



## **IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

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# **PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING**

April 14, 2016

650 W. State Street, Boise ID

Len B. Jordan Building, Suite 307

## **AGENDA**

**Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – 650 W. State Street, Suite 307, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

### **A. COMMISSION WORK**

1. Agenda Review / Approval
2. Minutes Review / Approval

### **B. OTHER**

1. Legislative Update
2. Commission Workshop: Charter Renewal Process
3. EXECUTIVE SESSION, pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206(d) to consider records that are exempt from disclosure.

If auxiliary aids or services are needed for individuals with disabilities, or if you wish to speak during the Open Forum, please contact the SBOE office at 334-2270 or PCSC staff before the meeting opens. While the PCSC attempts to address items in the listed order, some items may be addressed by the PCSC prior to or after the order listed.

1. Agenda Approval

Does the Public Charter School Commission (PCSC) have any changes or additions to the agenda?

**COMMISSION ACTION**

A motion to approve the agenda as submitted.

2. Minutes Approval

Does the PCSC have any changes or additions to the meeting minutes from February 11, 2016?

**COMMISSION ACTION**

A motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 11, 2016, as submitted.



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# DRAFT MEETING MINUTES PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 11, 2016, 9:00 a.m. – 304 N 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Rm 242

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reed at 9:00 a.m.

The following Commissioners were in attendance:

Alan Reed – Phone  
Gayle O'Donahue – Phone  
Evan Frasure – In Person  
Kelly Murphey – Phone  
Brian Scigliano – Phone  
Gayann DeMordaunt – Phone  
Wanda Quinn – Phone

### A. COMMISSION WORK

Chairman Reed inquired whether there were any amendments to the agenda.

**M/S (Quinn/Frasure):** To approve the agenda as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

Chairman Reed inquired whether there was any discussion regarding the draft minutes.

**M/S (DeMordaunt/O'Donahue):** To approve the meeting minutes from December 10, 2015, and January 22, 2016, as submitted. *The motion passed unanimously.*

### B. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE

**M/S (Frasure/Scigliano):** To execute the performance certificate for Alturus International Academy as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

## **C. OTHER**

### **1. PCSC ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTATION**

PCSC Director Tamara Baysinger provided an overview of the 2015 PCSC Annual Report. She addressed the PCSC's staffing and budget, PCSC school outcomes and demographics, and preparations for the upcoming charter renewal process.

### **2. IDAHO CHARTER SCHOOL NETWORK/BLUUM PRESENTATION: "THE POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS"**

Terry Ryan, ICSN/Bluum CEO and Marc Carignan, ICSN/Bluum CFO, provided a presentation reviewing the roles of ICSN and Bluum, the services they provide, and their goals for helping improve school choice options in Idaho.

Commissioner Quinn left the meeting.

### **3. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

At Chairman Reed's request, Director Baysinger provided an update regarding proposed charter school legislation. She said the State Board of Education's legislation regarding replication and charter management organizations had not yet been introduced in committee.

Director Baysinger described S1248, a bill sponsored by Senator Nonini, which would remove the requirement that public charter school teachers and administrators be on a contract in a form approved by the superintendent of public instruction. Although charter schools could choose to use the approved contract, they would also be free to use a different contract if they wished. Director Baysinger summarized the arguments made against and in favor of the bill during a February 9, 2016, hearing in the Senate Education Committee. She said she had already expressed her concern to the ICSN's lobbyist; that is, that charter school authorizers should not be placed in the position of evaluating contracts because it would infringe on school board autonomy.

Commissioner DeMordaunt said she leaned toward remaining silent on S1248.

Commissioner Frasure said he supported the bill because the purpose of charter schools is to be innovative, and the bill would provide additional room for innovation. Other states have been successful in giving charter schools flexibility regarding teacher and administrator contracts.

Chairman Reed asked about the opinions of public charter schools, saying he wouldn't want the PCSC's position on the bill to be in opposition to charter schools' position.

Director Baysinger said that the ISBA had surveyed its charter school members; 2/3 of the respondents opposed the bill and 1/3 were in favor.

Mr. Carignan said that ICSN's survey results indicated that 12 respondents supported the bill, 11 were neutral, and 10 opposed. District-authorized charters were more inclined to oppose.

Chairman Reed said he personally favors the bill, but felt the PCSC's opinion should consider that of the schools.

Commissioner Frasure emphasized that the bill would make using different contracts an option, but not a requirement. Each charter school would still have the option of using the superintendent-approved form.

