



Portfolio Performance Report  
2022

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Term Ends 2026



Sherrilynn Bair, Vice Chair  
Term Ends 2024



Brian Scigliano  
Term Ends 2024



Wanda Quinn  
Term Ends 2024



Nils Peterson  
Term Ends 2023



Dean Fisher  
Term Ends 2023



Karen Echeverria  
Term Ends 2026



Jenn Thompson  
IPCSC Director

## The IPCSC’s mission is to cultivate exemplary charter schools.

The Idaho Public Charter School Commission (IPCSC) is Idaho’s independent chartering entity. Composed of seven Governor-appointed commissioners and a small staff, we provide oversight and compliance monitoring for approximately 60 public charter schools in our state.

The commission is primarily tasked with protecting taxpayer and student interests in the charter sector. This important work requires that we evaluate the risk to student and taxpayer dollars posed by new charter school applications. It also requires that we evaluate the return on investment of those public dollars as we consider charter school renewal applications.

Our mission of cultivating exemplary charter schools reminds us that our day-to-day tasks are in service of students and families.

We envision a healthy charter school landscape focused on:

**Quality**—Idaho families have exemplary charter school options.

**Autonomy**—Charter schools design and implement unique educational programs.

**Accountability**—Charter schools meet the standards defined in the IPCSC’s performance framework.

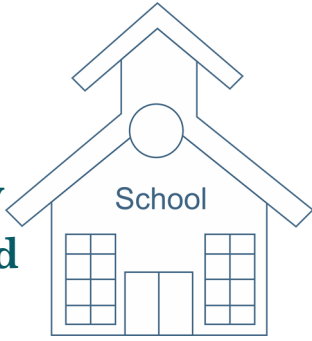
**Compliance**—Charter schools operate in compliance with laws, rules, and regulations.

**Advocacy**—The IPCSC advocates for student and public interests.

We believe that by engaging in our mission with professionalism, integrity, and transparency, Idaho’s charter schools and our educational landscape as a whole will continue to thrive.

# Charter School Facts

**60**  
Currently  
Authorized  
Schools



**28,816** Students Attended  
Charter Schools  
21-22 SY

**All**  
Charter Schools are



and  
**Public**

**3**  
Schools  
Opening  
2023

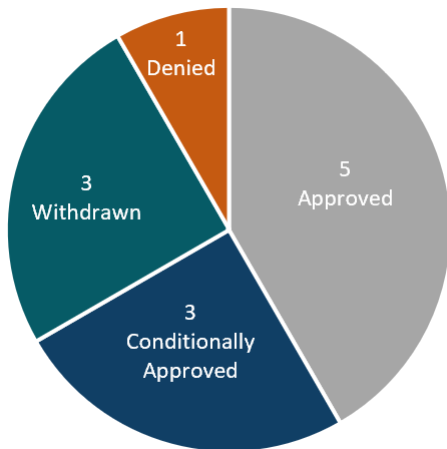
**2**  
New Petitions  
in Review  
2023

**1**  
School  
Closure  
2022

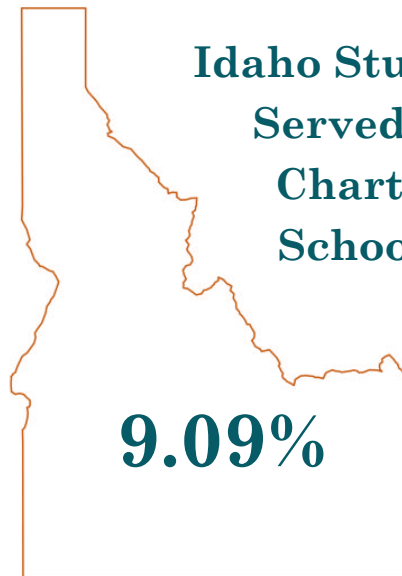
## Authorizer's Balance



## New Charter School Petition Outcomes 2020-2022



Idaho Students  
Served by  
Charter  
Schools



# Annual Performance Reports

To serve the needs of schools, policy-makers and Idaho families, the IPCSC maintains a webpage for each school. Operating contracts, annual performance reports, contract renewal documents, and contact information for each school can be accessed by clicking the links below or by visiting: <https://chartercommission.idaho.gov/psc-schools/by-region/>

[ALTURAS INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY](#)

[ALTURAS PREPARATORY ACADEMY](#)

[AMERICAN HERITAGE CHARTER](#)

[ANSER CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[BINGHAM ACADEMY](#)

[BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CHARTER](#)

[CARDINAL ACADEMY](#)

[CHIEF TAHGEE ELEMENTARY](#)

[COEUR D' ALENE CHARTER](#)

[COMPASS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[DORAL ACADEMY OF IDAHO](#)

[ELEVATE ACADEMY](#)

[ELEVATE ACADEMY NAMPA](#)

[ELEVATE ACADEMY NORTH](#)

[FALCON RIDGE PUBLIC CHARTER](#)

[FORGE INTERNATIONAL, LLC](#)

[FUTURE PUBLIC SCHOOL](#)

[GEM PREP - MERIDIAN](#)

[GEM PREP - POCATELLO](#)

[GEM PREP MERIDIAN NORTH](#)

[GEM PREP MERIDIAN SOUTH](#)

[GEM PREP TWIN FALLS](#)

[HAYDEN CANYON CHARTER](#)

[HERITAGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[HERITAGE COMMUNITY CHARTER](#)

[IDAHO TECHNICAL CAREER ACADEMY](#)

[IDAHO CONNECTS](#)

[IDAHO NOVUS CLASSICAL ACADEMY \(2024\)](#)

[IDAHO SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY](#)

[IDAHO VIRTUAL ACADEMY](#)

