IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Date: Thursday, April 10, 2025
Start Time: 9:00 A.M., MST

Physical Location: Capitol Mall Annex (Old County Courthouse) Senate Conference Room, Third Floor, 514 W. Jefferson Street, Boise, Idaho 83702

Live Stream: https://www.youtube.com/IPCSC

I. **COMMISSION WORK (Action Item)**
   A. Minutes Review / Approval

II. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
   A. 9:00am – 9:15am
      i. Terry Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, Bluum

III. **CONSIDERATION OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION (Action Item)**
   A. 9:15am – 10:00am
      i. Trailhead Virtual Academy (formerly Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho)

IV. **CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE (Action Item)**
   A. 10:00am – 10:30am
      i. iSucceed Virtual School

V. **ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK UPDATE**
   A. 10:30am – 11:15am
      i. Dr. Jody Ernst, VP of Research and Policy Analytics, Momentum Strategy & Research

VI. **INCREASED CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT PRESENTATION**
   A. 11:15am – 11:30am
      i. Rachel Burk, School Choice Coordinator, State Department of Education

VII. **2025 LEGISLATURE OVERVIEW**
   A. 11:30am – 11:45am
      i. Matthew Reiber, External Affairs and Strategy Officer, State Board of Education

VIII. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**
   A. 11:45am – 12:00pm

IX. **EXECUTIVE SESSION (Action Item)**
   A. The Commission will enter into executive session pursuant to IC 74-206(1)(a) to consider hiring a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, wherein the respective qualities of individuals are to be evaluated in order to fill a particular vacancy or need.
      i. Topic: Executive Director Position

X. **APPROVAL OF NEW IPCSC DIRECTOR (Action Item)**

XI. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
   A. Public comment will be limited to three minutes per person. To submit written comment please email to pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov before 5:00 pm MST on Wednesday, April 9, 2025.

XII. **ADJOURN**

Times are approximate and for convenience only.

MEETING MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025
Start Time: 9:00 AM, MST
Physical Location: Capitol Mall Annex, Senate Conference Room, Third Floor, 514 W. Jefferson Street, Boise, Idaho 83702

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reed at 9:04am.

Commissioners Present:	Staff Present:
Chairman Reed - Present	Director Joshua Whitworth, OSBE
Vice Chair Bair - Present	Karen Sheehan, Attorney General's Office
Commissioner Koehler - Present	Jared Dawson, IPCSC
Commissioner Hedrick - Present	Joy Lindner, IPCSC
Commissioner Quinn - Present	Jean Nichols, IPCSC
Commissioner Amador - Present	Korey Mereness, CTE
Commissioner Paulos - Present	Matthew Reiber, OSBE

I. COMMISSION WORK (Action Item)

Minutes Review / Approval

Motion/Second (Hedrick/Koehler) Motion to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2024 Regular Commission Meeting and January 10, 2025 Special Commission Meeting as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

II. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Joshua Whitworth recognized the work of the staff during the Director transition. Finance Manager Jean Nichols was thanked for her contribution as she transitions to a new job. Korey Mereness, Chief Educator Officer, Idaho Division of Career Technical Education, has been helping with day-to-day operations of the IPCSC staff. The staff are working to update Standard Operating Procedures for the office. Providing clarity for staff roles and responsibilities is also in process.

III. CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGREEMENTS TO RENEW CHARTER WITHOUT CONDITIONS (Action Item)

A. **Thomas Jefferson Charter School**

Board Chair Matt Dorsey, Administrator Jodi Endicott, and Principal Amy Pfaff, with Business Manager Scotti Erikson online, gave a presentation. Finances, enrollment, special education, curriculum, and pre-assessment were discussed. A question was raised about board action regarding renewal for 6 or 12 years. Minutes from the April 2024 meeting include an approved motion stating: "schools that meet or exceed all the criteria in all the aspects of their performance framework to receive twelve-year renewals."

Motion/Second (Hedrick/Koehler) Motion to approve the consent agreement for charter renewal without conditions, as presented for Thomas Jefferson Charter

School, thereby approving the school's renewal application and renewing its charter for a 6 year operational term starting July 1, 2025. *The motion passed unanimously.*

B. **MOSAICS Public School**
Board Chair Bryan Taylor, Board Vice Chair Brandy Perez, and Administrator Anthony Haskell gave a presentation.
Motion/Second (Hedrick/Koehler) Motion to approve the consent agreement for charter renewal without conditions, as presented for MOSAICS Public School, thereby approving the school's renewal application and renewing its charter for a 6 year operational term starting July 1, 2025. *The motion passed unanimously.*

IV. **CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGREEMENTS TO RENEW CHARTER WITH CONDITIONS (Action Item)**
A. **Pinecrest Academy of Idaho**
Administrator Andy Mirhaj, Academica Senior Director of Operations Colin Bringhurst, with Board members Nicole Moreno and Anna Speegle and Business Manager Trevor Goodsell online, gave a presentation. Their presentation focused on how the school plans to address the recommended conditions. Lisa Paulos gave notice that she has a personal relationship with a school leader.
Motion/Second (Hedrick/Quinn) Motion to approve the consent agreement for conditional charter renewal, with the recommended four conditions as presented for Pinecrest Academy of Idaho, thereby approving the school's renewal application and renewing its charter for a 6 year operational term starting July 1, 2025. *The motion passed unanimously.*

