

May 27, 2015

AMEND BOARD REPORT 14-0528-EX4
AMEND BOARD REPORT 13-0424-EX11
AMEND BOARD REPORT 13-0227-EX5
APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH
ASPIRA INC. OF ILLINOIS (ASPIRA CHARTER SCHOOL) AND
THE PHASE-OUT OF ITS MIRTA RAMIREZ HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS

THE CHIEF INNOVATION AND INCUBATION OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

Approve the renewal of the Charter School Agreement with ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois for an additional five-year period and the phase-out of its Mirta Ramirez High School Campus. A new Charter School Agreement applicable to this renewal term and campus phase-out 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.

This April 2013 amendment is necessary to authorize ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois to (a) establish a new high school campus at 2989 North Milwaukee Avenue in the fall of 2014 and (b) increase the overall at capacity enrollment at the charter school by 1,000 to 2,250 students. 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 amended Board Report. The agreement authorized herein will only take effect upon certification by the Illinois State Board of Education.

This May 2014 amendment is necessary to change the start date of the ASPIRA Charter School - ASPIRA Business and Finance High School Campus from fall 2014 to fall 2015. Due to this delay, the overall at capacity enrollment at the charter school for the fall of 2014 will be 1,700 students, for fall of 2015 will be 1,950 students, and for fall of 2016 will be 2,250 students. The authority granted herein shall automatically rescind in the event a written amendment to the Charter School Agreement is not executed by the Board and the charter school's governing board within 120 days of the date of this amended Board Report. The amended agreement authorized herein will only take effect upon certification by the Illinois State Board of Education.

This May 2015 amendment is necessary to change the phase-out completion date for the ASPIRA Charter School – Mirta Ramirez High School Campus from June 30, 2016 to June 30, 2015. Due to the change in the phase-out year, the overall at capacity enrollment of the charter school will decrease to 1,500 students beginning in the fall of 2015 and increase to 2,250 students beginning in the fall of 2016.

This May 2015 amendment is also necessary to authorize the disbursement of one-time incubation and startup funds to ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois for the ASPIRA Charter School – ASPIRA Business and Finance High School Campus opening in the fall of 2015. The authority granted herein shall automatically rescind in the event a written amendment to the Charter School Agreement is not executed by the Board and the charter school's governing board within 120 days of the date of this amended Board Report.

SCHOOL OPERATOR: ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois
 2415 North Milwaukee Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60647
 Phone: 773-252-0970
 Contact Person: Wanda Figueroa-Peralta, President & CEO

OVERSIGHT: Office of Innovation and Incubation
~~125 S. Clark, 10th Floor~~ 42 West Madison Street, 3rd Floor
 Chicago, IL 606032
 (773) 553-1530
 Contact Person: Jack Elsey, Chief Innovation and Incubation Officer

ORIGINAL AGREEMENT: The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 02-0925-EX02) was for a term commencing July 1, 2003 and ending June 30, 2008 and authorized the operation of a charter school serving no more than 450 students in grades 9 through 12. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently renewed for an additional five-year period commencing July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2013 (authorized by Board Report 08-0227-EX26) and authorized an increase in the maximum enrollment to 1,500 students in grades 6 -12. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently amended as follows:

- Board Report 09-0422-EX2: Approved the correction in the at capacity enrollment of the Early College High School Campus from 400 to 600 students and the correction in the overall at capacity enrollment of the charter school from 1,500 to 1,700 students.

CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL: ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois submitted a renewal proposal on September 4, 2012 to continue the operation of the ASPIRA Charter School under a unified mission. ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois agreed to phase-out its Mirta Ramirez High School Campus. Beginning in the fall of 2013, that campus will not accept any freshmen students. Students attending the campus during the 2012-2013 school year will be allowed to continue attending through the 12th grade, with the campus closing completely by June 30, 2016.

As a result, during the renewal term the charter school shall serve grades 6 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 1,700 students but maximum enrollment will decrease to 1,250 students by the end of the 2015-2016 school year. The maximum enrollment for each ASPIRA Charter School Campus is indicated on the chart below.

This agreement will incorporate an accountability plan where the school is evaluated by the board each year based on numerous factors related to its academic, financial and operational performance.

In September 2012, ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois proposed to establish a new high school campus named ASPIRA Business and Finance Campus at 2989 North Milwaukee Avenue in the fall of 2014, serving 250 students in grade 9. In successive years, that campus will add one grade at a time, until reaching an at capacity enrollment of 1,000 students in grades 9 through 12. The overall at capacity enrollment of the whole charter school will increase by 1,000 to 2,250 students. A public hearing on the proposed campus was held on April 15, 2013. The hearing was recorded and a summary report is available for review:

In February 2014, ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois submitted a material modification to change the start date of the ASPIRA Charter School - ASPIRA Business and Finance High School Campus from fall 2014 to fall 2015. Due to this delay, the overall at capacity enrollment at the charter school for the fall of 2014 will be 1,700 students, for fall of 2015 will be 1,950 students, and for fall of 2016 will be 2,250 students. A public hearing on the proposed change was held on Wednesday, May 14, 2014. The hearing was recorded and a summary report is available for review.

