



Board of Education

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

Board Report

25-0424-EX15

Agenda Date: 4/24/2025

AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF THE ROWE ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH CONDITIONS

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

Authorize renewal of the Rowe Elementary Charter School 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: Northwestern University Settlement Association, an IL not-for-profit corporation
1400 W. Augusta Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60642
Phone: 773-278-7471
Contact: Carole Wood, President

CHARTER SCHOOL: Rowe Elementary Charter School
1424 N. Cleaver Street
Chicago, IL 60642
and
1420 W. Augusta Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60642
Phone: 312-445-5870
Contact: Jaime Jaramillo, Principal

OVERSIGHT: Office of Innovation and Incubation
42 W. Madison, 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60602
Phone: 773-553-1530
Contact Person: Alfonso Carmona, Chief Portfolio Officer

ORIGINAL AGREEMENT: The original Charter School Agreement (authorized by Board Report 09-1123-EX15) 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 581 students in grades K through 8. The charter and Charter School Agreement were then renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2020 (authorized by Board Report 15-0527-EX11). The charter and Charter School Agreement were amended for an increase to the maximum enrollment of the charter school by 180 to 1,080 students beginning in the fall of 2016 (authorized by Board Report 16-0427-EX12). The charter and Charter School Agreement were then renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2025 (authorized by Board Report 20-0122-EX10).

CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL: Northwestern University Settlement Association submitted a renewal proposal on July 31, 2024, to continue the operation of Rowe Elementary Charter School ("Rowe Elementary"). The charter school shall continue to be located at 1424 N. Cleaver Street and 1420 W. Augusta Boulevard and shall continue to serve grades K through 8 with a maximum enrollment of 1,080 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 Rowe Elementary'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 Rowe Elementary. 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, Rowe Elementary be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

RENEWAL TERM: The term of Rowe'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 incorporated into the Charter Agreement between the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and Rowe Elementary Charter School:

- Due to its Summative Designation, the school must participate in the Innovation & Incubation Academic Support process. This process requires schools to complete a Self-Reflection template, the District-managed Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP), and participate in joint progress monitoring and Continuous Improvement activities. The Academic Support process runs annually, offering schools the opportunity to exit based on criteria defined by Innovation and Incubation. Schools not meeting the annual exit criteria will remain in Academic Support until they meet them.
- 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, the school must meet state and federal rules governing English Learners as demonstrated by a rating of Partial or higher on formal compliance reports from the Office of Multilingual-Multicultural Education (OMME). Chicago Public Schools has designated OMME to conduct school visits and determine school compliance with state and federal rules regarding English Learner programs.
- On an annual basis throughout the term, the school must receive a rating of "Meets Standards" or higher on the Legal Compliance indicator on the Financial and Compliance Scorecard generated by CPS.
- 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.

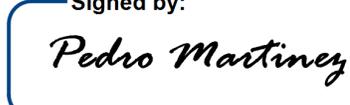
GENERAL CONDITIONS: The agreement shall contain general conditions including but not limited to the following: Inspector General provision, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1; Conflicts provision, in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/34-21.3; Indebtedness provision, in accordance with the Board's Indebtedness 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:

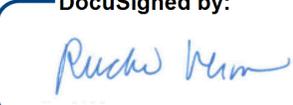
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Alfonso Carmona
Chief Portfolio Officer

Approved:

Signed by:

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Pedro Martinez
Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form: 

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Ruchi Verma
General Counsel