B. **Doral Academy of Idaho**
Board Chair Sara Frost, Board Vice Chair Angela Perez, Principal Michael Shapiro, and Academica Senior Director of Operations Colin Bringhurst, with Business Manager Trevor Goodsell online, gave a presentation. Enrollment, academics, and teacher preparation were discussed.
Motion/Second (Hedrick/Koehler) Motion to approve the consent agreement for conditional charter renewal, with the recommended six conditions as presented for Doral Academy of Idaho, thereby approving the school's renewal application and renewing its charter for a 6 year operational term starting July 1, 2025. *The motion passed unanimously.*

C. **Mountain Community School**
Administrator Jenny Schon and Business Manager Matt Lovell, with Board Chair Jonas Bean, and Board members Hadden Tanner, Kelsie Baldwin, and Liz Neihart online, gave a presentation. It was noted the school would benefit from an alternative comparison group concerning academic measures. Challenges particular to small, rural schools were discussed.
Motion/Second (Koehler/Quinn) Motion to approve the consent agreement for conditional charter renewal, with the recommended four conditions as presented for Mountain Community School, thereby approving the school's renewal application and renewing its charter for a 6 year operational term starting July 1, 2025. *The motion passed unanimously.*

D. **Hayden Canyon Charter**

Administrator Bill Rutherford and Business Manager Matt Lovell, with Board Chair Alex Tull, Nathan Wright and other Board members online, gave a presentation. It was noted the school would benefit from an alternative comparison group concerning academic measures.

Motion/Second (Hedrick/Koehler) Motion to approve the consent agreement for conditional charter renewal, with the six recommended conditions as presented for Hayden Canyon Charter, thereby approving the school's renewal application and renewing its charter for a 6 year operational term starting July 1, 2025. *The motion passed unanimously.*

V. **CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE (Action Item)**

North Star Public Charter School & Rolling Hills Public Charter School

North Star Administrator Andy Horning, North Star Business Manager Jonathan Gillen, Rolling Hills Attorney Chris Yorgason, and Rolling Hills Administrator Tara Handy gave a presentation.

North Star and Rolling Hills are located in close proximity (about 5 miles apart). North Star has had increasing enrollment but limited space, while Rolling Hills has been declining in enrollment. Their proposal is to distribute Rolling Hills' assets and liabilities (including facility) to North Star. In that proposal, grades K-8 would be located at the current North Star site and grades 9-12 at the current Rolling Hills site. State Statute 33-5204(3) allows charter schools to "purchase, receive, hold, and convey real and personal property for school purposes," so North Star does not need Commission approval to receive Rolling Hills' assets/liabilities. North Star's Performance Certificate may need to be amended to increase their enrollment cap and allow for dual campuses. Rolling Hills would be dissolved after transfer of assets/liabilities and would not need a Performance Certificate amendment.

Motion/Second (Koehler/Quinn) Motion to amend the North Star Performance Certificate contingent on final closeout of details as approved by Chairman Reed. *The motion passed unanimously.*

VI. **2025 LEGISLATURE OVERVIEW**

Matthew Reiber, External Affairs and Strategy Officer, State Board of Education, provided a legislative overview. HB 1067 would allow for the conversion of a public school district to a charter school district. Another house bill would increase facility cost reimbursement from $400 to $500. HB 93 has been signed by Governor Little regarding school choice. Funding and budget bills are in process.

VII. **INCREASED CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT PRESENTATION**

Rachel Burk, Parent Engagement and School Choice Coordinator, State Department of Education, gave a presentation on increased charter school support. Charter schools to receive support in the 2024-2025 school year are Blackfoot Charter, Mountain Community School, Peace Valley Charter, and Rolling Hills Public Charter.

VIII. **ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK UPDATE**

Dr. Jody Ernst, VP of Research and Policy Analytics, Momentum Strategy and Research, gave a presentation. All charter schools, regardless of their program or student demographics, receive performance measures in Academics,

Operations/Governance, and Finance. Charter Schools that provide education to students in an alternative setting are evaluated on additional academic measures that take into consideration the students' at-risk profile, mobility, and progress toward graduation.

Dr. Ernst has been working with IPCSC staff Jared Dawson and Jen Coffey along with the Performance Subcommittee of the Commission on a draft framework. A survey of alternative charter schools was conducted to provide feedback on the framework. The draft framework was reviewed. Schools would choose one option for each of the five indicators (math achievement and growth, ELA achievement and growth, progress toward graduation, postsecondary readiness, and attendance). The framework will be reviewed again at the April meeting and then voted on at the June meeting.

IX.   PUBLIC COMMENT
No public comment.

Meeting adjourned.

