

**APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH  
POLARIS CHARTER ACADEMY**

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

Approve the renewal of the Charter School Agreement with Polaris Charter Academy for an additional 5-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.

**CHARTER SCHOOL:** Polaris Charter Academy  
620 North Sawyer  
Chicago, Illinois 60624  
(773) 534-0820  
Contact Person: Michelle Navarre, Principal

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

**ORIGINAL AGREEMENT:** The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 06-1115 -EX13) was for a term commencing July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2012 and authorized the operation of a charter school serving no more 480 students in grades Kindergarten through 8.

**CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL:** Polaris Charter Academy submitted a renewal proposal on September 1, 2011, to continue the operation of Polaris Charter Academy under a unified mission. The charter school shall serve grades Kindergarten through 8 with a maximum enrollment of 480 students.

The agreement incorporates an accountability plan in which the charter 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 Portfolio Office conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Polaris Charter 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 learning communities were assessed. A public hearing was conducted on Thursday, March 22, 2012 to receive public comments on the application to renew the Charter School Agreement with Polaris Charter Academy for an additional five years. In addition, the Portfolio Office evaluated the school's student performance. From 2007-2008 to 2010-2011, Polaris Charter Academy received 6 out of 25 high ratings and 16 out of 25 middle ratings on the school absolute student indicators found in the framework put forth by the district for assessing charter school pupil performance. From 2007-2008 to 2010-2011, Polaris' student attendance averaged approximately 94.1%. In 2010-2011, the percentage of students meeting/exceeding state standards on the ISAT Composite was 74.1%, an increase of 23.6 percentage points from 2008-2009, the first year for which data was available. The committee recommends that, based on the school's performance on these and other accountability criteria, Polaris Charter Academy be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

**RENEWAL TERM:** The term of Polaris Charter Academy's charter and agreement is being extended for a five (5) year term commencing July 1, 2012 and ending 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, 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 Director of the Office of New Schools and Programs 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 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:**

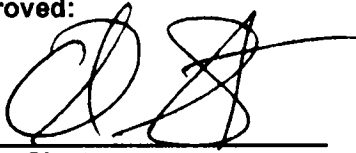
Inspector General - Each party to the agreement shall acknowledge that, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1, the Inspector General of the Board of Education has the authority to conduct certain investigations and that the Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary 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, 1996 (96-0626-PO3), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

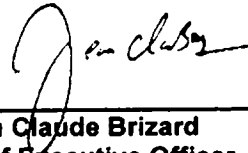
Ethics - The Board's Ethics Code adopted May 25, 2011 (11-0525-PO2), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

Approved:



**Oliver Sicat**  
Chief Portfolio Officer

Respectfully Submitted:



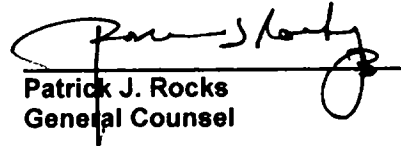
**Jean Claude Brizard**  
Chief Executive Officer

Within Appropriation:



**David Watkins**  
Chief Financial Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 



**Patrick J. Rocks**  
General Counsel