



Board of Education

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

Board Report

25-0424-RS6 **WITHDRAWN**

Agenda Date: 4/24/2025

RESOLUTION ADDRESSING VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO THE BOARD'S AUTHORIZATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL

WHEREAS, the Chicago Board of Education ("Board") operates both district-run schools and authorizes not-for-profit organizations to operate public schools within the district pursuant to Article 27A of the Illinois School Code; and

WHEREAS, the public schools authorized pursuant to Article 27A of the Illinois School Code operate in accordance with a charter agreement between the Board and the not-for-profit organization; and

WHEREAS, annually, the Board reviews charters up for renewal and determines whether the charter has met all standards and goals for academic, organizational and financial performance; and

WHEREAS, some charters have struggled to support our most vulnerable populations, such as adhering to the supports needed for students with disabilities and/or English language learners; and

WHEREAS, in order to improve delivery of services and encourage continuous improvement, charters need to be given timely and actionable feedback regarding areas of growth and renewal performance standards should be publicized and explained in detail; and

WHEREAS, within the standards for financial performance, it is imperative that charter schools provide an honest and transparent assessment of their finances so that the stability of the students and staff is not compromised; and

WHEREAS, charter schools are funded pursuant to Article 27A, with Board funds, at the expense of taxpayers, for the purpose of education Chicago students; and

WHEREAS, closing a school, even at the end of a renewal period creates anxiety and uncertainty for students, parents and staff, necessitating support from both the charter school operator and the District; and

WHEREAS, the Board intends to ensure the uninterrupted provision of educational services to school-aged public school students by operators of charter schools in the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the Board seeks to comply with state law and its collective bargaining agreement with the Chicago Teachers Union requiring charter operators to exercise union neutrality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chicago Board of Education hereby resolves the following:

1. Advocate to the Illinois General Assembly that Article 27A of the school code be amended to:
 - A. Require charters to sign and abide by their written agreements within 90 days of receiving it from the Board;
 - B. Ensure parents are included as voting members of a charter's governing body;
 - C. Prohibiting charters from closing during their renewal term and requiring advanced notice and collaborative planning for any closure occurring at the end of a renewal term; and
 - D. Provide for parent/community engagement into the process of closing charters and the possible transition of the charter school to a district managed school, including, where possible, opportunities for families and staff to stay together; and
2. Agreements with Charter school operators will have the following provisions:

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- A. Upon closure, any property or assets of the charter purchased with public funds for the operations of the charter school or a campus shall be returned to the Board, at no cost to the Board;
 - B. That Charter school operators will assume financial responsibility for any charter school closures;
 - C. Charter school operators shall notify the Board of any school closure at least 18 months in advance of the closure date;
 - D. Require that charters spend the majority of publicly-funded revenues on direct services and materials that benefit students, subject to the law and its implementing regulations;
 - E. Charter school operators must provide all information relevant to employee roster requests, including but not limited to salary, and salary schedule, upon request from the Department of Innovation and Incubation ("I&I");
 - F. Charter school operators shall be neutral regarding the unionization of any of its employees such that the Charter school will not at any time express a position on the matter of whether its employees will be unionized and such that the charter school will not threaten, intimidate, discriminate against, retaliate against, or take any adverse action against any employees based on their decision to support or oppose union representation; and
 - G. Charter school operators must provide any bona fide labor organization access at reasonable times to areas in which the Charter School's employees work for the purpose of meeting with employees to discuss their right to representation, employment rights under the law, and terms and conditions of employment.
3. That I&I do the following:
 - A. Ensure that all rubrics are available to charter and contract school operators and to Board members, that notification will be provided to charter operators of any changes, and that any changes to rubrics are made in the best interest of students.
 - B. Within its review process of charter school operators, conduct site visits annually. Feedback from these visits should be made available to charter operators and school-based administration in a timely way so that they can improve their practice; and
 - C. Report to the Board regularly on the results of progress monitoring and efforts underway to support charter schools in improvement.
 4. That I&I bring to the Board a Policy that addresses what happens when a charter school or campus closes. This policy should highlight the factors by which the Board will consider the possible transition from closed charter school to district-managed school. The policy will also address how students will be supported in a transition and how parents/community members will be engaged.