III. CONSIDERATION OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

A. Trailhead Virtual Academy (formerly Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho)

BACKGROUND

The new charter school application for Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho was initially received on August 30, 2024. IPCSC Staff collaborated with the school to provide feedback and develop the final application and evaluation on November 7, 2024. The school intends to operate in a statewide virtual school beginning Fall 2025. The school presented before the Commission at the December 12, 2024 Commission meeting. No action was taken at the meeting, and the Commission directed staff to work with the school to address the areas that the school received a Does Not Meet Standard rating in the Standards of Quality document. The school has changed the name to Trailhead Virtual Academy.

The charter application can be found on the IPCSC website: https://chartercommission.idaho.gov/event/charter-commission-meeting-boise-9/

DISCUSSION

The Application Evaluation Report is included in these materials which is a staff evaluation of the application with respect to the IPCSC's established Standard of Quality. The petitioner's response and additional information, as well as IPCSC staff's evaluation, are included in these materials.

SPEAKERS

Sonja Howerton, Board chair

Karen McGhee, Board member

Katey Dahlstrom, Board member

Fred Ostermeyer, Board member

Don Lynn, Board member

Cody Claver, Accel

COMMISSION ACTION

1. A motion to approve the new charter school application for Trailhead Virtual Academy for a six-year term effective (either) July 1, 2025 (or 2026);

OR

2. A motion to approve the new charter school application for Trailhead Virtual Academy for a six-year term effective (either) July 1, 2025 (or 2026) with the following conditions: [state conditions and due dates];

OR

3. A motion to deny the new charter school application for Trailhead Virtual Academy on the following grounds: [state reasons for denial].

Trailhead Virtual Academy
Response to Commission Concerns
1.28.2025

CONCERN: The application does not present evidence that a virtual school managed by ACCEL has a proven track record capable of meeting or maintaining the level of academic performance necessary to meet the requirements of the Idaho Public Charter School Commission's Performance Framework and sustain operations in Idaho.

In addition to the information shared in the application and addendum, the board would like to offer more insight into ACCEL as a partner. Here are some important items to note:

- Virtual school performance must be compared to virtual schools within each state since each state has different accountability systems.
- Each year there are several new virtual schools in most states. It is important to examine academic growth in the first few years of virtual school operation.
- The majority of ACCEL virtual partner schools perform at or above the average/median of virtual schools in each state.
- Several ACCEL virtual partner schools are demonstrating academic gains at a larger or faster rate than virtual schools in each state.
- One ACCEL virtual partner school is performing below average/median compared to virtual schools in that state.

Some schools were called out as ACCEL partner schools without data by the commission staff. These schools, including the VPA of CO, VPA of IA and VPA of NM, were never in operation nor, slated to be opened. It is also important to note that VPA of AZ and VPA of FL are only in their second year of operation and the most recently available data shows the students just enrolled, and data at the end of this year will be the first opportunity to see growth made year-over-year.

We asked ACCEL to respond to the specific schools cited in the Commission staff report. Below please find current, contextual information on each school: The data for remaining schools has been reviewed and discussed and board staff feels it is important to point out the success of these schools, in part due to their partnership with ACCEL:

Arizona - Academy with Community Partners

- In the most recently available state proficiency data, compared to 103 currently operating virtual schools, ACP scored 16th highest in ELA and 17th highest in Math. This is the top 20% of the state, or better than 80% of all virtual schools.
- Out of 71 virtual schools receiving a letter grade, ACP scored in the top 33% of the state, with a B letter grade. (7 As, 17Bs, 41 Cs, 6 Ds)

- Out of 13 schools serving the same grade levels, ACP scored 3rd highest in ELA and 5th highest in math.
- ACP's B rating is higher than any other virtual high school with a letter grade.

VPA of Indiana at Madison Grant

- Due to its smaller sample size, the proficiency data is not reported on the students who took state testing in grades 3-12. However, based on a review of the SAT scores, VPA of Indiana and Madison Grant is performing at the median level compared to all virtual offerings in both EBRW and Math.

Michigan Online School

- Michigan Online School demonstrated a 40 percent improvement on percent proficient in Math from 2022-23 to 2023-24 and a 20 percent improvement in ELA. During this same time period, economically disadvantaged students made an overall improvement of percent proficient of 30 percent in Math and 40 percent improvement in ELA.

Ohio - OHDELA

- OHDELA will not be closing in the Fall of 2025.
- OHDELA has demonstrated consistent growth in PI, growing 6.5% from 2020-2023.
- Another key improvement to note for OHDELA was in its year-over-year improvement in Reading and Math. The Reading gain was 12% and the Math gain was 57%.

Ohio - Gateway

- Gateway is a newer school but is already meeting the standards for progress as outlined by the Ohio state report cards. Additionally, it is outperforming the progress of its comparison group of other similar school offerings across the state by nearly 8 percentage points.

Ohio - Pathfinder

- Pathfinder is in its first year of operation, however, according to the Ohio rating system, Pathfinder is "significantly exceeding the state standards in closing educational gaps"

VPA of Oregon

- Based on a review of the state proficiency levels for ELA and Math, VPA of Oregon is performing at the median level compared to all virtual offerings.

