

WASHINGTON STATE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION SCHEDULED TO RELEASE 2014 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Commission eagerly awaits proposals for schools opening in Fall 2015

The Washington State Charter School Commission is scheduled to begin its yearly round of charter school authorization with the release of the 2014 Request for Proposals (RFP) on Tuesday, April 15, 2014. Last year's RFP saw 18 non-profit organizations submitting 19 completed proposals by the deadline, resulting in the Commission authorizing seven schools – Spokane School District, as well, authorized one charter school. This year, the Commission looks forward to proposals from new, innovative non-profit organizations, as well as those who were encouraged to reapply during the last application process.

This current release seeks proposals for schools opening in Fall of 2015. With First Place Scholars scheduled to be the only approved charter school opening in Fall 2014, Washington state law will allow for as many as eight new charter schools to open in 2015, as spots not filled one year are carried to subsequent years. The Commission is excited at the prospect of this year's pool of exciting applicants.

As with the previous release, The 2014 RFP seeks applicants who wish to embody the Commission's mission, namely to create '...high quality schools that will significantly improve student outcomes, particularly for at-risk students.' The Commission expects a wide variety of applicants to rise to the challenge, from experienced national operators to local startups.

The 2014 RFP release initiates a six month process, concluding October 9 with the Commission's decision to authorize charter school applicants. Along the way, applicants will submit a Notice of Intent to Apply by June 13, followed by a full proposal due July 15. From there, applicants will engage in in-person interviews in late August, 2014. The final step are public forums held in the first three weeks of September, allowing applicants to address the community their school is designed to serve.

The Washington State Charter School Commission was established in November 2012 after the passage of Initiative 1240. An independent state agency, The Commission's mission is to authorize and supervise high quality charter schools throughout the state, particularly those designed to expand opportunities for at-risk students. The nine member Commission collectively possesses strong experience and expertise in public and nonprofit governance; management and finance; and public school leadership, assessment, curriculum, and instruction, as well as public education law. Each member has demonstrated and understanding of an commitment to charter school as a strategy for strengthening public education in the State of Washington. For more in for information about the Commission, or to view the 2014 RFP, please visit:

<http://www.governor.wa.gov/issues/education/commission/default.aspx>.