**M/S (Frasure/DeMordant):** For the Public Charter School Commission to formally endorse Senate Bill 1248.

Commissioner Scigliano said he would support the motion because it created flexibility for the schools, rather than a requirement.

Commissioner Murphey said he would not support the motion because his experience as a superintendent and turnaround support for a struggling charter make him aware of how badly a poorly written contract could hurt a school. He said he supports the concept of increased flexibility, but there is too much risk when contracts are drafted by individuals without sufficient experience.

Commissioner Frasure noted that the bill does not relieve schools of any other, current provision of law. He said this is a way to give charters more tools for innovation.

Chairman Reed asked for clarification of the wording of the motion and how it expressed rationale for the PCSC's support.

Director Baysinger read the motion, which did not include rationale language.

Commissioner Frasure said he did not feel the motion needed to be amended to include rationale, but the wording could be changed slightly.

**Amended Motion (Frasure/DeMordaunt):** For the Public Charter School Commission to support Senate Bill 1248. *The motion passed 4-1.*

**M/S (DeMordaunt/O'Donahue):** To adjourn the meeting. *The motion passed unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

**SUBJECT**

2016 Legislative Update

**APPLICABLE STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

During the 2016 legislative session, the Idaho Legislature considered several bills directly related to public charter schools.

**DISCUSSION**

PCSC staff will provide an overview of legislation directly pertinent to public charter schools and the PCSC:

S1248 amends existing statute to remove the requirement that charter schools use the teacher contracts approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The bill was signed by Governor Otter on 3/16/16.

S1376 amends existing statute to clarify language regarding the replication of high performing charter school and sets guidelines in place regarding how charter schools may contract with education service providers. The bill was signed by Governor Otter on 3/31/2016.

S1430 appropriates and transfers \$750,000 from the Economic Recovery Reserve Fund to the Charter School Debt Reserve Fund for fiscal year 2017. The Charter School Debt Reserve Fund assists qualified charter schools in obtaining favorable financing for new facilities and renovations. The bill was sent to Governor Otter on 3/29/2016.

H603 amends existing statute to allow school districts and public charter schools whose enrollment increases by more than 3% mid-year to receive additional funding for those students who enrolled later in the school year. The bill was sent to Governor Otter on 3/28/2016.

HCR33 authorizes the Legislative Council to appoint a committee to conduct a study of the public school funding formula and make recommendations.

**IMPACT**

Information item only.

**STAFF COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff has no comments or recommendations.

**COMMISSION ACTION**

Any action would be at the discretion of the PCSC.

**SUBJECT**

PCSC Workshop: Charter Renewal Process

**APPLICABLE STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

§33-5209B, Idaho Code

**BACKGROUND**

Idaho statute requires charter school authorizers to periodically evaluate the schools in their portfolio for purposes of renewal or non-renewal. In March 2017, the PCSC will make renewal or non-renewal decisions regarding eleven schools.

**DISCUSSION**

PCSC staff will provide a review of the charter renewal process, including:

1. Steps in the renewal process that have already taken place;
2. Steps in the renewal process that will occur prior to March 2017;
3. Statutory options available to authorizers; and
4. Standards already established to guide PCSC decision-making.

**IMPACT**

Information item only.

**STAFF COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff has no comments or recommendations.

**COMMISSION ACTION**

Any action would be at the discretion of the PCSC.



IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

# PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL GUIDANCE & APPLICATION



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Boise, Idaho 83702

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Alan Reed, Chairman  
Tamara Baysinger, Director



## Introduction

Idaho statute requires that all public charter schools in the state be periodically reviewed by their authorizer for the purpose of determining whether or not the charter should continue operations. New schools are initially approved for three year terms, and may be renewed for successive five year terms thereafter.

The Public Charter School Commission (PCSC) seeks to make the renewal process as meaningful, transparent, and collaborative as possible. We encourage schools to review this guide thoroughly, taking care to meet deadlines and complete the renewal application accurately. We also encourage schools to start the process early and maintain communication with PCSC staff throughout.

The renewal process offers an opportunity for you, as a school, to reflect on your outcomes during your current performance certificate term; make an evidence-based case that your school represents a prudent use of student time and taxpayer funds; and present a compelling plan for your school's future.

The PCSC will make renewal decisions in accordance with Idaho statute, ultimately basing its decision on each school's outcomes with regard to the requirements and standards established in the performance certificate and framework.

We thank you for your thoughtful engagement in this rigorous but important process, and invite an atmosphere of honest communication and commitment to quality as we all work toward the goal of upholding Idaho's charter school movement and the students it serves.

