

January 25, 2023

**AUTHORIZE RENEWAL OF THE ACERO CHARTER SCHOOLS AGREEMENT WITH CONDITIONS****THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:**

Authorize renewal of the Acero Charter Schools Agreement (the "Charter School Agreement") with conditions for an additional three-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:** Acero Charter Schools, Inc., an IL not-for-profit corporation  
(f/k/a UNO Charter School Network)  
18 S. Michigan Avenue, 9th Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60603  
Phone: 312-637-3900  
Contact: Helena Stangle, Chief External Affairs Officer

**CHARTER SCHOOL:** Acero Charter Schools  
(f/k/a UNO Charter School)  
18 S. Michigan Avenue, 9th Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60603  
Phone: 312-637-3900  
Contact: Helena Stangle, Chief External Affairs Officer

**OVERSIGHT:** Office of Innovation and Incubation  
42 W. Madison Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 97-1217-EX2) was for a term commencing July 1, 1998 and ending June 30, 2003 and authorized the operation of a charter school serving no more than 800 students in grades K through 8. The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2003 and ending June 30, 2008, serving no more than 1,060 students in grades, Pre-K through 8 (authorized by Board Report 03- 0225-EX7). The charter and Charter School Agreement were further renewed for a term commencing on July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2013, serving no more than 4,630 students (authorized by Board Report 08-0602-EX7). The charter and Charter School Agreement were then renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2018, serving no more than 10,240 students in grades K through 12 (authorized by Board Report 13-0227-EX10). The charter and Charter School Agreement were subsequently renewed for a term commencing July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2023 (authorized by Board Report 17-1206-EX6).

**CHARTER RENEWAL PROPOSAL:** Acero Charter Schools, Inc. submitted a renewal proposal on July 29, 2022 to continue the operation of Acero Charter Schools under a unified mission. The charter school shall continue to serve grades K through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 9,750 students.

Campus Name	Year Opened	Address	At Capacity Grades	2022-2023 enrollment	Estimated At Capacity Enrollment*
Brighton Park	2013	4420 S. Fairfield Avenue	K-8	533	600
Sandra Cisneros	2010	2744 W. Pershing Road	K-8	417	630
Roberto Clemente	2012	2050 N. Natchez Avenue	K-8	456	630
Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz	2012	7416 N. Ridge Blvd	K-12	513	1262
Bartolome de las Casas	2006	1641 W. 16th Street	K-8	244	315
Carlos Fuentes	2006	2845 W. Barry Avenue	K-8	402	630
Major Hector P. Garcia MD	2008	4248 W. 47th Street	9-12	646	720
Jovita Idar	2011	5050 S. Homan Avenue	K-8	521	630
Officer Donald J. Marquez	2007	2916 W. 47th Street	K-8	526	630
Octavio Paz	1998	2651 W. 23rd Street	K-8	173	550
Esmeralda Santiago	2011	2510 W. Cortez Street	K-8	221	630
Victoria Soto	2013	5025 S. St. Louis Avenue	6-12	562	868
Rufino Tamayo	2005	5135 S. California Avenue	K-8	270	315
Bartolome de las Casas.	2006	1641 W. 16th Street	K-8	278	315
PFC Omar E. Torres	2008	4248 W. 47th Street	K-8	530	670
SPC Daniel Zizumbo	2008	4248 W. 47th Street	K-8	552	670

\*At cap enrollment at individual campuses may fluctuate but overall network-level at cap enrollment will remain unchanged.

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 Acero Charter Schools' 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 January 10, 2023 for all contract and charter schools going through renewal to receive public comments, including Acero Charter Schools. 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, Acero Charter Schools be authorized to continue operating as a charter school.

**RENEWAL TERM:** The term of Acero Charter Schools' charter and agreement is being extended for a three (3) year term commencing July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2026.

**ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Additional terms and conditions will be communicated to the charter school by the Chief Executive Officer or his designee in a formal Letter of Conditions and will be included as an attachment to the Charter School Agreement with Acero Charter Schools, Inc.

**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 2023-2024 fiscal year budget. Since the School Code of Illinois prohibits the incurring of any liability unless an appropriation has been previously made, expenditures beyond FY23 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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**Alfonso Carmona**  
Chief Portfolio Officer

Approved:

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**Pedro Martinez**  
Chief Executive Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:



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**Joseph T. Moriarty**  
General Counsel