VPA of Washington

- Based on a review of the state proficiency levels, VPA of Washington is performing at the median level compared to all virtual offerings for ELA and scored 10 points higher than the mean performance for all virtual schools in science.

VPA of West Virginia

- VPA made more than 40 percent growth in ELA and math from 2023 to 2024 in percent proficient and performed above the other virtual school in math and about the same as the other virtual schools in ELA.

CONCERN: The application does not present sufficient evidence of student demand for a statewide virtual K-12 program, as statewide enrollment data shows a decrease in existing virtual charter schools.

- **SOURCE: Application, page 60**
  - A six-week campaign was launched to gauge the parent interest in a new online school. 114 responses were collected from the locations illustrated on the map below. When compared to similar campaigns, this provides good indication that the enrollment projections can be achieved.

- **SOURCE: Application, page 61**
  - The following chart is indicative of the need to serve the above-mentioned student population. The need exists in the state of Idaho to move greater numbers of students to proficient levels and is even more profound in the rural and urban settings and among underserved student populations

Subject	Grade	Population	Advanced Rate	Proficient Rate	Basic Rate	Below Basic Rate
ELA	All Grades	All students	21.7	29.9	22.5	25.9
ELA	High School		28.7	34.9	19.4	17.0
Math	All Grades		18.8	21.8	26.6	32.8
Math	High School		11.9	21.4	26.2	40.6
Science	All Grades		9.2	31.7	34.5	24.6
Science	High School		5.0	35.1	32.7	27.2

ISAT 2023 (Source: Idaho State Department of Education – Assessment and Accountability)

- **SOURCE: Application, page 62**
  - Research on Idaho's student population clearly indicates room for improvement as indicated in the Idaho NAEP results. The proposed school will target those rural areas that are unable to provide higher level education opportunities due to the rural setting and/or teacher availability.
  - To illustrate further need to serve this population, the State Board's Accountability Oversight Committee (AOC) presented a recommendation to the State Board at the April 2022 Board meeting, in which virtual schools were a topic for discussion. The main data points suggest that virtual students are proliferating and doing well:

- Virtual charters have the best attendance of any school type — even before the pandemic. Virtual charters show 95% (2019) and 93% (2021) attendance rates. Traditional schools were at 86% (2019) and 81% (2021) for comparison.
- There is a small group of virtual charters for whom that number jumped from 58% (2018) to 72% (2020) to 85% (2021). The report says, "...this group's size more than tripled and the percentage participating increased to 85%, on par with Charter Schools and Traditional Schools." (pg. 42)
- Virtual charters' graduation rates have fared VERY well from 2018-21. Graduation rates for brick-and-mortar charters decreased 13% over four years while the rate for virtual charters increased 24%. Even alternative virtual schools increased 8%. (pg. 47)
- Alternative virtual schools experienced growth in their 5-year graduation rates, too. The estimate is 2-8%. "These 5-year graduation rates reveal the importance of these schools to their students' likelihood of graduation." (pg. 47)

- **SOURCE: Addendum, page 18**
  - Although virtual school enrollment may have declined from fiscal year 2020 to 2023, a new district online program successfully enrolled 378 students in SY23-24. The Board feels our budget target of 300 students is achievable given the recent district online program experience in recruiting and enrolling students into a new educational option. In addition to recent enrollment success for a new online program, research on Idaho population trends shows upward trends. Idaho overall population growth from 2012-2023 was 368,816 - which is an average of 33,528 per year. This overall population growth translates into student population growth for the past 11 years of approximately 10% of the annual average population growth in Idaho. https://usafacts.org/data/topics/people-society/population-and-demographics/our-changing-population/state/idaho/?endDate=2022-01-01&startDate=2012-01-01

- **SOURCE: "Statewide enrollment is slightly up compared to last fall", Carly Flandro, Idaho Ed News, 12.09.2024 – IdahoEdNews.org**
  - Idaho's K-12 public school enrollment numbers are slightly higher than they were last fall, according to state data.
  - Of Idaho's 10 largest districts, eight had enrollment declines this fall when compared to last. But there are pockets of growth — **especially at online** and non-traditional schools.

- o Idaho Virtual Academy's student enrollment increased 330 students from 1,695 in Fall 2023 to 2,025 in Fall 2024.
- o Idaho Virtual High School Richard McKenna's enrollment increased 191 students from 522 in Fall 2023 to 713 in Fall 2024.
- o iSucceed Charter's student enrollment increased 299 students from 1,171 in Fall 2023 to 1,470 in Fall 2024.
- SOURCE: Coeur D'Alene Public Schools - Bids & Legals | COEUR D'ALENE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
  - o Coeur d'Alene School district has an RFP out right now for an online education provider to operate a virtual school next year through their district

New Charter School Application Report
Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho
November 7th, 2024

Idaho Public Charter School Commission

514 W. Jefferson Street, Suite 303

Boise, Idaho 83702

Phone: (208)332-1561

pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov

Alan Reed, Chairman

Jacob Smith, Director

November 7th, 2024

Application Review Summary

Idaho Collaborative Learning Partners, Inc., dba Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho, is applying to open a new statewide virtual charter school. The proposed school would serve 2,000 students in grades K-12 at maximum enrollment. ICLP has chosen to partner with an Education Services Provider, ACCEL, to provide curriculum and management services.