[INSPIRE VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[iSUCCEED VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL](#)

[KOOTENAI BRIDGE ACADEMY](#)

[KOOTENAI CLASSICAL ACADEMY](#)

[LEGACY CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[LIBERTY CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[MONTICELLO MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[MOSAICS PUBLIC SCHOOL](#)

[MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY SCHOOL](#)

[NORTH IDAHO STEM CHARTER ACADEMY](#)

[NORTH STAR CHARTER](#)

[NORTH VALLEY ACADEMY](#)

[PALOUSE PRAIRIE SCHOOL](#)

[PEACE VALLEY CHARTER](#)

[PINECREST ACADEMY OF IDAHO](#)

[PINECREST ACADEMY OF LEWISTON \(2023\)](#)

[PROJECT IMPACT STEM](#)

[RICHARD MCKENNA](#)

[ROLLING HILLS PUBLIC CHARTER](#)

[SAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BOISE](#)

[SYRINGA MOUNTAIN CHARTER](#)

[TAYLORS CROSSING CHARTER](#)

[THE ACADEMY \(CONNOR ACADEMY\)](#)

[THE VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[THOMAS JEFFERSON CHARTER](#)

[TREASURE VALLEY CLASSICAL](#)

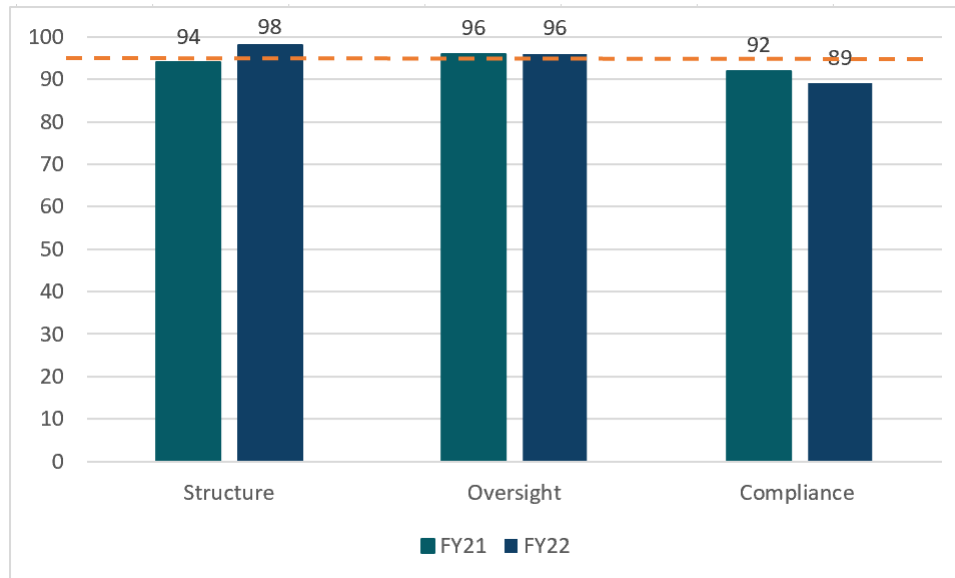
[VICTORY CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[VISION CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[WHITE PINE CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

[XAVIER CHARTER SCHOOL](#)

## Operational Oversight: Board Stewardship



For public charter schools, the line between success and failure often comes down to the quality of board stewardship and school leadership. School teams that respond quickly and competently to issues as they arise help ensure a school’s overall success. Conversely, teams that do not respond quickly or competently foster a riskier environment.

The IPCSC’s operational measures are designed to identify signs of distress in a charter school. While charter school failure is most commonly linked to financial failure, financial failure is always precipitated by signs of distress in a school’s operations.

For example, a governing board in distress might hold many executive sessions, have long board meetings, experience Open Meeting Law violations, or may not evaluate their school leader thoroughly.

A leadership team in distress may experience high rates of staff turn-over, have “findings” in student services reviews, fail to turn reports in on time, or lose track of the “little things”, such as updating the website or posting expenditure reports regularly.

The operational measures are divided by board stewardship and leadership/

management in order to help a school identify which party can take action to make improvements before an early sign of distress turns into something more.

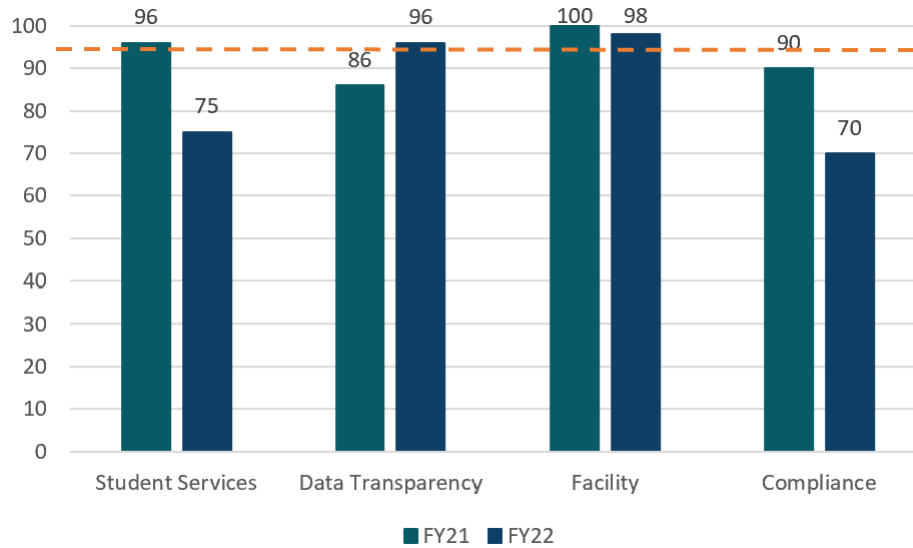
The IPCSC evaluates three Board Stewardship measures. The Governance Structure measure considers whether the board’s guiding documents (such as bylaws and meeting procedures) are compliant and in use.

