



Message from Commissioner Williams

The Charter Commission is facing its first big regulatory decision and, as a Commissioner, I find myself between a rock and a very hard place. As First Place completes its first school year, it has been plagued with significant challenges that by law must be met in order to continue as a public charter school. On the other hand, the new leadership team, which took over late last fall, has worked hard to address those challenges and has made significant progress. All of this while meeting the very sobering needs of a student population

that is predominantly poor and highly traumatized.

There is no doubt that the Commission and First Place share the same mission: providing our state's most at-risk student population with an excellent education. By all accounts, First Place is a safe place where students and their families feel loved and secure, providing stability in the midst of what is for many of these young students an unpredictable life. As I have had the opportunity to meet with volunteer board members at First Place and Dr. Linda Whitehead, the school leader, I have been humbled by their dedication to each of the families in their care. However, the question that I am still unable to answer is whether students are receiving the academic education and personalized, data-driven instruction they will most certainly need to fulfil their full potential. This is one of several questions that will be on the table at our upcoming meeting in June. The Commission has tried repeatedly to better understand the system that has been put in place to measure and accelerate academic growth. Nothing could be more fundamental to a school's success.

The Commission voted at our last meeting to give First Place one last chance to meet their requirements under state law. It has been an emotional journey for all involved, as we have provided the additional time we felt the new team needed to tackle the systemic challenges they inherited. I have seen my fellow Commissioners and our staff struggle with the complexity and consequences of this decision. In the end, there is no easy answer, but the Commission will be forced to make a decision based on the evidence presented as to whether First Place is meeting, or has a viable plan to meet, its obligations under the charter it signed a year ago.

Cindi Williams

Principal, HCM Strategists

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Two Applications Received in Response to 2015 RFP

On May 22, 2015, the Commission announced that it had received two applications in response to its 2015 Request For Proposals (RFP). The applicants are (nonprofit name, school name, location):

- Innovation Schools, Willow Public School, Walla Walla
- Summit Public Schools, Summit Public School: Seattle #2, South Seattle

View the applications [here!](#)

Read the press release [here!](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2015 Public Forums

The Commission is excited to announce its 2015 Applicant Public Forum Schedule. Public Forums offer a chance for community members to learn more about and provide input on the proposed charter schools sited in their community.

Summit Public Schools, Summit Public School: Seattle #2

6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 21, 2015

9601 35th Ave SW

Seattle, WA 98126

Innovation Schools, Willow Public School

7:00 p.m. Thursday, July 23, 2015

Walla Walla Housing Authority Gym

501 Cayuse Street

Walla Walla Washington 99362

For more information about the Public Forums and the 2015 Application Process, please visit [here!](#)

Commission Hiring School Quality and Accountability Director



The Commission is seeking a School Quality and Accountability Director to create and implement the Commission's data tracking systems. For more info, please see the job posting [here!](#)

Commission Seeks Applicants for Internships

HELLO
my name is

INTERN

The Commission is seeking interns to engage in a variety of activities over the Summer and Fall. If you're interested, check out the internship postings [here!](#)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE COMMISSION

UPDATE: On-Boarding Process for New Schools



On April 28th, Commission-Authorized schools attended a full day of dialogue, relationship building and expectation setting with the Commission's leadership team at Educational Service District 113 in Tumwater. The full-day engagement was supported by a graphic facilitator whose artifact from the day (above) serves as a road map for future engagement.

At the April 28th on-boarding, the leadership team presented draft versions of a New School Orientation Guidebook, as well as a Site Visit Guide. The leadership team also gathered feedback regarding these documents, and will soon release final versions.

Once released, the final New School Orientation Guidebook and Site Visit Guide will be available [here](#).

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UPCOMING EVENTS

**Commission Meeting,
Seattle**

June 18, 2015

10:00 am-5:00 pm

South Seattle Community

College, Georgetown

Colin Educational Hall

Room C122

6737 Corson Avenue S

Seattle, WA 98108

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THE COMMISSION'S MISSION

To authorize high quality public charter schools and provide effective oversight and transparent accountability to improve educational outcomes for at-risk students.

FORWARD TO FRIEND

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