## Overview

The renewal process outlined in Idaho statute includes several deadlines and requirements of both authorizers and schools. This guide is intended to assist you in understanding these requirements and fulfilling your school's responsibilities in a timely and effective fashion. It will also explain the PCSC's role in the process, including procedures and possible outcomes.

Your charter, performance certificate, and framework contain a description of the school you have committed to provide for your community. The framework details academic, mission-specific, operational, and financial standards against which your outcomes are evaluated on an annual basis. These outcomes are provided to you by the PCSC in annual performance reports and indicate whether your school has exceeded, met, failed to meet, or fallen far below the standard for each measure.

Throughout the majority of your performance certificate term, very few (if any) sanctions are imposed even if your school's outcomes are not ideal. Instead, annual performance reports serve as guideposts to help shape your strategic planning as you celebrate your strengths and seek to improve upon any shortcomings.

During the renewal process, the PCSC will carefully evaluate your school, including implementation of your stated mission and key design elements, as well as academic, mission-specific, operational, and financial outcomes relative to the standards established in the framework. We will examine the trajectory of your school throughout the performance certificate term, noting changes over time as well as the larger context in which they have occurred.

The renewal process includes opportunities for you to address the outcomes described in your annual reports, provide contextual detail and additional evidence, and describe improvements undertaken by your school. These opportunities include optional submission of auxiliary data, a site visit by a pre-renewal review team, completion of a renewal application, and a public hearing.

The renewal application included with this guidance document is intended to answer the following questions:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school organizationally sound and compliant with applicable laws and regulations?
3. Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?
4. If renewed, what is the school's plan for its next performance certificate term?

The process allows you to make your best case for renewal by providing additional information and offering explanations for any performance issues. Because the renewal timeline is tight, we encourage you to begin working to address any concerns identified in your annual reports as soon as possible.

Ultimately, there are several possible outcomes of the renewal process:

1. The PCSC may renew your charter for a new, 5-year term.
2. The PCSC may *conditionally* renew your charter for a new, 5-year term. If the specific, written conditions established by the PCSC are not met on the timeline specified, the PCSC may proceed with revocation of the charter prior to the end of the term.
3. The PCSC may non-renew your charter. Non-renewal obliges a school to permanently close at the end of the school year during which the non-renewal decision is made. In the event of a non-renewal decision, an appeal process is available.
4. Your school may voluntarily relinquish its charter. If this decision is made, the PCSC strongly encourages schools to close at the end of the school year, rather than mid-year, whenever possible.

## Renewal Process

The PCSC endeavors to conduct a rigorous, transparent renewal decision process that leads to merit-based decisions in accordance with Idaho statute and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*. This standard is embedded in the performance certificate and framework signed by each school. In accordance with statute, the performance certificate, PCSC policy, and best practices in authorizing, the PCSC will base its renewal decisions on each school's existing performance record.

Although the formal renewal process described in Idaho statute begins in fall of the renewal year, several stages lead up to the process:

**Performance Certificate and Framework Adoption** -- Your school's performance certificate and framework were adopted and signed by both your board chair and the PCSC's chair at the beginning of the certificate term. The adoption process included multiple conversations between PCSC staff and school leadership, during which the certificate and framework were reviewed and customized to your school. The certificate and framework specify the academic, mission-specific, operational, and financial performance expectations to which both parties have agreed.

**Non-Renewal Years** -- Throughout your performance certificate term, your school received annual performance reports advising you of your outcomes relative to the performance expectations described in the performance framework. Each year, you had an opportunity to review a draft and provide documented responses in advance of the final report's publication. School leadership was encouraged to work toward resolution of any shortcomings identified in the annual reports.

**Pre-Renewal Year** -- This stage comprises the school year prior to the one in which a renewal or non-renewal decision will be made. During this stage, PCSC staff meets with school leadership to discuss any concerns that may impact the upcoming renewal decision. As a school, you are invited (though not required) to submit auxiliary performance data to support your case for renewal.

**Renewal Year** -- This stage comprises the school year in which a renewal or non-renewal decision will be made. Early in the renewal year, an evaluation team will make a site visit to the school. Between November 15 and March 15 of the renewal year, the PCSC and school will exchange final performance documentation on a strict timeline. Your school's board is ultimately responsible for the school's participation in the renewal process, including timely submission of a thorough and accurate renewal application.

## Renewal Timeline

Below is a timeline of the renewal process, including deadlines, beginning in the year preceding the renewal year and continuing through the PCSC's final decision. Deadlines for schools are shown in green.

