

**APPROVE THE GRANTING OF A CHARTER AND ENTERING INTO A CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH CATALYST SCHOOLS, AN ILLINOIS NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION**

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

Approve the granting of a charter and entering into a Charter School Agreement with Catalyst Schools 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:** Catalyst Schools  
5608 West Washington Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60644  
Phone: (773) 295-7001  
Contact Person: Gordon Hannon

**CHARTER SCHOOL:** Catalyst-Maria Charter School  
6727 S. California Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60629  
Phone: (773) 534-1753  
Contact Person: Gordon Hannon

**OVERSIGHT:** Portfolio Office  
125 S. Clark, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603  
Phone: (773) 553-1530  
Contact Person: Oliver Sicut, Chief Portfolio 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.

**CHARTER APPLICATION PROPOSAL:** The Catalyst Schools proposal was submitted by Catalyst Schools and received by the Board in August 2011. The mission of Catalyst Schools is to provide quality 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. Catalyst-Maria Charter School will open in the fall of 2012, serving 600 students in grades K-5 and grade 9. The school will add grades in subsequent years before reaching full capacity in September 2015, with 1100 students in grades K-12. The school will be located at 6727 S. California Ave. This site is currently occupied by Maria High School. Maria High School and Catalyst-Maria Charter School will share occupancy of the site for one year with Maria High School serving students in grades 10-12 and Catalyst-Maria Charter School serving students in grades K-5 and 9, during the 2012-2013 school year, as Maria High School transitions towards permanent closure. A shared use agreement between the schools will identify what portions of the building shall be occupied by each school and what portions of the building shall be designated as common areas. In June 2013 Maria High School will close and Catalyst-Maria Charter School will be the sole occupant of the 6727 S. California Ave. site. A public hearing, as required by statute, was held on November 22, 2011.

**TERM:** The term of the Catalyst Schools 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:**

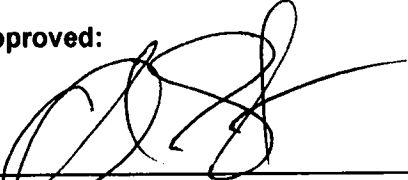
Inspector General - Each Party to the agreement shall acknowledge that, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1, the Inspector General of the Board of Education has the authority to conduct certain investigations and that the Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary 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 May 25, 2011 (11-0525-PO2), as amended from time to time shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.


**Approved:**



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**Oliver Sicat**  
Chief Portfolio Officer

**Respectfully Submitted:**



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**Jean Claude Brizard**  
Chief Executive Officer


**Within Appropriation:**



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**David G. Watkins**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Approved as to Legal Form:**



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**Patrick J. Rocks**  
General Counsel