The Governance oversight measure considers whether the board is performing its duty to the school and taxpayers by ensuring the school has effective leadership, policy, and financial oversight.

The Governance compliance measure considers whether more serious investigations into issues were necessary. In fiscal year 2022, six schools did not meet standard on this measure. The issues ranged from misunderstandings of the governing board’s role (promptly corrected with training), to failures in addressing ineffective leadership. In one case, leading to school closure.

Overall, these measure help us identify which school boards may need more education or access to resources to support their efforts to make well-informed decisions.

# Operational Oversight: Leadership and Management



The IPCSC evaluates four leadership and management measures, some of which require inter-agency cooperation to fully address. The student services measure considers whether the school’s service programs, such as special education, English language learners, etc., operated in good standing with the State Department of Education’s (SDE) expert teams who are tasked with monitoring these specific programs.

The data security and transparency measure considers whether the school is engaging in compliant financial transparency, making accurate and timely ISEE financial data uploads, and is keeping student data safe in compliance with the State Board of Education’s (SBE) regulations.

The facility services measure considers whether a school’s facilities are being well maintained and whether ancillary programs, such as meal service and transportation, are adequate.

Finally, the operational compliance measure considers the compliance of a school’s enrollment process as well as its response to any corrective action plans.

The IPCSC maintains a target of having 95% of our schools meet standard on each

measure. Several factors contribute to measures where the target was not met in 2022.

In a few cases schools have been found to have significant operational deficiencies either by our team or by a specialist team. These schools are working through corrective action plans. Courtesy letters and individual school performance reports identify the specifics of these issues for the sake of public transparency.

Difficulty in filling classified positions, (such as special education para-professionals and office staff) appears to have been a contributor to lower performance rates on the student services and compliance measure in fiscal year 2022.

While a school’s performance outcomes are just what they are, we acknowledge that programs that are understaffed or experiencing higher rates of turn over are more likely to struggle to maintain compliance and good standing.

We hope that as the state-wide staffing issues are addressed, these outcomes will rise above the target while continuing to help us identify important indicators of distress.

## Financial Oversight

- In addition to academic and operational oversight, the IPCSC evaluates each school’s financial performance against nine financial measures.

The first 4, called “near-term” measures, are designed to identify whether a school is able to meet its financial obligations in the next year. Near-term measures include Current Ratio, Cash on Hand, Default, and Enrollment Variance.

The last five, called “sustainability” measures, are designed to identify whether a school is able to meet its long-term financial obligations. Sustainability measures include Total Margin, Cash Flow, Debt Service Coverage Ratio, Debt to Asset Ratio, and Financial Compliance.

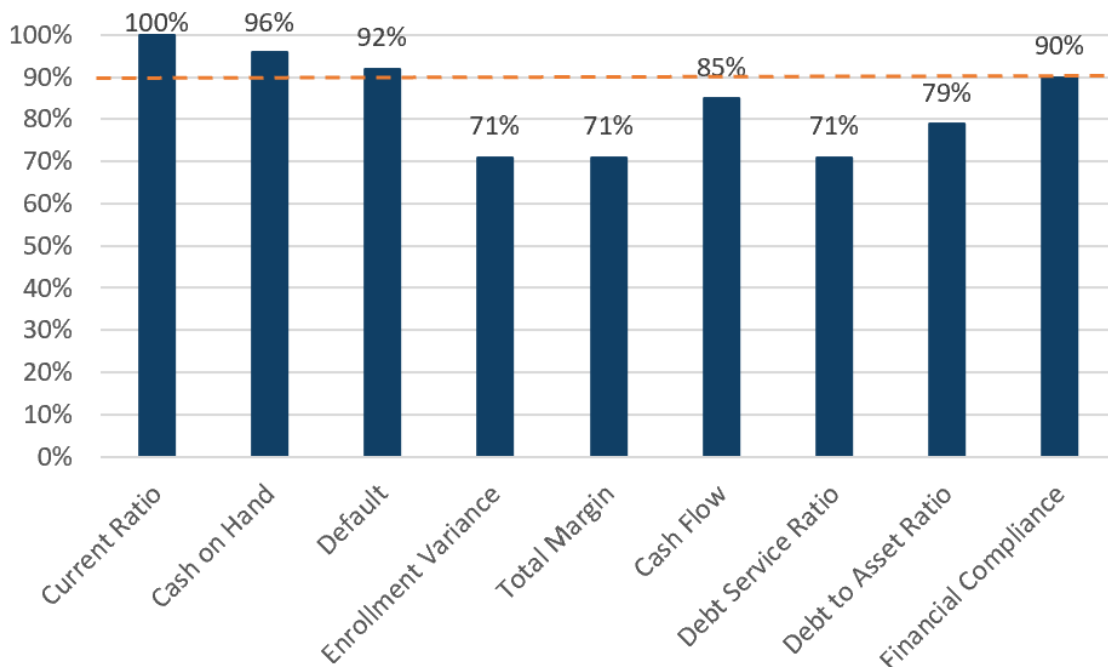
Our overall goal is to see 90% of our schools meet standard on all financial measures.

**Notes:**

- When a school has taken out a facility loan, but has not yet moved into the building, the school has a liability, but not the corresponding asset. This im-

pacts the debt service ratio and the debt to asset ratio measures temporarily, but bounces back once the asset is secured.

