



**For Immediate Release:**

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## Update Regarding Impact Public Schools

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**Olympia, WA** – Today the Washington State Charter School Commission provided a statement and update on Impact Public Schools.

“As one of the state agencies tasked with regulatory oversight of Washington’s charter public schools, we are committed to supporting the availability of education options for families seeking resources that best empower their children to learn and thrive,” **said Commissioner Christine Varela**. “Authorized charter public schools, like all public schools in Washington, must operate with transparency about all aspects of operation and student outcomes. Charter public schools are free and open schools and are required to serve all students, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners, just like traditional public schools. Charter public schools are subject to high levels of accountability and performance and compliance with state and federal laws and the charter contract.”

“In recent months, a local journalist made numerous inquiries about charter schools,” **Varela continued**. “The Washington State Charter School Commission responded to every inquiry, and coordinated with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to respond to several public records requests. In continued transparency and accountability for charter public schools, we are providing additional information and the actions the Commission is taking.”

- On June 14, 2022, the Commission issued a Letter of Inquiry into concerns at Impact Public Schools regarding allegations relating to: 1) student retention and promotion; and 2) enrollment of students with disabilities and multilingual learners. The Letter of Inquiry is the first step when the Commission receives information indicating there may be a violation of the school’s charter contract or the law. The purpose of the Letter of Inquiry is to request and gather information, and the school is required to respond within ten business days. Impact responded to the inquiry on June 28, 2022.

- The Commission is currently reviewing the information Impact provided to determine possible next steps. These could include: determining there was not a violation of the charter contract or the law with regard to the issues raised; requesting additional information from Impact to determine whether a violation occurred; or issuing a Notice of Perceived Problem if a violation appears to have occurred.

While the Commission does not typically issue statements regarding school inquiries, especially during the initial information-gathering stage, this additional step is to provide transparency of processes due to the public interest in the issues raised.

Charter public schools in Washington are authorized, accountable, flexible, and transparent. Charter public schools must adhere to a performance framework, which clearly states the expectations of the Commission and is also monitored for compliance with state and federal laws and a variety of state agencies including the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Auditor’s Office. The Commission is committed to closing opportunity gaps between the state’s most and least privileged groups of students. We will continue to hold all charter public schools accountable for respecting the rights of students, staff, and families within the schools, as well as the interests of the general public while meeting the legal requirements and obligations of the state and federal governments.

#### **Additional Resources**

- [Commission performance framework](#)
- [Commission compliance calendar](#)
- Impact School Profiles, Board Information & Performance Reports
  - [Commencement Bay Elementary](#)
  - [Puget Sound Elementary](#)
  - [Salish Sea Elementary](#)
  - [Black River Elementary](#)

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