



Guidance: Charter Renewal Process and Application Instructions

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Introduction

In accordance with §33-5205B and 33-5209A, Idaho Code, all public charter schools in Idaho must undergo periodic review by their authorizer to determine whether the charter should continue its operations. Specifically, §33-5209A, Idaho Code, mandates that charter schools be considered for renewal at the conclusion of their Performance Certificate term.

The Idaho Public Charter School Commission (IPCSC) makes renewal decisions based on each school's independent fiscal audits, as well as its overall performance as measured against the criteria outlined in the Performance Framework. In addition to academic, financial, and operational outcomes, the IPCSC also considers the school's demographic profile and any relevant circumstances that may impact the school's ability to meet the terms and conditions of its charter.

Purpose

Pursuant to §33-5209A(2), Idaho Code, charter authorizers are required to provide renewal application guidance to any charter holder with a charter expiring the following year. This document is intended to:

- Answer frequently asked questions about the renewal process, and
- Provide clear instructions for completing the Renewal Application.

Criteria Guiding Renewal

In making charter renewal decisions, the IPCSC must do all of the following, pursuant to §33-5209A(6), Idaho Code:

1. Ground its decision for renewal on evidence of the school's performance over the term of the performance certificate (including fiscal audits and performance measured against the Performance Framework);
2. Ensure that data used in making renewal decisions are made available to the school and the public;
3. Take the actual and potential at-risk and economically disadvantaged makeup of the school's student body population (as defined in §33-1001, Idaho Code) for all grade levels into consideration; and
4. Provide a public report summarizing the evidence basis for the renewal decision.

Renewal Timeline

Table No. 1 Renewal Timeline

Date	Task
Spring Orientation	<u>Initial Renewal Meeting</u> IPCSC staff will schedule a meeting in the spring prior to the renewal year with the primary charter administrator and a representative of the charter school's governing board to introduce the renewal process, provide written guidance, and discuss any concerns regarding school outcomes.
Spring / Fall	<u>Observations</u> IPCSC staff conduct the following observations once during each School's Performance Certificate operational term: • A governing board meeting observation; • A lottery observation; and • A site visit for the purpose of observing the school's Key Design Elements as implemented (only necessary if the school is not accredited or the school is accredited but is not currently in good standing).
September 1	<u>Renewal Guidance and Performance Report Issuance</u> IPCSC staff will issue performance report and charter renewal guidance to any charter holder with a Performance Certificate expiring the following year. The charter holder may begin working on the renewal application upon receipt of the renewal guidance. The performance report shall provide notice of any weaknesses or concerns that may jeopardize renewal, if not timely rectified, using all verified performance data available to IPCSC as of the date of issuance. Any additional performance data that becomes available afterward will be provided to the charter holder via the annual report and incorporated into the renewal record. The charter holder has thirty (30) days to respond to the performance report and submit requests for corrections or clarification for the report.
October 1	<u>Charter Holder Response Due</u> The charter holder's response to the performance report, if any, is due to the IPCSC. The response should include any requested corrections or clarifications for the report.
November 15	<u>IPCSC Renewal Report and Recommendations</u> IPCSC will send each charter holder the annual report containing the most recent year's data. The charter holder has thirty (30) days to respond to the annual report with any corrections or clarifications. The IPCSC staff's recommendation for renewal, conditional renewal, or non-renewal will be issued to the charter holder. The charter holder and IPCSC may discuss this recommendation up to December 15.

December 15	<u>Proposed Renewal Conditions</u> If the charter holder does not agree with conditions recommended by IPCSC staff, the charter holder may address those recommendations and propose alternatives for the Commission's consideration at the renewal hearing. The charter holder should continue completing the renewal application. <u>Non-Renewal</u> • Acceptance of non-renewal: ○ If the charter holder accepts the non-renewal recommendation, it may submit a board-approved and signed resolution stating the charter holder's intent to relinquish its charter no later than December 15. Closure protocol will begin by December 20, with the school ceasing operations by June 30. • Does not accept the non-renewal: ○ If the school does not accept the non-renewal recommendation, the school may propose an alternative renewal recommendation at the renewal hearing. ○ A renewal application must still be submitted to the IPCSC no later than close of business, December 15.
December 15	<u>Renewal Application</u> Renewal Application must be submitted to the IPCSC by close of business by all renewal schools. Should the IPCSC amend its renewal recommendation based on the contents of the renewal application, it will notify the charter holder as soon as possible. <u>Charter Holder Response to Annual Performance Report Due</u> The charter holder's response to the annual performance report (most recent data), if any, is due to the IPCSC. The response should include any requested corrections or clarifications for the report.
30 days prior to Renewal Hearing	<u>Renewal Hearing Meeting Materials</u> The IPCSC staff will provide the renewal schools a copy of the meeting materials (e.g., renewal packet) used for the renewal decision. Renewal packets will contain the following information, either directly or via a web link: • Renewal Report and performance reports for each year of the charter term; • Most recent Annual Financial Audit; • Observation reports (accreditation report in lieu of Key Design Elements observation, if applicable); • The current Performance Certificate; • Response to annual reports for the duration of the performance certificate term, if applicable; and

