

**SUBJECT**

Proposed New Procedure: Formation of Staff Recommendations

**APPLICABLE STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

During a discussion at the April 17, 2014, PCSC meeting, the PCSC directed staff to prepare a procedure regarding the formation of staff recommendations to the PCSC.

**DISCUSSION**

The proposed, new procedure codifies the process already used by staff to gather information and develop recommendations regarding action items for PCSC review and approval. The procedure is intended to ensure that staff recommendations are:

- Guided by the PCSC’s mission and vision;
- Data-driven and verified;
- As timely and thorough as possible; and
- Available for public review prior to PCSC consideration.

**IMPACT**

Any new PCSC procedure adopted by the PCSC will be effective immediately. Schools whose performance certificates incorporate an older version of PCSC policies and procedures will be offered the opportunity to amend their certificates to reflect the amendments.

**STAFF COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed new procedure regarding the formation of staff recommendations.

**COMMISSION ACTION**

A motion to approve the proposed new procedure regarding the formation of staff recommendations as submitted.

OR

A motion to approve the proposed new procedure regarding the formation of staff recommendations with the following changes:

\_\_\_\_\_.

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ Carried Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

# IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

### Section I: General Governing Policies and Procedures

#### A. Procedure for Formation of Staff Recommendations (NEW SECTION)

##### 1. Staff recommendations will be guided by the PCSC's mission statement:

*The Public Charter School Commission's mission is to ensure PCSC-authorized public charter schools' compliance with Idaho statute, protecting student and public interests by balancing high standards of accountability with respect for the autonomy of public charter schools and implementing best authorizing practices to ensure the excellence of public charter school options available to Idaho families.*

On this basis, staff recommendations will attempt to:

- a. Implement best authorizing practices identified by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and other national leaders in the charter school community.
- b. Respect the autonomy of public charter schools, including the decision-making authority of charter school boards, and focus on outcomes that result from schools' autonomous operations.
- c. Uphold high standards of accountability, particularly with regard to schools' legal compliance, academic achievement, operational effectiveness, and fiscal stability.
- d. Protect student interests.
- e. Protect public interests, including the responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

##### 2. Staff recommendations will be data-driven and verified.

In the process of forming recommendations, staff will:

- a. Communicate with the source of the information under consideration and obtain documentation when possible.

- b. Communicate with the affected school(s) and, when possible, offer opportunity for school representatives to provide perspective and additional documentation.
- c. Communicate with third parties as necessary and possible to gather documentation and verify or elucidate information.
- d. Review relevant documentation and cross-check facts when possible.
- e. Query relevant parties regarding confusion or disparity that may arise from various communications and investigation.

**3. Staff recommendations will be as thorough and timely as possible.**

PCSC staff will make every reasonable effort to ensure that recommendations reflect the most up-to-date, complete information possible. Factors affecting staff's ability to do so include, but are not limited to:

- a. Timeliness of responses by school representatives and other entities.
- b. Thoroughness of responses by school representatives and other entities.
- c. Accuracy of responses by school representatives and other entities.
- d. Circumstances beyond the control of the relevant parties.
- e. Publication deadlines for PCSC meeting materials, which are generally 7 days in advance of regular meetings, or 3 days in advance of special meetings, and require extensive and time-consuming preparation.

[Note: Publication deadlines should not be interpreted as materials/response submission deadlines. Submission deadlines shall be in accordance with Section II.A or as otherwise established in writing by PCSC staff pursuant to Section I.A.3.f of this manual.]

In order to minimize the impact of these factors, PCSC staff will:

- f. Provide schools with clear, written deadlines and lists of requested/required documentation and queries.
- g. Attempt to communicate with school officials and other parties to clarify unclear information and/or elicit responses to follow-up queries.

Recommendations that must be formed based on incomplete information due to schools' failure to provide requested information in a timely fashion will be noted as such, and will be based on staff's best judgment in light of the available information.

Meeting materials typically cannot be modified after publication for practical reasons including limited staff capacity and the need to permit adequate time for PCSC review of the materials prior to meeting. Rare exceptions are generally made only at the direction of the PCSC chairman. Schools that failed to provide previously requested information and/or respond adequately to clarifying questions should not expect staff recommendations to be revised based on information received after established information submission deadlines, as staff capacity and short timeframes limit staff's ability to adequately research and integrate late-arriving information.

**4. Staff recommendations will be available for public review prior to PCSC consideration of action based on such recommendations.**

- a. PCSC regular meeting materials are typically published on the PCSC's website five (5) business days in advance of the meeting date. If online posting is delayed, members of the public may request to have materials sent directly to them.
- b. PCSC special meeting materials are typically published on the PCSC's website two (2) days in advance of the meeting date. If online posting is delayed, members of the public may request to have materials sent directly to them.
- c. Schools that believe a staff recommendation affecting them is based on inaccurate or incomplete information are encouraged to notify staff of such concern, in writing and with any applicable documentation, as far in advance of the meeting date as possible. Doing so maximizes the opportunity for staff to conduct additional research, if possible, and provide appropriate, verbal updates to the PCSC during the meeting.