



Board of Education

Office of the Board
1 North Dearborn Street
Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602

Board Report

25-0424-EX16

Agenda Date: 4/24/2025

AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF URBAN PREP CHARTER ACADEMY FOR YOUNG MEN HIGH SCHOOL BRONZEVILLE CAMPUS AGREEMENT WITH CONDITIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

Authorize renewal of the Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men High School - Bronzeville Campus Agreement (the "Charter School Agreement") with conditions for an additional two-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. The Renewal and any related contracts must be executed by the current contract's expiration date in order for first-quarter funding to be released for the new contract term. Information pertinent to this renewal is stated below.

SCHOOL OPERATOR: Urban Prep Academies ("UPA"), an IL not-for-profit corporation
420 North Wabash, Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60611

CHARTER SCHOOL: Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men High School - Bronzeville Campus
521 E 35th St, Chicago, IL 60616
Phone: (773) 624-3444
Contact: Dennis Lacewell, Interim Chief Executive Officer

OVERSIGHT: Office of Innovation and Incubation
42 West Madison Street, 3rd Floor Chicago, IL 60602
Contact: Alfonso Carmona, Chief Portfolio Officer

ORIGINAL AGREEMENT: The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 09-1123- EX19) was for a term commencing July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2015, and authorized the operation of a charter school serving no more than 500 students in grades 9 through 12. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2020 (authorized by Board Report 15-0527-EX8). The charter and Charter School Agreement were further renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2023 (authorized by Board Report 20- 0122-EX11). The charter and Charter School Agreement were then renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024 (authorized by Board Report 23-1214-EX3), pursuant to a court order that has since been reversed. The charter term was then extended for one additional year to end June 30, 2025 (authorized by Board Report 24-0627-EX6) in the interests of continuity and predictability for enrolled students and their families, and given the timing of the Appellate Court's decision.

CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL: Urban Prep Academies ("UPA") submitted a renewal proposal on August 29, 2024, to continue the operation of Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men High School - Bronzeville ("Urban Prep - Bronzeville"). The charter school shall continue to be located at 521 E 35th Street and shall continue to serve grades 9 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 500 students.

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

CHARTER EVALUATION: After receiving the charter renewal proposal, the Office of Innovation and Incubation conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Urban Prep - Bronzeville's academic performance, financial viability, and legal and contract compliance. This evaluation included a review of the proposal, academic results, financial performance, governance documents, parental issues, facilities surveys, and special education documentation. A public hearing was held on February 4, 2025, for all charter schools going through renewal to receive public comments, including Urban Prep - Bronzeville. The Office of Innovation and Incubation recommends that, based on the school's performance on these and other accountability criteria, as well as the school's demonstration of intent to satisfy the "Additional Terms and Conditions" referred to herein below, Urban Prep - Bronzeville be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

RENEWAL TERM: The term of Urban Prep - Bronzeville's charter and agreement is being extended for a two (2) year term commencing July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2027.

ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The following conditions shall be required before the Board of Education of the City of Chicago enters into an agreement with Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men High School - Bronzeville:

- By July 1, 2025, the school must submit all outstanding Illinois State Attorney General Open Meetings Act training certificates for its Board Members and its OMA Designee.

The following conditions shall be incorporated into the Charter Agreement between the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men High School - Bronzeville:

- Urban Prep Academies and its Board members, administrators, and employees shall cooperate in all United States federal government investigations and comply with all directives from its entities.
- On an annual basis throughout the term, the school must achieve a rating of "Meets Standards" or higher on the Document Timeliness indicator.
- On an annual or more frequent basis throughout the term, the school must ensure the accuracy of teachers reported as licensed in their Employee Roster by validating it with the ISBE Educator Licensure System (ELIS). School will notify staff in writing of deficiencies and pending licensure renewal deadlines, as needed. On an annual basis throughout the term, Urban Prep Academies must demonstrate compliance with the 75% teacher licensure requirement.
- Urban Prep Academies and its Board members, administrators and employees shall comply and cooperate with the Board's right to permanently bar individuals, including Tim King, from CPS property or from having contact with Urban Prep Academies or CPS students. Urban Prep Academies shall require Urban Prep Academies' security staff to reasonably coordinate with CPS security staff to ensure that CPS security is alerted to the presence of any such barred person on CPS property.
- Urban Prep Academies and its Board members, administrators and employees shall not encourage or promote any third party's use of the Urban Prep name in association with the Urban Prep Foundation. Urban Prep Academies shall withdraw permission or provide legal notice to cease the use of the Urban Prep trademark to Urban Prep Foundation and to provide the Board documentation of such withdrawal of permission. Urban Prep Academies shall also comply with requests for information to discover the business relationship (or any other connection) between it and Urban Prep Foundation.
- To amend its bylaws to require that, Urban Prep Academies shall consult with CPS Board representatives or Illinois State Board of Education representatives or an independent Charter organization's representatives before approving any nominations to sit on the Urban Prep Academies Board.
- On a monthly basis, on the first business day of the month:
 - submit timely monthly Cash Flow Statements for the preceding month, in accordance with the Board's compliance calendar, and such statements must reflect a positive balance for the activities of the entire organization;
 - post the meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes for governing board meetings held by the Charter

- School on its website in accordance with the timelines prescribed by the Illinois Open Meetings Act; and Board of Education of the City of Chicago School District 299;
- submit approved board meeting minutes for any governing board meetings that occurred in the prior month.
 - Urban Prep Academies must additionally provide:
 - A plan for a reformed governance structure to be submitted no later than July 31, 2025 and to be effective December 1, 2025, that prohibits any one person from holding a directorship and an executive position or other position with substantial financial decision-making authority and eliminates the risk of conflicts of interest, self-dealing, and other mis- or malfeasance inherent in holding both positions;
 - A Code of Ethics that requires that Urban Prep Academies' directors, executives, administrators, and employees avoid conflicts of interest, advance the mission of the organization, advance the public interest and act with personal and professional integrity;
 - A system of internal controls that minimizes risks of financial or administrative mis- or malfeasance, including but not limited to (i) GAAP accounting methods; (ii) a checking account; (iii) adequate payroll procedures; (iv) bylaws; (v) an organizational chart; (vi) procedures for the creation and review of monthly and quarterly financial reports, which procedures shall specifically identify the individual who will be responsible for preparing such financial reports in the following fiscal year; (vii) internal control procedures for, including but not limited to, cash receipts, cash disbursements and purchases; and (viii) maintenance of asset registers and financial procedures for grants in accordance with Education Department General Administrative Regulations ("EDGAR") or the State Board.; and 3 24-0627-EX7 CORRECTED
 - A plan for implementing the internal control framework should be approved by the Urban Prep Academies Board's audit committee or the entire Urban Prep Academy Board as soon as possible and fully implemented on or before December 1, 2025 using a phased approach that prioritizes the most significant risk areas (e.g., financial controls) for Urban Prep Academies.
 - On an annual basis throughout the term, the network must provide a summary of discipline practices, including staff training and multi-tiered interventions and restorative strategies implemented, and an end-of-year update on the progress and results of its discipline practices, with a demonstrated reduction in ISS and OSS.
 - The school must demonstrate progress toward implementing the Recommendations codified in the Special Education Renewal Site Visit Report by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).
 - On an annual basis throughout the term, all staff must complete the required CPS Title IX (Protecting Chicago's Children or equivalent) training in SafeSchools.
 - By July 1st, 2025, and annually throughout the term, no one person shall hold a directorship and an executive position or other position with substantial financial decision-making authority.

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. Authorize the President and Secretary to execute the written Charter School Agreement. Authorize the Executive Director of the Office of Innovation and Incubation 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. Authorize the General Counsel to further negotiate and execute any amendments to the Charter School Agreement as required by the Illinois State Board of Education.


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

FINANCIAL: The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY25 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

GENERAL CONDITIONS: The agreement shall contain general conditions including but not limited to the following: Inspector General provision, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1; Conflicts provision, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-21.3; Indebtedness provision, in accordance with the Board's Indebtedness Policy adopted June 26, 1996 pursuant to Board Report 96-0626-PO3; Ethics provision, in accordance with the Board's Ethics Code as amended, and a Contingent Liability provision.

Approved for Consideration:


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Alfonso Carmona
Chief Portfolio Officer

Approved:


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Pedro Martinez
Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:
Initial

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Ruchi Verma
General Counsel