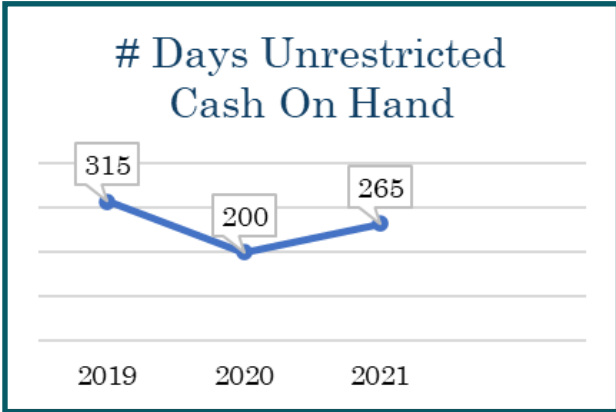
- The total margin and cash flow measures are multi-year measures, impacted by decreases in year end fund balance and higher expenditures than revenue in a single year. The lower outcomes in the chart below for these two measures reflect that schools had to dip into reserve funds during the pandemic years. Outcomes on these measures will bounce back in cases where the decision to draw on reserve funds was temporary.
- Enrollment variance is more concerning. Charter schools do not have the same revenue protections as traditional school districts. If the school’s enrollment does not reach the projected level, the school’s current year budget will be impacted with lower revenue than expected. To meet standard on this measure a school must achieve 95% of the enrollment it projected. Budget amendments are expected for schools who fail to meet this mark.





## Drilling Down

While high level information is useful in guiding the IPCSC toward its goal, it is important that our work is also useful at the school level. Below are a few examples of the charts each individual school might see on its annual performance report.



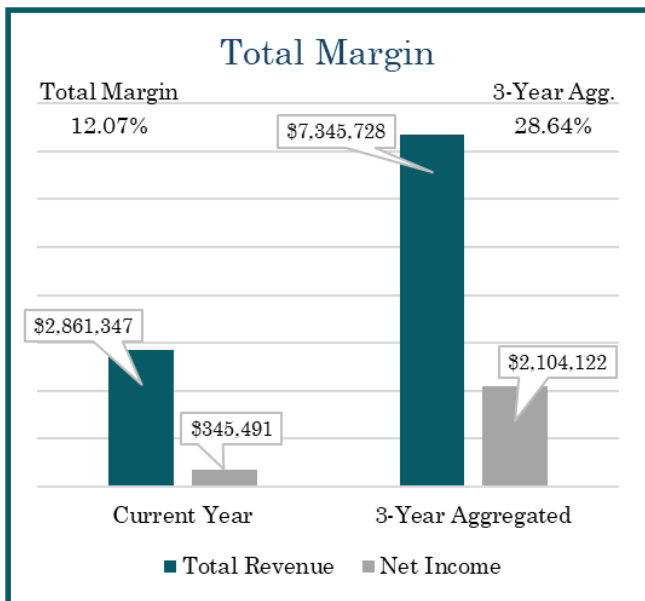
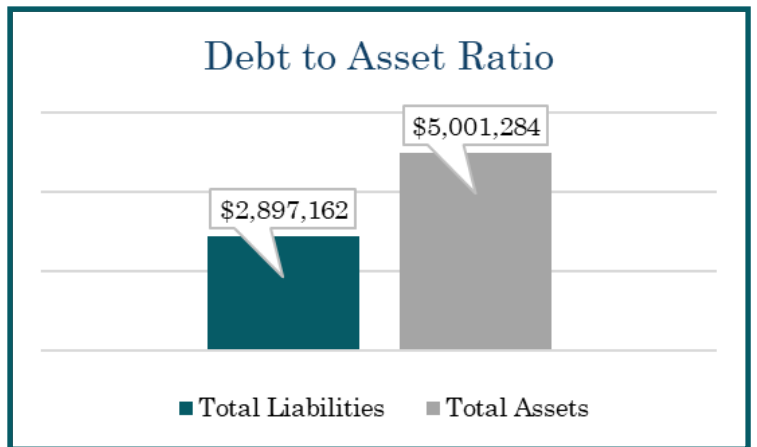
**Why cash on hand matters:** This measure estimates a school’s average daily cost of operations and considers the number of days a school could operate using only its available cash and investments.

A school with at least 60 days cash on hand would be able to meet its immediate financial obligations with available cash, buying the time it might take to access other assets. A school with less than 15 days cash on hand is in financial distress and is at risk of automatic closure.

**Why debt to asset ratio matters:**

The Debt to Asset Ratio compares a school’s total liabilities to its total assets.