Pre-Renewal Year	PCSC staff meets with school leadership to introduce the renewal process and discuss any concerns regarding school outcomes.
July 15	Schools may submit auxiliary performance data (optional).
Fall of Renewal Year	Evaluation team makes a site visit to the school. School board members, administration, and business management personnel should plan to participate.
November 15	PCSC issues performance reports to all renewal-year schools. PCSC issues renewal application and guidance to all renewal-year schools.
December 15	Renewal-year schools submit completed renewal applications to PCSC.
February PCSC Regular Meeting	Public hearings are held to consider evidence regarding renewal year schools.
Within 7 days of February PCSC Regular Meeting	Schools may submit written closing arguments to PCSC office (optional).
By March 15	PCSC holds special meeting for the purpose of making final renewal or non-renewal determinations.

Several of the deadlines above are statutory, and all are critical to ensuring a smooth renewal process during which both parties have an opportunity to review and respond to all relevant documentation. For this reason, PCSC policy provides that "schools that fail to submit their completed renewal applications...by the statutory deadline may be recommended for non-renewal."

Schools are encouraged to review this timeline frequently and contact PCSC staff with any questions.

## Auxiliary Performance Data Submission

The renewal process described above includes an optional opportunity for you to submit auxiliary performance data of which the PCSC may not otherwise be aware. We invite you to use this opportunity to make your case for renewal by providing academic, mission-specific, operational, or financial information that is not already captured by the performance framework.

The auxiliary performance data submission deadline is July 15, and auxiliary data must be submitted using the Auxiliary Performance Data Submission Form. Be sure to follow the instructions carefully in order to ensure that your data is presented in a meaningful and useable manner. Remember to focus on measurable, objective evidence rather than on anecdote.

We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this voluntary submission in order to support claims about your school's outcomes. For example, if you believe that your SAT results are reflective of a population that is highly mobile, you could consider submitting the following:

- SAT results for all your students who took the test;
- The same data parsed by the length of time students have been continuously enrolled at your school prior to taking the test; and
- Analysis of the above data differentiating results of students who have been enrolled for a significant period from those of students who enrolled more recently.

As another example, perhaps you believe your ISAT proficiency rates reflect a population of students who were already struggling academically when they enrolled at your school. You could consider submitting the following:

- Student-level growth data (using a standardized assessment) for all your students;
- The same data parsed by how close to grade level students were when they entered your school; and
- Analysis of the above data demonstrating the rate of growth for students who enrolled below, at, and above grade level.

As a third example, perhaps you believe your four-year cohort graduation rate is reflective of a population that includes many students who were already behind their cohorts when they enrolled at your school. You could consider submitting the following:

- 4 year, 5 year, and 6+ year cohort graduation rates;
- Student-level data demonstrating which of your students graduated with which cohorts (4 year, 5 year, 6+ year);
- Student-level data demonstrating whether/how far behind cohort those graduates were when they enrolled at your school; and
- Analysis of the above data demonstrating the rate at which students who enrolled with or behind their cohorts progressed through graduation from your school.

The Auxiliary Performance Data Submission Form will help you organize your supporting documentation and explain the purpose for which you are submitting it. We will provide a secure file transfer site to ensure that individually-identifiable student information is protected.

## Renewal Application

Below is a checklist to guide you through the development of your renewal application. The checklist is followed by guidance to assist you with development of the application narrative and exhibits.

### Title Page

Please provide a title page with the title "Application for Charter Renewal." Include the following information:

- School Name
- School Address
- Contact Information for Renewal Process Contact Person
  - Name
  - Title
  - Phone
  - E-mail
  - Mailing Address
- Date of Application Approval by School Board
- Application Submission Date

## Table of Contents

Please provide a clear and comprehensive table of contents including, for all major sections and exhibits:

- Page Numbers
- Hyperlinks or Electronic Bookmarks

## Executive Summary

Please provide an executive summary, limited to two (2) pages in length (no less than 11-point font, standard 1-inch margins), providing a concise and concrete overview of the renewal application, including:

- Summary of the school's mission and key design elements, or defining characteristics
- Summary of major successes and challenges during the current performance certificate term
- Summary of the school's responses to the four, central questions addressed in the application
- Signatures of your school's board chair and administrator

## Application Narrative

Please provide an application narrative, limited to twenty-five (25) pages in length (no less than 11-point font, standard 1-inch margins) addressing the four, central questions below:

- Is the school an academic success?
- Is the school organizationally sound and compliant with applicable laws and regulations?
- Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?
- If renewed, what is the school's plan for its next performance certificate term?

Your responses to the first three questions should focus on credible evidence of the school's past performance outcomes and current status. Only the answer to question four should focus on plans for the future. Below you will find additional guidance to provide direction as you craft your response to each question.

