

**AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF THE CATALYST ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL –  
CIRCLE ROCK AGREEMENT WITH CONDITIONS**

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

Authorize renewal of the Catalyst Elementary Charter School – Circle Rock Agreement (the "Charter School Agreement") with conditions for an additional five-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.

**SCHOOL OPERATOR:** Catalyst Schools, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation  
5608 West Washington Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60644  
Phone: 773-854-1633  
Contact Person: Gordon Hannon, Chief Executive Officer

**CHARTER SCHOOL:** Catalyst Elementary Charter School – Circle Rock  
5608 West Washington Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60644  
Phone: 773-890-0233  
Contact Person: Ayanna Mitchell, Principal

**OVERSIGHT:** Office of Innovation and Incubation  
42 West Madison Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602  
Phone: 773-553-1530  
Contact Person: Jack Elsey, Chief Innovation and Incubation Officer

**ORIGINAL AGREEMENT:** The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 09-1123-EX12) 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 K through 8. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently amended as follows:

- Board Report 10-0825-EX7: Approved the increase in the maximum enrollment of the charter school by 20 students to 520 students beginning in the fall of 2010.

**CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL:** Catalyst Schools submitted a renewal proposal on November 17, 2014 to continue the operation of Catalyst Elementary Charter School – Circle Rock (Catalyst-Circle Rock). The charter school shall be located at 5608 West Washington Boulevard and shall serve grades K through 8 with a maximum enrollment of 520 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 Catalyst-Circle Rock'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 May 20, 2015 for all charter schools going through renewals to receive public comments, including Catalyst-Circle Rock. 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, Catalyst-Circle Rock be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

**RENEWAL TERM:** The term of Catalyst-Circle Rock's charter and agreement is being extended for a five (5) year term commencing July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2020.

**ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Catalyst-Circle Rock's charter and agreement shall be recommended for renewal with the following condition to be included in the agreement:

- On or before September 15, 2015, Catalyst-Circle Rock must demonstrate full resolution of facility and ADA issues including, but not limited, to the following:
  - o Accessibility needs to be increased at the school entrances, playground and band room for its students and parents with disabilities;
  - o No room signage throughout the school has Braille & raised lettering; and
  - o Objects are overextended into the corridors and into students' circulation path without cane-detectability.

**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 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. Authorize the General Counsel to further negotiate and execute any amendments to the Charter School Agreement 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 2015-2016 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY15 are deemed to be contingent liabilities only, subject to appropriation in subsequent fiscal year budgets.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:**

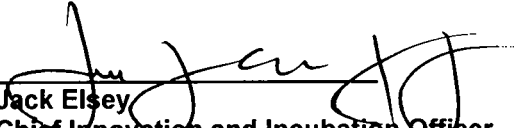
Inspector General - Each party to the agreement shall acknowledge that, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1, the Inspector General of the Board of Education has the authority to conduct certain investigations and that the Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary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

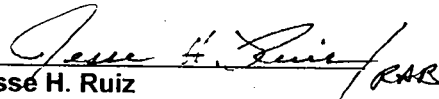
Indebtedness - The Board's Indebtedness Policy adopted June 26, 1996 (96-0626-PO3), as amended from time to time, shall be incorporated into and made a part of the agreement.

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.

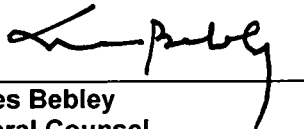
Approved for Consideration:

  
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Jack Elsey  
Chief Innovation and Incubation Officer

Approved:

  
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Jesse H. Ruiz  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form 

  
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James Bebley  
General Counsel