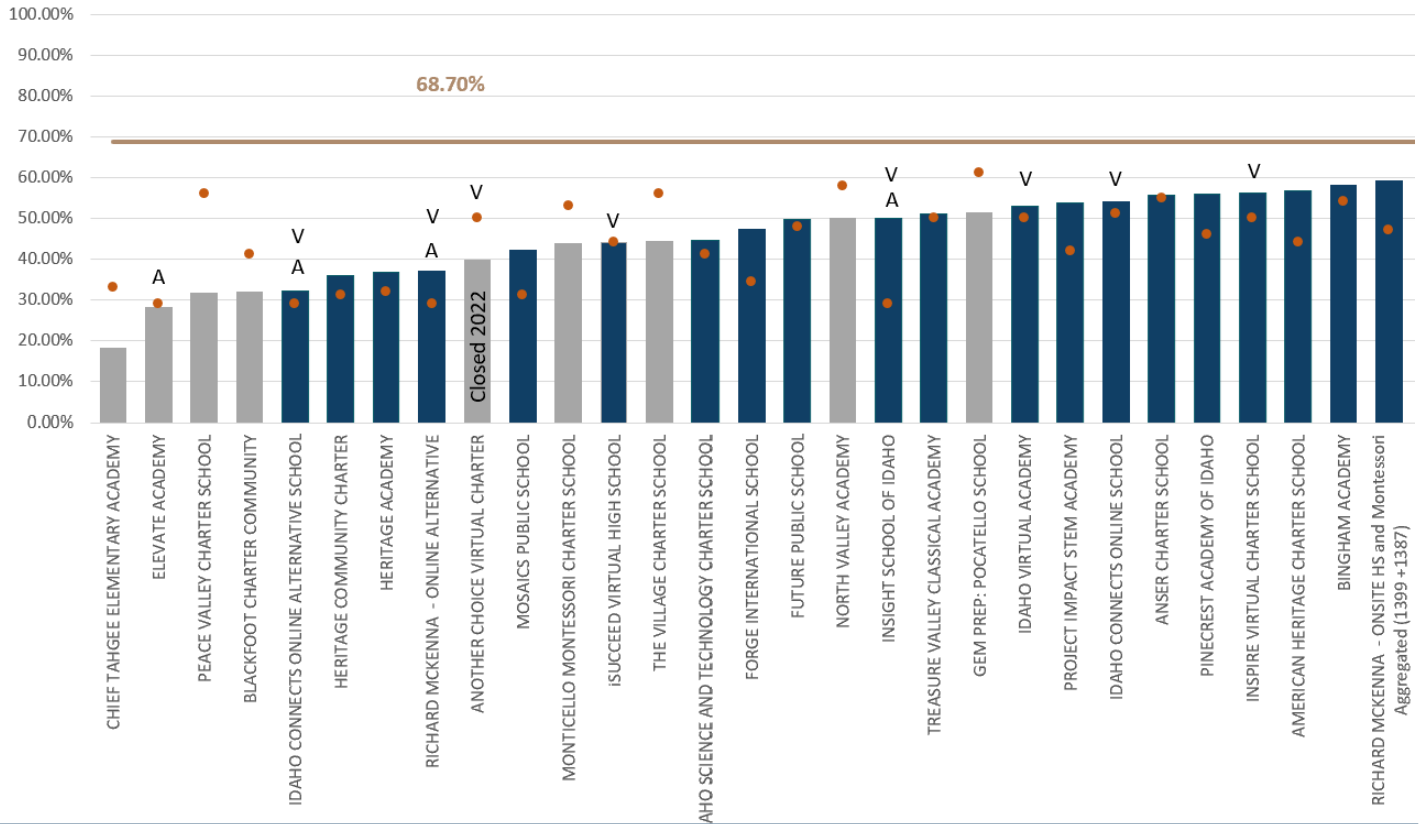
A school whose total liabilities are 90% or less of its total assets is likely to be able to repay all short-term debts and still manage to set its long-term affairs in order in a worst-case scenario. A school with more liabilities than assets would not be able to meet all its financial obligations in a worst-case scenario.



**Why total margin matters:** The Total Margin compares a school’s total revenue to its net income. A school with a positive total margin spent less than it brought in. That is, the school is living within its means and can plan for future purchases and investments.

An occasional negative total margin may indicate that a planned or necessary purchase has taken place. This is not necessarily a negative indicator. However, if the Total Margin is chronically negative or severe decreases appear, the school may be in financial distress. Aggregating this margin over three years helps identify long-term trends.

# Academic Oversight: ELA Proficiency



## Meets Standard Mark:

A school meets the minimum standard if its proficiency rate is at least as high as the average proficiency rate of its comparison group (generally the traditional district in which the school is located), represented by the orange dots.

## What the Data Says:

- 15 schools (far right) are not only meeting the minimum standard, but also exceeding the statewide reach goal established in Idaho’s Consolidated ESSA Plan.
- 82% of IPCSC schools are performing as well or better than the average of their peers.
- The schools with the largest gaps between the gray bar and the orange dot have the most work to do.

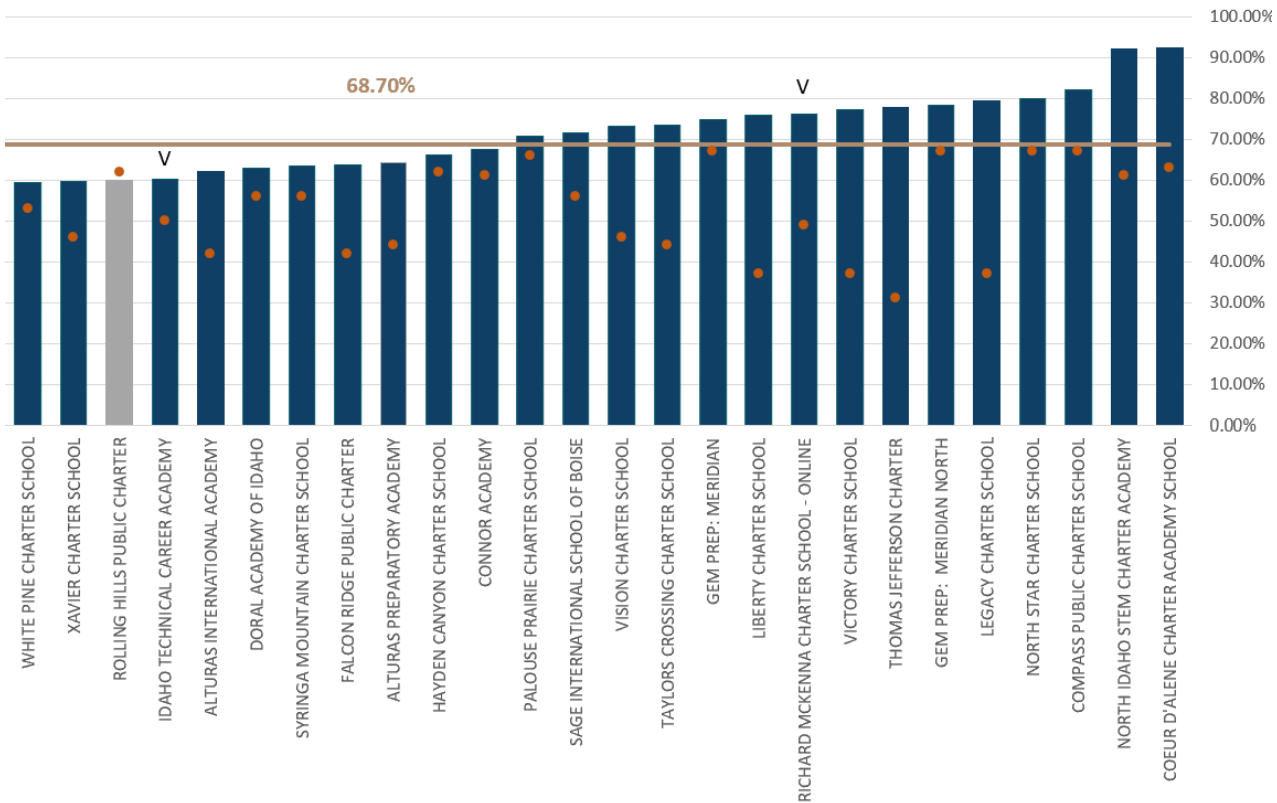
## Notes:

- Another Choice Virtual Charter School closed at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. This report reflects the school’s final performance outcomes.
- Alternative programs tend to enroll a high number of students who are struggling with basic literacy skills, even in the upper grades.

### ELA Proficiency Legend

- School’s Rate > Comparison Group Rate
- School’s Rate < Comparison Group Rate
- IPCSC Minimum Meets Standard
- Statewide Accountability Goal 2022

A = Alternative Program    V = Virtual School



### Why Use Comparison Groups?

The inherent variability of charter schools makes it difficult to effectively evaluate assessment outcomes in relationship to a static target. These measures are designed to help us better understand the performance of each of our schools within the context of school choice.

The IPCSC is tasked with evaluating whether the return on taxpayer investment in a charter school’s operations warrants that school’s continued operations.

Part of that evaluation comes from a school’s operational and financial outcomes. Is the school financially sound? Does it operate within the established boundaries?

Part of that evaluation is based on community need and market demand. Is the model unique or needed in some way? Do families choose to enroll their children?

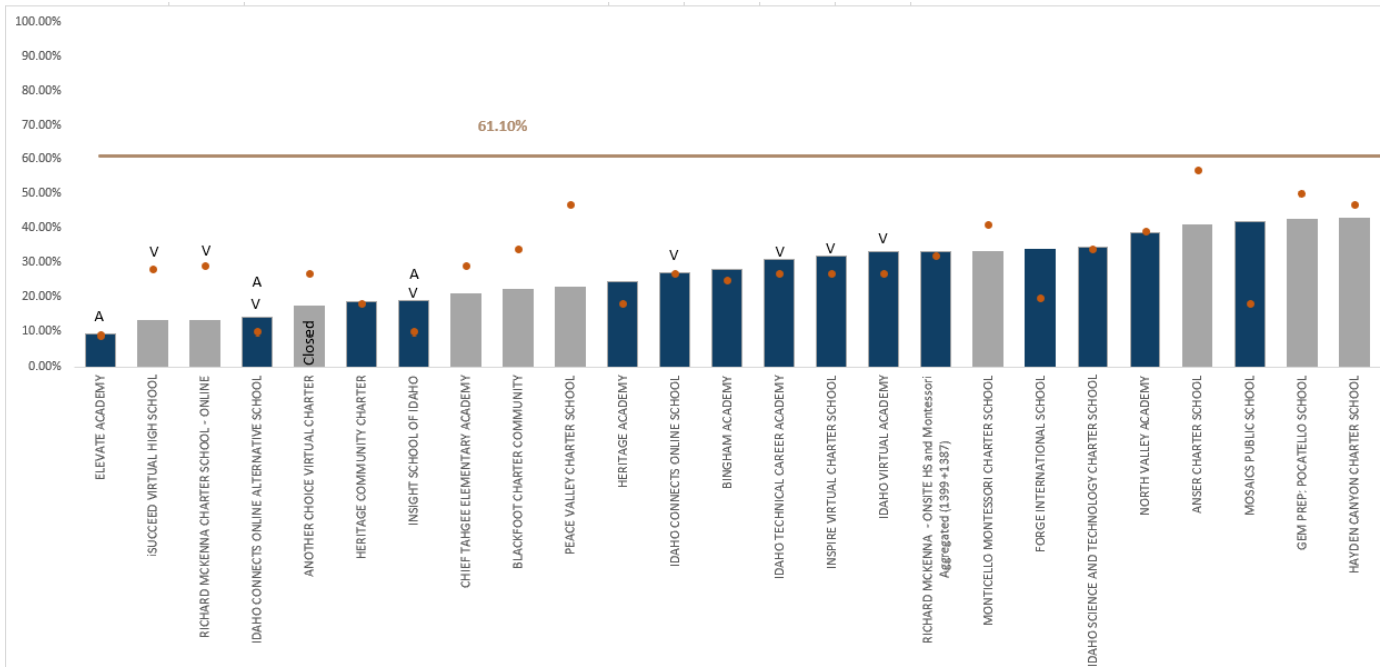
Part of that evaluation is based on whether the school performs at least as well as other options a family has.

The minimum standard established by the IPCSC represents the average proficiency rate of each charter school’s “identified comparison group”.

The minimum standard is different for each school because a comparison group may be based on physical location, or it may be based on demographic composition if the charter school has a markedly different composition. It can also fluctuate year over year.