The application presents a number of concerns:

- The application does not present evidence that a virtual school managed by ACCEL has a proven track record capable of meeting or maintaining the level of academic performance necessary to meet the requirements of the Idaho Public Charter School Commission's Performance Framework and sustain operations in Idaho.
- The petition does not present sufficient evidence of student demand for a statewide virtual K-12 program, as statewide enrollment data shows a decrease in existing virtual charter schools.
- The proposed contract with ACCEL allows for 95% of state revenues to be administered directly to the ESP

Summary of Section Ratings

Section 1: Educational Program	Does Not Meet Standard
Section 2: Financial & Facilities Plan	Approaches Standard
Section 3: Board Capacity and Governance Structure	Meets Standard
Section 4: Student Demand & Primary Attendance Area	Does Not Meet Standard
Section 5: School Leadership and Management	Meets Standard
Section 6: Virtual Schools	Meets Standard

Section I: Educational Program:

Standard Rating: Does Not Meet Standard

Comments

The application proposes a blended synchronous and asynchronous virtual college and career readiness program serving grades K-12. The application proposes a replica of ACCEL Schools virtual model, utilizing extensive parental involvement with a focus on individual learning.

Strengths:

- The application states that the school will use a synchronous instructional design (page 17).
- Proposed platform uses several established educational resources.
- Strong support for student-focused and collaborative learning.

Concerns:

- The petition does not provide evidence that a virtual school using the educational model described will be able to meet the academic standards described in the Idaho Public Charter School Commission's Performance Framework. The amended application includes a target score of 40% math proficiency and 50% English proficiency, and states that the Board reviewed academic data for ACCEL schools (page 175). However, the amended petition does not provide comprehensive data for virtual schools in the ACCEL portfolio.

- The petition places a heavy emphasis on parental involvement in multiple aspects of the program (p. 22-24). This is a concern for younger or at-risk students, as there may be a barrier to students with parents that cannot fully engage in the Learning Coach responsibilities.

Section II: Financial and Facilities Plan

Standard Rating: Approaches Standard

Comments

The application proposes leasing a facility for general office space for the proposed model and staffing needs. The application also includes a budget and financial management plan that includes state enrollment revenues and estimates for annual expenditures related to the operation of a statewide virtual school.

Strengths:

- The proposed ESP will provide comprehensive back office services to the board (page 53).

Concerns:

- The petition proposes a financial structure that distributes 95% of all income to ACCEL. Of the remaining 5% of funds which the board has control over, the contract states that "the Board shall use four percent (4%) of that for academic enrichment activities and one percent (1%) for Board expenses" (page 151). The 1% remaining for Board expenses may present a hardship to the board, as "the Board shall pay the following and any other fees and expenses it decides to incur, including, without limitation:
  - Authorizer fee is it wasn't already withheld by the authorizer;
  - compensation of all personnel employed by the Board;
  - its operational expenses;
  - its taxes, if any;
  - its legal, insurance, accounting, auditing, and other professional fees;
  - the cost of any annual audit by the Auditor of the State, or any special or independent audits; and
  - the purchase price of equipment deemed necessary or appropriate by the Board for Board operations that are separate from the day-to-day operation of the School" (page 151).
- The amended petition does not provide adequate documentation to allow staff to analyze the financial arrangements. The amended petition states that the school will receive financial assistance from ACCEL, and that assistance will not come in the form of loans, but rather "direct payment of expenses or any additional support necessary…" (page 180), but does not provide any

documentation of terms of this financial arrangement included in the application.

- The amended application states that the school will receive invoice discounts and additional financial assistance from ACCEL (page 178). It is unclear and appears undocumented how invoice discounts will be applied and utilized by the school to evidence near- and long-term financial stability. Attachment A-1 (e.g., the school budget, page 101) shows that the school will not have cash-on-hand.

- Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho was a virtual program for Idaho Falls School District 91 for one school year (FY23-24). On June 20, 2024, ACCEL submitted a Notice of Termination of Management Agreement to D91. In the notice to D91, ACCEL EVP Allison Cleveland stated that ACCEL accrued a significant operating debt. However, the amended application states that ACCEL informed the board that the agreement was terminated because it "did not receive timely payments from D91" (page 183). It is unclear how operating a statewide virtual charter school will allow ACCEL to maintain financial stability.

Section III: Board Capacity and Governance Structure

<div style="background-color:green">**Standard Rating: Meets Standard**</div>

Comments

The application proposes a school, Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho, whose charter would be held by the board of directors of an Idaho non-profit, Idaho Collaborative Learning Partners, dba Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho. The charter holder (board of directors) intends to outsource operations of the school to ACCEL Online West, LLC, an Education Services Provider.

The board will consist of five directors, each with designated roles and backgrounds. Commission staff conducted a Governance Capacity interview with the prospective on October 16th, 2024.

Strengths:

- The board is comprised of members with varied backgrounds and experience in education (page 126).

Concerns:

- There are no concerns with this section.