In February 2015, ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois submitted a material modification to change the phase-out completion date of its ASPIRA Charter School - Mirta Ramirez High School Campus from June 30, 2016 to June 30, 2015. Due to the change in the phase-out year, the overall at capacity enrollment of the charter school will decrease to 1,500 students beginning in the fall of 2015 and increase to 2,250 students beginning in the fall of 2016.

Campus Name	Year Opened	Address	At Capacity Grades	2012-2013 Enrollment	At Capacity Enrollment
Mirta Ramirez High School	2003 (closed in 2015)	1711 N. California Avenue	9 th – 12 th	373	450-0 (phased out by June 30, 2015)
Haugan Middle School	2005	3729 W. Leland Avenue	6 th – 8 th	578	650

Early College High School	2007	3986 W. Barry Avenue	9 th – 12 th	511	600
ASPIRA Business and Finance High School	2015	2989 N. North Milwaukee Avenue	9 th – 12 th	250 (in 2015-16)	1,000

CHARTER EVALUATION: After receiving the charter renewal proposal, the Office of New Schools conducted a comprehensive evaluation of ASPIRA Charter School'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 charter schools going through renewals to receive public comments, including ASPIRA Charter School. In addition to the foregoing, the Office of New Schools evaluated the school's student performance. From 2007-2008 to 2011-2012, the Ramirez Campus received 8 out of 62 high ratings and 19 out of 62 middle ratings, the Haugan Campus received 24 out of 52 high ratings and 21 out of 52 middle ratings, and the Early College Campus received 5 out of 37 high ratings and 14 out of 37 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 2011-2012, ASPIRA Charter School's student attendance averaged approximately 89.8% at the Ramirez Campus, 95.3% at the Haugan Campus, and 90.8% at the Early College Campus. In 2011-2012, the percentage of students meeting/exceeding state standards on the PSAE Composite at the Ramirez Campus was 15.4%, a decrease of 10.0 percentage points from 2007-2008, and at the Early College Campus was 20.8%, an increase of 2.3% from 2009-2010. In 2011-2012, the percentage of students meeting/exceeding state standards on the ISAT Composite at the Haugan Campus was 72.0%, an increase of 11.2% from 2007-2008.

The Office of New Schools recommends that, based on the school's performance on these and other accountability criteria, ASPIRA Charter School be authorized to continue operating as a charter school but will phase-out its Mirta Ramirez High School Campus.

RENEWAL TERM: The term of ASPIRA Charter School's charter and agreement is being extended for a five (5) year term commencing July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2018.

ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Additional terms and conditions will be communicated to the charter school and included as an attachment to the Charter School Agreement with ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois.

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, and amendment and wind down agreement for the Mirta Ramirez High School Campus, ~~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, and ~~Amendment and wind down agreement for the Mirta Ramirez High School Campus.~~ Authorize the ~~Senior Director of the Office of Chief~~ Innovation and Incubation Officer 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 as well as any other information as may be necessary due to the closure of the Mirta Ramirez High School Campus. Authorize the Chief Innovation and Incubation Officer to execute any documents related to the disbursement of the one-time incubation and startup funds for the ASPIRA Business and Finance High School Campus.

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

INCUBATION: Upon the final approval of this amended Board Report and the submission of an Incubation Budget Plan by ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois, the Board will disburse an amount not to exceed \$152,000 in incubation funding for the ASPIRA Charter School – ASPIRA Business and Finance High School Campus opening in the fall of 2015. The use of the funding will be outlined by the Office of Innovation and Incubation.

STARTUP FUNDING: Upon the execution of the amendment to the Charter School Agreement with ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois, the Board will disburse an amount not to exceed \$627,750 in startup funding for the ASPIRA Charter School – ASPIRA Business and Finance High School Campus opening in the fall of 2015. The use of the funding will be outlined by the Office of Innovation and Incubation.

FINANCIAL: The financial implications will be addressed during the development of the fiscal year 2015-2016 budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY4415 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

GENERAL CONDITIONS:

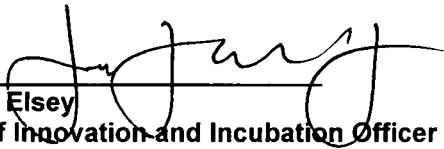
Inspector General - Each party to the agreement shall acknowledge that, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1, the Inspector General of the Board of Education has the authority to conduct certain investigations and that the Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary 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.

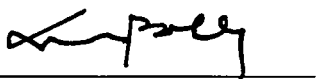
Ethics - The Board's Ethics Code adopted May 25, 2011 (11-0525-PO2), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

Approved for Consideration:



Jack Elsey
Chief Innovation and Incubation Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 



James Bebley
General Counsel