One of the basic premises in the charter sector is that a rising tide will raise all ships. The IPCSC’s standard is not that all schools achieve a single, static proficiency rate, but that each school continually strives to stay at the head of its pack.

# Academic Oversight: Math Proficiency



## Meets Standard Mark:

This chart reads similarly to the ELA chart on the previous page. A school meets the minimum standard if its proficiency rate is at least as high as the average proficiency rate of its comparison group (generally the traditional district in which the school is located), represented by the orange dots.

## What the Data Says:

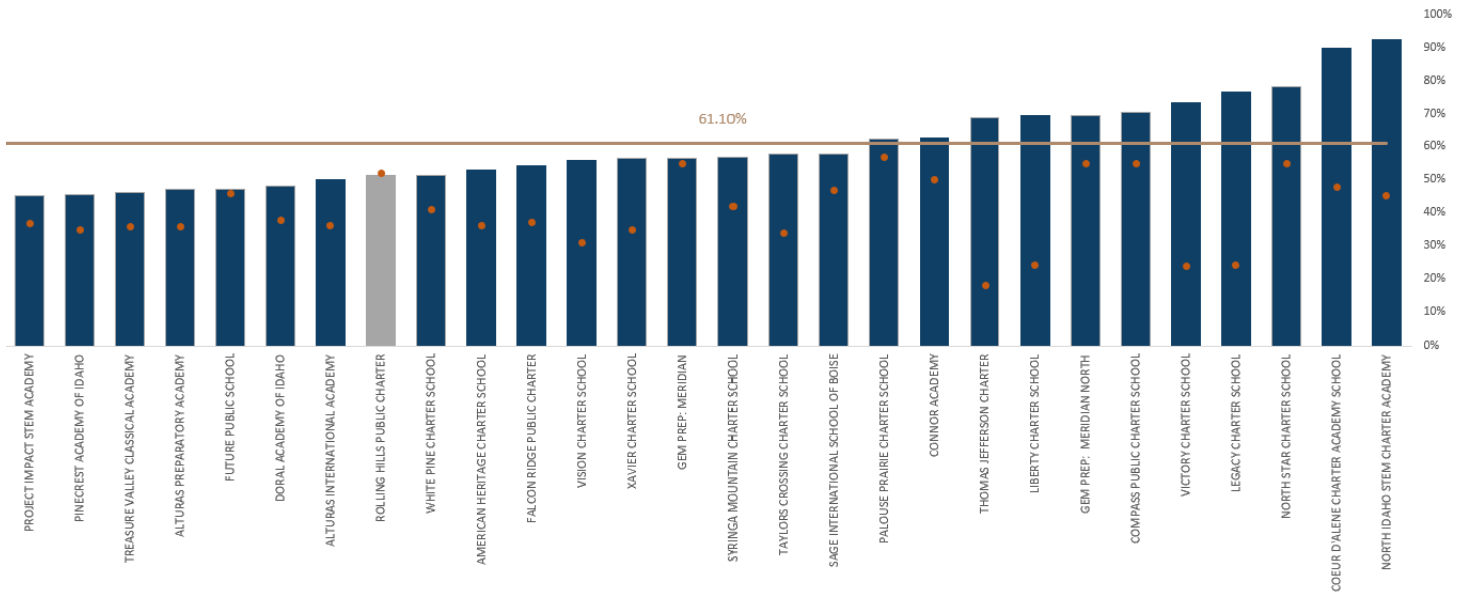
- 11 schools (far right) are not only meeting the minimum standard, but also exceeding the statewide reach goal established in Idaho’s Consolidated ESSA Plan.
- 79% of IPCSC authorized schools are performing as well or better than the average of their peers.
- The schools with the largest gaps between the gray bar and the orange dot are falling behind their peers.

## Notes:

- Anser Charter School recently expanded by approximately 60 students. This was an intentional move to allow the school the opportunity to shift its demographic profile to better reflect the neighborhood in which it resides.
- Three schools were renewed on condition that their math proficiency rates meet standard by 2024. Two of the three achieved a meets standard rating in 2022.

## Math Proficiency Legend

- School’s Rate > Comparison Group Rate
- School’s Rate < Comparison Group Rate
- IPCSC Minimum Meets Standard
- Statewide Accountability Goal 2022
- A = Alternative Program    V = Virtual School



### Why Two Benchmarks?

The ISAT proficiency chart on this page (as on the page before) presents each school’s average rate of proficiency in relation to two benchmarks: A minimum meets standard mark and a statewide reach goal.

The minimum meets standard mark is established in the school’s operating contract (represented here by the orange dots). This benchmark represents the point below which the IPCSC must consider whether the school’s continued operations is a good investment of taxpayer dollars.

A school performing below this mark is at risk of contract non-renewal. On the other hand, meeting the minimum standard means that the school can take on other projects and focus on performance goals of its own design.

For all schools, continuous improvement on statewide assessments is important. The statewide accountability goal, established in

Idaho’s Consolidate ESSA Plan and represented here by the brown line, serves as a meaningful reach goal for schools that have already met the minimum standard.

While we acknowledge that what makes a school successful is more than the results of a single test on a single day, quantitative data is an important tool in helping a team set achievable short and long-term goals.

We hope this data helps inform a school’s strategic plan goals by narrowing the focus to a particular measure or helping a school identify a meaningful next benchmark. We also hope this data is helpful to parents as they make public school choice decisions for their children.

The data helps us identify which schools are high performing, which schools have made gains, and which schools need to make improvements before their next contract renewal decision.

## Academic Oversight: IRI Proficiency

The IPCSC evaluates each school's Idaho Reading Indicator assessment results.

