



# Board of Education

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

## Board Report

25-0424-EX7

Agenda Date: 4/24/2025

### AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF THE EPIC ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL AGREEMENT WITH CONDITIONS

#### THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

Authorize renewal of the EPIC Academy Charter High 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:** EPIC Academy, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation  
8255 S. Houston Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois, 60617  
Phone: 773-535-7930  
Contact: LeeAndra Khan, Executive Director

**CHARTER SCHOOL:** EPIC Academy Charter High School  
8255 S. Houston Avenue Chicago, Illinois,  
60617  
Phone: 773-535-7930  
Contact Person: Dr. Kyla Mathews, Principal

**OVERSIGHT:** Office of Innovation and Incubation  
42 West Madison Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 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- EX13) 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 480 students in grades 9 through 12. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2018, serving no more than 600 students (authorized by Board Report 15-0527-EX4). The charter and Charter School Agreement were renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2025 (authorized by Board Report 17-1206-EX11). The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently amended as follows:

- Board Report 22-0525-EX6: Approved the relocation of EPIC Academy Charter High School from the facility at 8255 S. Houston Avenue to an independent facility at the 8200 block of S. Shore Drive, beginning no earlier than fall of 2024.

**CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL:** EPIC Academy submitted a renewal proposal on July 30, 2024 to continue the operation of EPIC Academy Charter High School ("EPIC"). The charter school shall continue to be located at 8255 S. Houston Avenue and shall continue to serve grades 9 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 600 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 EPIC'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 EPIC. 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, EPIC be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

**RENEWAL TERM:** The term of EPIC'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 EPIC Academy Charter High School:

- 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 or more frequent basis throughout the term, the school must ensure the accuracy of teachers reported as licensed in the Employee Roster by validating it with the ISBE Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS). The school will notify staff in writing of deficiencies and pending licensure renewal deadlines, as needed. On an annual basis throughout the term, the school must demonstrate compliance with the requirement of 75% teacher licensure.
- On an annual basis throughout the term, the school must submit additional documentation to verify the authenticity of Board member required trainings.
- 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:

Approved:

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**Alfonso Carmona**  
Chief Portfolio Officer

Signed by:



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**Pedro Martinez**  
Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:



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**Ruchi Verma**  
General Counsel