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## Washington State Charter School Commission Announces Leadership Update

*Jessica de Barros selected as interim executive director as search for permanent executive director progresses, RFP issued to retain executive search firm on Jan. 14*

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**Olympia, WA** – The Washington State Charter School Commission announced the appointment of Jessica de Barros as the agency’s interim executive director as the body overseeing charter public schools in Washington proceeds with its national search for a permanent director. The Commission published a [Request of Proposal](#) on January 14 to identify a search firm to assist with the executive director search process. Krystal Starwich, who has served as interim director since July 2021, will remain on staff to continue supporting the work of the Commission.

“As the agency overseeing charter public schools in our state, we are committed to a transparent and rigorous process for selecting the next executive director of the Washington State Charter School Commission,” said Chris Korsmo, chair of the Commission. “Jessica de Barros is highly qualified to lead the work of the organization as we continue the search for a permanent director. Her extensive background in education coupled with her drive and energy to serve Washington State’s students made her an ideal fit for this role. And on behalf of the entire Commission, I want to thank Krystal Starwich for her exemplary service during this transition. We are grateful she will remain on staff to ensure continuity for the organization.”

Upon approval of her new role by the Commission, Ms. de Barros said, "I am honored to join the team, to carry forward the important work of the Commission. I look forward to partnering with schools and their students, families and staff to support excellence and innovation across the state."

Jessica de Barros is a policy leader committed to closing opportunity gaps and promoting racial justice. Her previous experience includes serving as Executive Director of Communications, Government and Public Relations for Puget Sound Educational Service District, an agency supporting 44 school systems in urban, suburban and rural settings. She also served as Board Chair for a Washington state charter school, as Director of Impact for the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, and held leadership positions with Seattle Public Schools.

### **Executive Committee Update**

Commissioner Chris Korsmo, who has served as interim chair of the Commission since November 2021, will continue her service on the Commission as the chair. Harium Martin-Morris, the State Board of Education’s representative on the Commission, will serve as vice chair. Christine Varela, a Commissioner since March of 2020, will act as the member-at-large on the executive committee. Previous updates on the [leadership search process](#) may be reviewed on the Commission’s website.

### **About Washington State’s Charter School Commission**

Washington State’s Charter School Commission was formed with the mission of creating a rigorous and comprehensive proposal process and to hold charter public schools accountable to high standards of quality. The Commission is an independent state agency that exists to authorize and oversee high quality public charter schools throughout Washington with an emphasis on schools designed to expand opportunities for at-risk students, providing leadership and oversight that is consistent with national principles and standards of charter school authorizers and the provisions of Washington’s charter school law.

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