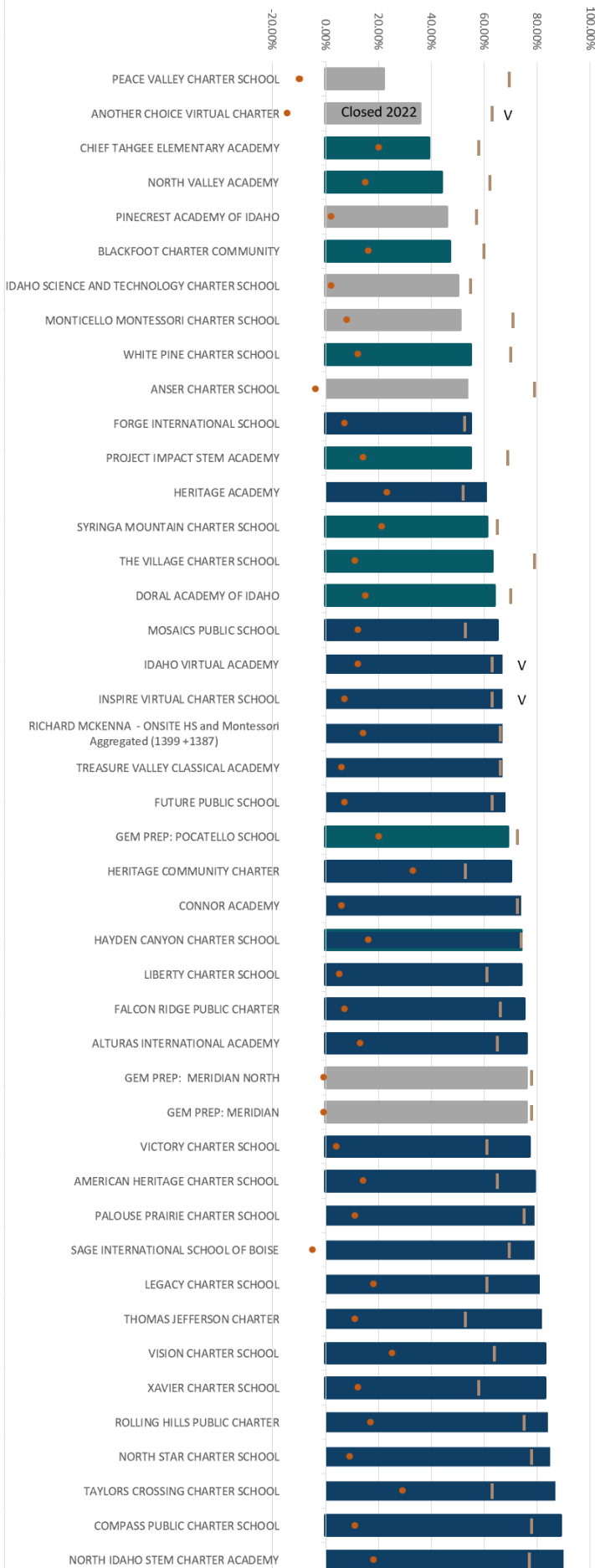
**Meets Standard Mark:** A school meets the minimum standard on this measure if the percentage of students in grades K-3 who are reading at grade level on the spring administration of this assessment is as high or higher than its comparison group.

OR

A school can alternatively meet the minimum standard by increasing the percent of students reading at grade level by at least 10% between the fall and spring administrations of this assessment.

**What This Means for Families:** We hope this information helps parents make informed educational choices.

- Orange dots indicate how effective or ineffective a school's reading instruction is.
- Dark blue bars indicate that a school is performing at least as well as other likely options a parent may be considering.
- Turquoise bars indicate that the school has not yet outperformed its peers, but that its reading instruction is effective.
- The brown line indicates how far ahead or behind of its comparison group each school falls.



### IRI Proficiency Legend

- School's Rate > Comparison Group Rate
- School's Rate < Comparison Group Rate
- School's Spring 10% greater than Fall
- Spring Proficiency Rate of Comp. Group
- School's Change Fall to Spring

## FAQ and Additional Resources

### How are new petitions evaluated?

Statute outlines a 12-week process for evaluating new charter school applications (petitions). A guidance document outlines the timeline and procedures for new applicants. The IPCSC maintains procedures for application evaluation, including a set of Standards of Quality which describe what a high-quality response might look like in each category. This is the tool by which applications are evaluated.

[New Petitioner Guidance](#)

[Standards of Quality](#)

### What is the process for renewal?

Charter schools are approved for 5-year terms and must apply for contract renewal every 5 years. The renewal process is outlined in Idaho Code. A guidance document outlines the relevant timelines and procedures. The performance framework describes the standards each school is expected to meet for a non-conditional renewal. Any school that meets all of the expectations is guaranteed a next contract. Any school that does not meet an expectation agreed to in the operating contract may be considered for conditional renewal or non-renewal.

[Renewal Guidance](#)

[Performance Framework](#)



### What are the IPCSC's future plans?

The Commission's 5-year strategic plan outlines goals in communication, school achievement, and organizational growth.

[Strategic Plan](#)

### Key Doc: Performance Certificate

After an application for a new school is approved, the school's board (charter holder) and the authorizer (IPCSC) must execute a performance certificate which serves as the school's operating contract. This contract includes: the key design elements of the model to be implemented; an enrollment capacity; a framework of performance outcome expectations; and general terms and conditions under which the school may operate.

### Key Doc: Performance Framework

Statute requires that the performance outcome standards be incorporated into each school's operating contract, so that all parties know the expectations upfront. Authorizers are required to establish standards in academic proficiency and growth, college and career readiness, board stewardship, and school operations.

### Key Doc: Performance Report

Each year a report is published to inform the school board and the public of the school's performance in relationship to the established standards.