

**APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT  
WITH AMERICAN QUALITY SCHOOLS CORPORATION, AN ILLINOIS NOT-FOR-PROFIT  
CORPORATION**

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

Approve the renewal of the School Management and Performance Agreement with the American Quality Schools Corporation, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, for the operation of the Plato Learning Academy. The School Management and Performance Agreement with American Quality Schools Corporation will be renewed for an additional 5-year period. A new School Management and Performance Agreement applicable to this renewal term will be negotiated. The authority granted herein shall automatically rescind in the event a written School Management and Performance Agreement is not executed by the Board and the school operator within 120 days of the date of this Board Report. Information pertinent to this renewal is stated below.

**SCHOOL OPERATOR:** American Quality Schools Corporation, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation  
850 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 275  
Chicago, Illinois 60607  
Phone: (312) 226-3355  
Contact Person: Michael Bakalis

**CONTRACT SCHOOL:** Plato Learning Academy  
5545 West Harrison &  
5112 West Washington  
Chicago, IL 60644  
Phone: (773) 413-3090  
Contact Person: Dr. Vanessa Thompson, Principal

**OVERSIGHT:** Office of New Schools  
125 S. Clark, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603  
(773) 553-1530  
Contact Person: Carly Bolger, Executive Director

**ORIGINAL AGREEMENT:** The original School Management and Performance Agreement (07-1024-EX15) was for a term commencing July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2013 and authorized the operation of a contract school serving no more than 350 students in grades Kindergarten through 6. The contract school was designated as a Small School pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4b. The School Management and Performance Agreement was subsequently amended as follows:

- Board Report 08-1022-EX7: Approved the Plato Learning Academy at 5545 W. Harrison, Chicago, IL 60644.
- Board Report 09-1123-EX4: Approved the addition of seventh and eighth grades to Plato Learning Academy beginning in the fall of 2010, increased the at capacity enrollment of the school by 270 to 620 students and identified the building annex located at 5500 W. Harrison as the location for grades 6-8 at the school.
- Board Report 11-0622-EX2: Approved the change in location for grades 5-8 at the school to the independent facility at 5112 W. Washington beginning in the fall of 2011.

**CONTRACT RENEWAL PROPOSAL:** American Quality Schools Corporation submitted a renewal proposal on September 4, 2012, to continue the operation of Plato Learning Academy. The contract school shall serve grades Kindergarten through 8 with a maximum enrollment of 620 students.

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

**CONTRACT EVALUATION:** After receiving the contract renewal proposal, the Office of New Schools conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Plato Learning Academy's performance and operations. This evaluation included a review of the proposal, facilities surveys, financial analysis, and academic site visit of the school in which student performance, teaching and learning, leadership and governance, and the learning communities were assessed. A public hearing was held on February 21, 2013 for all contract schools going through renewals to receive public comments, including Plato Learning Academy. In addition to the foregoing, the Office of New Schools evaluated the school's student performance. The school was rated Level 1 with 75.8% of points in 2010-11 and Level 2 with 59% of points in 2011-2012 on the school absolute student indicators found in the framework put forth by the district for assessing contract school pupil performance. From 2008-2009 to 2011-2012, Plato Learning Academy's student attendance averaged approximately 93.7%. In 2011-2012, the percentage of students meeting/exceeding state standards on the ISAT Composite was 72.5%, an increase of 23.8 percentage points from 2008-2009. The committee recommends that, based on the school's performance on these and other accountability criteria, Plato Learning Academy be authorized to continue operating as a contract school.

**RENEWAL TERM:** The term of the School Management and Performance Agreement is being extended for a five (5) year term commencing July 1, 2013 and end June 30, 2018. American Quality Schools Corporation and Plato Learning Academy's designation as a Renaissance Contract School will expire on June 30, 2018 unless renewed or terminated earlier by the Board.

**ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Additional terms and conditions will be communicated to the school and included as an attachment to the School Management and Performance Agreement with American Quality Schools Corporation.

**COMPENSATION:** American Quality Schools Corporation will continue to be paid on a per-pupil basis for the operation of the Plato Learning Academy.

**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 and Performance Agreement. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the written School Management and Performance Agreement.

**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 2013-2014 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY13 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

**PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:** As a contract school, American Quality Schools Corporation will continue to employ its own principal, teachers and staff.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:**

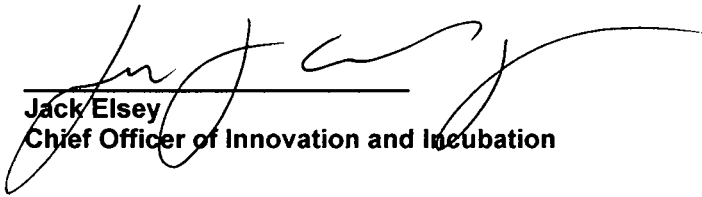
Inspector General - Each party to the agreement shall acknowledge that, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1, the Inspector General of the Board of Education has the authority to conduct certain investigations and that the Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary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

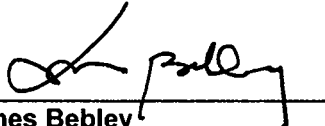
**Approved for Consideration:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Elsey  
Chief Officer of Innovation and Incubation

**Approved:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara Byrd-Bennett  
Chief Executive Officer

**Approved as to Legal Form:** 

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James Bebley  
General Counsel