Governance Capacity Interview Summary

Interview Date: October 16th, 2024

Present: Karen McGee, Don Lynn, Katey Dahlstrom, Fred Ostermeyer, Sonja Howerton

IPCSC Staff Present: Jacob Smith, Jared Dawson

Personal introductions – Please take a moment to introduce yourself and share a little about the role you've played in the petition process so far.

Karen lives in Pocatello and serves on Parents for School Options. She is also a former State Board of Education member.

Sonja works at CAC, best practice responses.

Don resides in CDA, has an IDVA background.

Katey lives in Picabo, has an education background, works with rural school districts.

Fred experienced communication difficulties during introductions.

1. **What board training have you sought out as a group? What training would you like to pursue in the future? JARED**

   The board has not sought out any specific training at this point. All directors have individual experience, will collaborate with ISBA in future. Sonja attended the charter start workshop.

2. **The board initially has one-year terms. Why did you choose that structure, and what are the plans for the future? (potential follow-up, how many current board members served while the school was associated with Idaho Falls District 91?) JACOB**

   The board has been through a lot of trainings. The board states that this is addressed within petition, and they plan to implement terms, stagger renewal terms, etc.

3. **Regarding Program Design, please provide answers for the following: JACOB**

   - **Can you please describe your program design?**
   - **Why virtual?**
   - **Why college and career readiness?**

- **Why work with an ESP?**

- **Why did you choose 2000 students for your maximum capacity?**

- **What happens if you do not reach your intended enrollment?**

What sets apart the program design is that the platform is set up to collaborate with the best of the virtual world, take from the best of other platforms and implement seamlessly, and then collaborate on the backside to give the best offering possible.

College and Career readiness is K-12, and they feel that it is appropriate to have conversations with children at early ages, and those conversations strengthen as students progress to middle school and high school. Career readiness is lifelong.

4. **Regarding Selected ESP: JARED**

- **Please describe the organizational structure of the school.**

- **Please describe the board's relationship with the ESP.**

The board will work closely with all parties involved, with a heavy emphasis on collaboration/communication and support. The Head of School has access to professional development opportunities as an employee of ACCEL.

5. **Regarding Selected ESP (2): JACOB**

- **Please describe your due diligence in selecting this vendor.**

- **What research was conducted? Who participated in the research? Was it independent from the ESP?**

- **Have you retained an attorney to represent your board? Did you retain him/her or did the ESP do so on your behalf?**

Background information on how to work with ACCEL, Sonja has been on board the longest. She spent 14 years in the virtual world and drew from long-standing relationships during that time. Those people are all now at ACCEL, now partners at this organization.

With any contract, any arrangement allows for both parties to benefit. View as collaboration, chose ACCEL because worked with these people in the past as individuals. There is a responsibility to govern and have oversight over partners, have right and responsibility to make changes to contract. The contract was reviewed by legal counsel. The board states they take this responsibility seriously.

Why this model? The more options that allow parents to choose a school is beneficial – with this school students can get courses they normally can't get in a rural area if local school doesn't have them. A virtual school has safety benefits over public schools. More options are better, and a virtual component is a must-have for workforce needs. The model is needed because they have best product available, and believe it would be a welcome addition. Dual enrollment and distance education is the next step, and was implemented at NIC a long time ago.

6. **What happens if you choose to sever your relationship with the ESP or vice versa? JACOB**

   - **Who owns the equipment and curriculum?**

   - **How will you access student data?**

   - **i.e. if you lose access to the LMS and you can no longer display anything branded, then what? Who are you without the ESP?**

   The board plans on community involvement, parental/community involvement in different areas of the state. The board has seen virtual board meetings and accessibility done many different ways.

   Sonja ran virtual student clubs for five years, engaging strong parents/leaders in school, and they plan to do virtual clubs.

7. **Do you have any questions for us? Are there any questions you have about your petition revision?**

   Summarized next steps in application process.

Section IV: Student Demand and Primary Attendance Area

<div style="background-color: red; text-align: center;">**Standard Rating: Does Not Meet Standard**</div>

Comments
> The school intends to provide a statewide virtual education option, focusing on a college and career readiness curriculum. The student population identified throughout the application varies, including virtual, rural, at-risk. The application anticipates an initial enrollment capacity of 500 students in grades K-8 in the first year of operation, and increase to 2,000 students in grades K-12 by year five.

Strengths:

- The petition states that the school has conducted student engagement surveys over the course of the last several years in Idaho.

Concerns:

- Students attending virtual schools in Idaho have decreased in the years following the pandemic (e.g., 2020 and 2021), which saw enrollment in Idaho virtual schools briefly spike (via Full Term ADA data from Idaho State Department of Education). Virtual schools in the Idaho Public Charter School Commission's portfolio have decreased in enrollment from 7,719 students in fiscal year 2020 to 5,397 students in fiscal year 2023. The amended application states that they should reach their goal of 300 students in year one of operations (page 187); however, the amended petition provides insufficient data to support the ability of the school to reach enrollment numbers in later years as it approaches maximum capacity of 2,000.

