



Board of Education

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

Board Report

25-0320-EX5

Agenda Date: 3/20/2025

AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF THE INSTITUTO JUSTICE AND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH CONDITIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

Authorize renewal of the Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy Charter High School Agreement (the "Charter School Agreement") for a two (2) year period, commencing July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2027, with conditions. A new Charter School Agreement, which will constitute the Charter 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: Institute for Latino Progress, Inc., an IL not-for-profit corporation
2520 S. Western Avenue
Chicago, IL 60608
Phone: 773-890-0055
Contact: Karina Ayala-Bermejo, Chief Executive Officer and President

CHARTER SCHOOL: Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy Charter High School
2570 S. Blue Island Avenue
Chicago, IL 60608
Phone: 773-890-8060
Contact: Maribel Arellano, Principal

OVERSIGHT: Options Network, Office of Network Support
4934 S. Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL 60615
Phone: 773-553-3065
Contact Person: Richard Smith, Chief of Options Network

ORIGINAL AGREEMENT: The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 12-0425-EX6) was for a five (5) year term commencing July 1, 2012 and ending June 30, 2017 and, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/27A-4(b), authorized the operation of a charter school that is devoted to re-engaging high school dropouts and/or students at risk of dropping out of school. The charter school served no more than 165 students in grades 9 through 12. The charter and Charter School Agreement were further renewed for a three (3) year term commencing July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2020 (authorized by Board Report 16-1207-EX7). The charter and Charter School Agreement were further renewed for a three (3) year term commencing July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2023 (authorized by Board Report 20-0122-EX5). The charter and Charter School Agreement were further renewed for a one (1) year term with performance benchmarks and conditions commencing July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024 (authorized by Board Report 23-0125-EX11). The charter and Charter School Agreement were further renewed for a one (1) year term with conditions commencing July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 (authorized by Board Report 24-0125-EX1).

CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL: Institute for Latino Progress, Inc. submitted a renewal proposal on July 24, 2024 to

continue the operation of Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy Charter High School (Instituto Justice) under a unified mission. The charter school shall continue to serve grades 9 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 165 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 Options Network conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Instituto Justice's academic performance, financial viability, and legal and contract compliance. This evaluation included, but was not limited to a review of the proposal, academic results, financial performance, governance documents, parental issues, facilities surveys, special education documentation, and English learner documentation. A public hearing was held on February 6, 2025 for all contract and charter schools going through renewals to receive public comments, including Instituto Justice. The Options Network 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, Instituto Justice be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

RENEWAL TERM: The term of Instituto Justice's charter 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 incorporated into the Charter Agreement between the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and Institute for Latino Progress, Inc.. These conditions will be communicated to Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy in a separate letter.

Continuous Improvement

- On a quarterly basis throughout the term, the Charter School must submit a comprehensive plan to address concerns illuminated by data provided by the Options Network. The data may include but is not limited to academics, attendance, enrollment, discipline, diverse learner services, English learner services, culture and climate, teacher licensure, parent issues, and finance. The plan must be reviewed and certified by the Charter School Board.
- On an annual basis throughout the term, the Charter School must submit a Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP) and will provide quarterly updates including action steps and data showing evidence of implementation and progress monitoring.

Diverse Learners

- On an annual basis throughout the term of the Agreement, the Charter School shall demonstrate compliance with the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) expectations of timely completion of IEP evaluations and related service provider (RSP) service documentation as measured by OSD.
- On an annual or more frequent basis throughout the term, the Charter School must demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations and laws by staffing appropriately licensed special education teachers, case manager(s) and related service providers

English Learners

- On a quarterly basis or more frequently throughout the term, the Charter School must meet federal, state, and local rules pertaining to English Language Learner ACCESS screening and WIDA testing participation, as reported by the Office of Multicultural-Multilingual Education (OMME).
- On an annual or more frequent basis throughout the term, the Charter School must demonstrate compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations and laws by staffing appropriately licensed bilingual specialists and ESL endorsed teachers.

Teacher Licensure

- On a bi-annual or more frequent basis throughout the term of the agreement, the Charter School must submit information for all employees and must verify the accuracy of teachers reported as licensed in the employee roster provided to the Board by validating such information with the ISBE Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS). The Charter School must notify staff in writing of deficiencies and pending licensure renewal deadlines, as needed.
- On an annual basis throughout the term of the agreement, the Charter School must demonstrate compliance with the 75% teacher licensure requirement and the alternative qualification requirements in accordance with Charter

Schools Law including all positions required to meet the educational needs of diverse and English Learners.

Student Discipline

- On a quarterly basis throughout the term of the agreement, the Charter School must provide documentation of all infractions listed in groups 3 through 6 of the Student Code of Conduct that the charter school has elected to implement.

Facilities & ADA

- On an annual basis throughout the term of the agreement, the Charter School must submit a facility deficiency repair plan and corresponding budget to communicate the status of the facility and ADA, Life Safety and Code Compliance issues for all Attendance Centers, as identified in the Facility Evaluation Reports that were provided by the CPS architects dated June through September 2024. The Charter School must demonstrate reasonable progress toward addressing the issues based on the expected costs and severity of deficiencies.

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 of the Options Network 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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Bogdana Chkoumbova

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Bogdana Chkoumbova
Chief Education Officer

Approved:

Signed by:

Pedro Martinez

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Pedro Martinez
Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:

Initial
ELS

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Ruchi Verma

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Ruchi Verma
General Counsel