## Exhibits

Please attach any exhibits necessary to support your application narrative. All exhibits should:

- Be immediately relevant to evidence and analysis presented in your renewal performance report. (Any other information should already have been submitted by the optional July 15 auxiliary performance data submission deadline.)
- Provide clear and objective evidence, rather than anecdotal information, to clarify or correct the contents of the renewal performance report.
- Be in Word or Excel format.
- Be referred to using an exhibit number in the relevant portion of the table of contents and application narrative.
- Be clearly labeled (both file name and within the document) with the school name and exhibit number.

## Application Narrative Guidance

The guidance below is intended to assist you with development of your renewal application narrative. Please review it carefully to ensure that your narrative is complete. Remember to use your renewal performance report as a guide for your response.

### 1. Is the school an academic success?

Students' academic success is the most important aspect of your school's efficacy, and it represents the PCSC's highest priority when evaluating schools for renewal. This portion of your application narrative should provide an honest, detailed, and data-driven discussion of your school's academic outcomes over the performance certificate term.

Be sure to address the key areas of proficiency, growth, and (in the case of high schools), college and career readiness. Include a discussion of both overall and sub-population achievement (Special Education, Free & Reduced Lunch, Non-White, and Limited English Proficiency). It may also be appropriate to consider other groups, such as at-risk students or students who have been continuously enrolled at your school for a certain period.

Also discuss your results on the mission-specific section of the framework, if applicable. The mission-specific measures reflect factors that your board self-identified as important for evaluation of the school. If your annual performance reports reflect weakness in any of these areas, please discuss how your school has responded to the identified shortcomings, focusing particularly on the documented impact of that response.

We invite explanation regarding the context of challenges faced by the school and discussion of how the school has adapted to meet them. Throughout this section, remember to focus primarily on outcomes, that is, the results of your efforts rather than the details of the efforts themselves.

You should also address the degree to which your school fulfills the promises made in your charter. Consider the key design elements listed in your performance certificate, as well as the educational program your charter describes. Does reality reflect the commitments made in your charter and performance certificate? Are you actually providing to your community the educational option and results that you described in your charter (as amended, if applicable)?

### 2. Is the school organizationally sound and compliant with applicable laws and regulations?

This portion of your narrative should address any concerns noted in the operational section of your annual performance reports. Include a description of actions you have taken to correct any outstanding issues, and focus on the outcomes of those actions.

Include a discussion of your school's student demographics by comparison to the state and surrounding district. If there are discrepancies, explain why you believe this is the case, any measures you have taken to ensure that all students feel welcome to enroll. Address the impact of your student demographics, whether they reflect diversity or lack thereof, on your academic outcomes.

It is also appropriate to discuss in this section any issues regarding topics such as organizational capacity, board oversight and governance, school leadership, school safety, and stakeholder satisfaction. Remember to focus on demonstrable evidence rather than anecdote.

### 3. Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?

This portion of your narrative should describe the school's financial status, both at present and over the long term. Any concerns noted in the financial section of your annual performance reports should be addressed. You should also discuss any concerns about independent fiscal audit findings,

internal controls, and under enrollment. Be sure to explain the reasons the concerns came about, the actions you have taken to address them, and the especially outcomes of those actions.

If your school faces unresolved financial uncertainty, it is appropriate to discuss how you will ensure that your students' educational experience is not negatively affected while you work toward a stronger financial position.

#### 4. If renewed, what is the school's plan for its next performance certificate term?

This portion of your narrative should discuss plans for the future of your school. Summarize your strategic plan, looking ahead to the upcoming five-year term.

If outstanding concerns remain in any of the areas considered earlier (academic, operational, or financial), this is an appropriate place to explain your action plan and timeline for resolving those concerns. It is particularly important to focus on the measurable results you expect to achieve by specified points in time.

You should also provide information regarding any intention to propose an expansion or replication, programmatic change, or other substantial modification to your school that may occur during the upcoming, five-year term.

Finally, please include in this section a description of any plans you have for disseminating your successes for the benefit of other schools, teachers, and students.

## Application Submission Instructions

Before submitting your application, please verify that it meets the following checklist:

- The application includes a complete title page, table of contents, executive summary and narrative.
- The executive summary does not exceed two (2) pages.
- The executive summary is signed by the school's board chair and administrator.
- The narrative does not exceed twenty-five (25) pages.
- The narrative thoroughly addresses the topics described in the guidance above.
- Any exhibits are clearly labeled and formatted according to the guidance above.