Section V: School Leadership and Management

<div style="background-color:green; text-align:center">**Standard Rating: Meets Standard**</div>

Comments

The application proposes that the Idaho Collaborative Learning Partners holds the charter to Virtual Preparatory Academy of Idaho. The board of directors intends to outsource operations of the school to an Education Services Provider, ACCEL.

ACCEL Schools is a division of Pansophic Learning, a for-profit global education management company founded in 2014, originally funded by Safanad Limited, out of Dubai (UAE). ACCEL currently manages fourteen virtual schools in its portfolio according to its website, although some are not yet operational. Most of the schools operated by ACCEL are in their first five years of operation.

Strengths:

- ACCEL provides services to numerous charters throughout the country, and has financial and operational resources to ensure that the school has proper funding to begin operations.

Concerns:

- There are no concerns with this section.

Section VI: Virtual Schools

<div style="background-color: green; text-align: center;">Standard Rating: Meets Standard</div>

Comments

The proposed LMS will use Canvas for student and teacher accessibility, PowerSchool for student information systems, and AMP (ACCEL Management Platform, a proprietary service of ACCEL), to provide single sign-on to the previous programs and all student curriculum.

Strengths:

- The Learning Management System includes reliable software, including Canvas and PowerSchool.

Concerns:

- There are no concerns with this section.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE

BACKGROUND
iSucceed Virtual School is seeking an amendment to the Performance Certificate that would allow them to increase enrollment greater than 10% of their current enrollment.

DISCUSSION
The specific request to amend the current Performance Certificate of iSucceed Virtual School.

SPEAKERS
Joshua Whitworth, IPCSC Director
Katie Allison, iSucceed Virtual School Administrator

IMPACT
If the IPCSC approves the amendment, the IPCSC will have 30 days in which to execute an amendment to the performance certificate.

COMMISSION ACTION
1. A motion to allow iSucceed Virtual School to increase maximum enrollment to (insert number here) students; OR
2. A motion to deny the amendment proposal; OR
3. A commission-developed motion

V. ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK UPDATE

BACKGROUND

All charter schools, regardless of their program or student demographics, receive performance measures in Academics, Operations/Governance, and Finance. Charter schools that provide education to students in an alternative setting are evaluated on **additional** academic measures that take into consideration the students' at-risk profile, mobility, and progress toward graduation.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Jody Ernst, VP of Research and Policy Analytics, Momentum Strategy & Research
Dr. Jody Ernst is the founding Vice President of Research and Policy Analytics for Momentum Strategy & Research (Momentum). For over 15 years, Dr. Ernst's work has been centered on using the best available data to research and inform school accountability policy and practice. Dr. Ernst has been the primary investigator for four federally funded projects, including Building Charter School Quality, the Charter School Facilities Initiative, Advancing Great Authorizing and Modeling Excellence (A-GAME), and A-GAME: Measure What Matters. Together with her team at Momentum, Dr. Ernst has worked to build a one-of-a-kind database housing performance and accountability data and policy on over 5000 alternative school options from across the country, as well as databases of rural charter schools, and charter school policy. Currently, Dr. Ernst and her team are working on innovative accountability solutions that are responsive to the students' and school's needs.

IPCSC Alternative Performance Framework

Math Achievement & Growth Indicator Options

Option #	Goal	Targets Per Rating Category			
		Exceeds	**Meets**	**Approaches**	**Does not Meet**
#1	Percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either a) completed all math requirements before the beginning of the year, b) completed the remaining number of math credits required for graduation, or c) completed at least one year-long[a] required math course (including summer school[b]).	80-100% of continuously enrolled students OR[c] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete increases by more than 10 percentage points over the prior year	70-79% of continuously enrolled students OR[c] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete increases 1-10 percentage points over the prior year	60-69% of continuously enrolled students OR[c] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete decreases by between 1-10 percentage points over the prior year	0-60% of continuously enrolled students OR[c] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete decreases by more than 10 percentage points over the prior year
#2	Percentage of students who either meet grade level proficiency by the end of the year, or who showed meaningful growth[d] between pre-and post-assessment on an approved nationally normed assessment of mathematics.	80-100% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules	60-79% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules	40-59% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules	0-39% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules.

a. Or the school's equivalent to a year-long course sequence.
b. Summer school data will only be included if the school provides the summer school results within 14 days of the end of their summer term, or September 1, whichever comes first.
c. Note: the "OR" option will only be applicable if the school has 2 consecutive years of data for this specific measurement, in their annual report.
d. See business rules for the definition of meaningful growth, and templates based on selected assessments