	• The school's renewal application, as submitted to the IPCSC (with data appropriately redacted/masked). The following information may also be included in the renewal packets, if applicable: • Conditional Certificate Status Report: This will be included if renewal conditions were applicable to the current Performance Certificate. • Courtesy Letters: These will be included if letters were issued during the current Performance Certificate Term. Resolved issues will be noted as such. • Additional materials at the IPCSC Director's discretion.
No later than March 15	<u>Renewal Hearing</u> IPCSC will hold a meeting to make final renewal decisions. If the Commission does not vote by March 15, the application shall be deemed approved. Renewal without Conditions: • Schools recommended for renewal without conditions may make a short presentation to the Commission, but it is not required. Renewal with Conditions: • Schools recommended for renewal with conditions must make a short presentation to the Commission. Non-Renewal: • If the IPCSC votes in favor of non-renewal of a charter, the charter holder may appeal the decision directly to the Office of Administrative Hearings according to Idaho Code §33-5209A(8).

Observations

The IPCSC conducts observations, both onsite or remote, to support oversight and ensure alignment with performance expectations.

General Visit Guidelines:

Most schools will participate in 2–3 observations during each performance certificate term. Additional visits may occur if IPCSC is:

- Investigating a concern, or
- Monitoring progress on a documented issue.

IPCSC staff also welcome invitations to attend celebrations or informal visits when invited.

Board Observation Visit

Frequency: Once per performance certificate term.

Purpose: To observe a school board meeting.

Preparation: Remote observations may require a link.

Notification: At least 30 days in advance.

Follow-up:

- A brief observation summary will be provided to the school leader and board chair.
- Schools may submit a written response.
- Both the summary and response will be included in the renewal packet that the Commissioners and school will receive.
- An observation summary template will be provided at the time of notification.

Lottery Observation Visit

Frequency: Once per performance certificate term.

Purpose: To observe the school's lottery process as a member of the public.

Preparation: Remote observations may require a link specific for IPCSC staff to observe lottery processes.

Notification: At least 30 days in advance.

Follow-up:

- A brief observation summary will be provided to the school leader and board chair.
- Schools may submit a written response.
- Both the summary and response will be included in the renewal packet that the Commissioners and school will receive.
- An observation summary template will be provided at the time of notification.

Key Design Elements Visit

Applicability:

- Required if the school is not accredited by Cognia, or
- Accredited but not in good standing.

Purpose: To understand how the school's key design elements are being implemented.

Structure:

- Visit includes 2–3 IPCSC staff members.
- Scheduled for approximately 2 hours.
- Includes a tour and discussions with school leadership and a board representative.

Planning:

- A Program Manager will coordinate with the school to tailor the visit.

Follow-up:

- A brief observation summary will be provided to the school leader and board chair.
- Schools may submit a written response.
- Both the summary and response will be included in the renewal packet that the Commissioners and school will receive.
- An observation summary template will be provided at the time of notification.

Renewal Application

Charter holders seeking renewal from the Idaho Public Charter School Commission must complete a renewal application and submit it to the IPCSC no later than December 15 (§33-5209A(5), Idaho Code). Be sure to answer each question completely and submit via the secure server ShareFile. If you have any questions or need assistance accessing ShareFile, please contact the IPCSC.

Application Contents

Please provide the following information:

Cover Sheet (Required):

1. The school's legal name and physical address.
2. The school's LEA and building numbers.
3. School Leader: Name, email address, phone number.
4. Board Chair: Name, email address, phone number.
5. The school's mission statement.
6. The school's current enrollment by grade level for all grades.

Narrative Questions:

1. Required: What improvement have been undertaken over the term of the current certificate?
2. Required: What improvements are planned for the school's next performance certificate term? This can include any action plans for resolving any concerns identified in the performance report (if applicable). Please be thorough and detailed in your response, including timelines and the measurable results you expect to achieve in your next performance certificate term.
3. Optional: Is there any additional evidence you would like us to consider in support of the school's renewal? Additional evidence may include academic data from a valid and reliable assessment your school uses (such as MAPS) year-to-date financial information, records of training, or more holistic improvement plans with specific benchmarks. Please provide an outline of the additional evidence for consideration. Each piece of evidence should be identified as Exhibit 1, Exhibit 2, etc. Please include a brief description of the content and purpose of each exhibit.

*All data must be redacted and ready for public presentation. Unredacted information containing personally identifiable information (PII) may not be included in the renewal application and/or sent back for revisions.