 295-7001  
Contact Person: Gordon Hannon

**CHARTER SCHOOL:** Catalyst Charter School - Howland  
1616 S. Spaulding Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60623  
Phone: (773) 534-1753  
Contact Person: Gordon Hannon

**OVERSIGHT:** Office of New Schools  
125 S. Clark, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Phone: (773) 553-1530  
Contact Person: Nora Moreno Cargie, Chief of Staff

**ORIGINAL AGREEMENT:** The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 05-1116-EX13) was for a term commencing July 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2011 and authorized the operation of a charter school serving no more than 270 students in grades Kindergarten through 8. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently amended as follows:

- Board Report 06-0322-EX4: Approved the increase of the at capacity enrollment of the charter school to 540 students in grades Kindergarten through 8.
- Board Report 06-0927-EX6: Approved the change of the charter school name to Catalyst Charter School – Howland.
- Board Report 10-0825-EX6: Approved the decrease of the at capacity enrollment of the charter school to 520 students in grades Kindergarten through 8.

**CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL:** Catalyst Schools submitted a renewal proposal on September 1, 2010, to continue the operation of the Catalyst Charter School – Howland under a unified mission. The Charter School shall serve grades Kindergarten through 8 with a maximum student enrollment of 540 students.

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

**CHARTER EVALUATION:** After receiving the charter renewal proposal, the Office of New Schools conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Catalyst Charter School – Howland performance and

operations. This evaluation included a review of the proposal, facilities surveys, financial and governance analyses, and site visit of the school in which teaching and learning, leadership and governance, learning community and services for ELL students and students with special needs were assessed. A public hearing was conducted on Thursday, March 10, 2011 to receive public comment on the application to renew the Charter School Agreement with Catalyst Schools for Catalyst Charter School – Howland for an additional four years. In addition, the Office of New Schools evaluated the school's student performance. From 2006-2007 to 2009-2010, Catalyst Charter School – Howland received 6 out of 19 high ratings and 10 out of 19 middle ratings on their absolute student indicators found in the framework put forth by the district for assessing charter school pupil performance. From 2006-2007 to 2009-2010, Catalyst Charter School - Howland's student attendance averaged 96.1%. In 2010, the percentage of students meeting/exceeding state standards on the ISAT Composite was 60.8%, an increase of 22 percentage points from 2006-2007. The committee recommends that, based on the school's performance on these and other accountability criteria, Catalyst Charter School – Howland be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

**RENEWAL TERM:** The term of Catalyst Charter School - Howland's charter and agreement is being extended for a four (4) year term commencing July 1, 2011 and ending June 30, 2015.

**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, funding, educational program, financial controls and practices, academic accountability and evaluations. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the written 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 Councils is not applicable to this report.

**FINANCIAL:** The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the 2011-2012 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, 1996 (96-0626-PO3), 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:



Nora Moreno Cargie  
Chief of Staff

Respectfully Submitted:




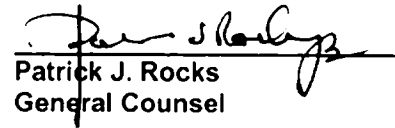
Terry Mazany  
Chief Executive Officer

Within Appropriation:



Diana S. Ferguson  
Chief Financial Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 



Patrick J. Rocks  
General Counsel