ELA Achievement & Growth Indicator Options

Option #	Goal	Targets Per Rating Category			
		Exceeds	**Meets**	**Approaches**	**Does not Meet**
#1	Percentage of continuously enrolled students who have either a) completed all ELA requirements before the beginning of the year, b) completed the remaining number of ELA credits required for graduation, or c) completed at least one year-long[a] required ELA course (including summer school[b]).	80-100% of continuously enrolled students OR[b] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete increases by more than 10 percentage points over the prior year	70-79% of continuously enrolled students OR[b] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete increases 1-10 percentage points over the prior year	60-69% of continuously enrolled students OR[b] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete decreases by between 1-10 percentage points over the prior year	0-60% of continuously enrolled students OR[b] Percentage of continuously enrolled students to complete decreases by more than 10 percentage points over the prior year
#2	Percentage of students who either meet grade level proficiency by the end of the year, or who showed meaningful growth[b] between pre-and post-assessment on an approved nationally normed assessment of reading/ELA.	80-100% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules	60-79% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules	40-59% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules	0-39% of students either show grade level skill or demonstrate growth as defined in the business rules.

a. Or the school's equivalent to a year-long course sequence.
b. Summer school data will only be included if the school provides the summer school results within 14 days of the end of their summer term, or September 1, whichever comes first.
c. Note: the "OR" option will only be applicable if the school has 2 consecutive years of data for this specific measurement, in their annual report.
d. See business rules for the definition of meaningful growth, and templates based on selected assessments

Progress toward Graduation Indicator Options

Option #	Goal	Targets Per Rating Category			
		Exceeds	Meets	Approaches	Does not Meet
1	Percentage of students who were enrolled for at least one full term[a] who earned the minimum average number of credits per enrolled term.	75-100% earn the minimum number of credits per enrolled term	65-74% earn the minimum number of credits per enrolled term OR Percentage increases by at least 5 percentage points over the prior year	<65% earn the minimum number of credits per enrolled term AND Percentage increases by between 3 and 5 percentage points over the prior year	<65% earn the minimum number of credits per enrolled term AND Percentage increases by between 0 and 2 percentage points over the prior year, or decreases
2	Percentage of students who were enrolled for at least 90% of one term[a] who earn at least 80% of the credits that they attempted during the year.	75-100% of students complete at least 80% of the attempted credits.	65-74% of students complete at least 80% of the attempted credits.	50-64% of students complete at least 80% of the attempted credits.	0-49% of students complete at least 80% of the attempted credits.

a. A "term" for the purposes of this alternative framework is defined by the school (e.g., semesters, trimesters, quarters, hexters, or other) and must be consistent with the school's operational procedures.

b. A student's number of credits needed to meet this goal will be based on the duration of enrollment, which is defined further in the business rule section of this document.

Postsecondary Readiness Indicator Options

Option #	Goal	Targets Per Rating Category			
		Exceeds	**Meets**	**Approaches**	**Does not Meet**
1	The percentage of 12th grade students who were enrolled in the school for at least 45 days and who are in either their 4th or 5th cohort year to graduate by the end of the year	65% or higher OR[a] Percent of graduates improves by more than 10 percentage points	55% or higher OR[a] Percent of graduates improves by between 5-10 percentage points	Below 55% AND[a] Percentage increases by between 0 and 4 percentage points over the prior year	Below 55% AND[a] Percentage decreases over the prior year
2	Percentage of students in their 4th or 5th high school year who either graduate at the end of the year (including summer school) or who continue their education the following year[b]	75-100%	65-74%	55-64%	0-54%
3	Percentage of students who complete high school with either a diploma, HiSet, GED, certificate of completion, industry recognized credential, or entry to the military.	75-100%	65-74%	55-64%	0-54%
4	Percentage of eligible seniors (based on # of graduation required credits obtained[c]) to graduate by the end of the year, including summer school graduates.	75-100%	65-74%	55-64%	0-54%

a. Note: the "OR" and "AND" options will only be applicable if the school has 2 consecutive years of data for this specific measurement, in your annual report. Otherwise, the result in the report will be based on the first of the two metrics mentioned.

b. For purposes of the postsecondary readiness option 2 goal, a student is counted as re-enrolled in school if they remain enrolled in the school through at least Fall Count Day of the following year. This includes re-enrollment in the alternative charter, or confirmed enrollments in other schools that offer a diploma or other state approved certificate of high school completion.

c. For purposes of the postsecondary readiness option 4 goal, the number of credit required for graduation is defined by the school and must be consistent with the school's operational procedures.

VI. INCREASED CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT PRESENTATION

BACKGROUND

The creation and implementation of the Accelerating Public Charter Schools Act focused on the need to provide additional layers of support for charter schools across the state. After the passage of House Bill 422 in February 2024, funding was appropriated to the State Department of Education to facilitate increased support directed at academically struggling charter schools. The state allocated about $300,000 of one-time funds to create and deliver the support mechanisms to schools identified in collaboration with the IPCSC Director.

Charter schools to be supported in the 2024-2025 school year: Blackfoot Charter, Mountain Community Charter, Peace Valley Charter, and Rolling Hills Charter.

The State Department of Education has contracted with Dr. Mary Gervase to lead the selected charter school leaders in assessing, mentoring, and strategizing a schoolwide action plan that will encourage systemic improvements focused on increasing academic outcomes.

SPEAKERS

Rachel Burk, Parent Engagement and School Choice Coordinator, Idaho State Department of Education

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment will be limited to three minutes per person.

To submit written comment please email to pcsc@osbe.idaho.gov before 5:00 pm MST on Wednesday, April 9, 2025.