

Washington State Charter School Commission

Three Washington Charter Public Schools Earn State Recognition for Student Growth, Joining Top 16% Statewide

Press Release

State recognition honors progress for students of color, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families. Impact Public Schools | Puget Sound Elementary, Rainier Prep, and Rooted School Vancouver earn recognition under the Washington School Recognition Program.

Olympia, WA - The Washington State Board of Education announced its annual awards under the Washington School Recognition Program, which recognizes public schools that demonstrate exceptional progress in key areas of student success. For the 2024-25 School Year, three charter public schools serving communities in our state earned recognition under the program, which is operated by the State Board of Education in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Education Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee:

- Impact Public Schools | Puget Sound Elementary: Recognized for Growth for Students in one or more racial or ethnic groups;
- Rainier Prep: Recognized for Growth for Students in one or more racial or ethnic groups and students receiving special education services; and,
- Rooted School Vancouver: Recognized for Growth for Low-income students.

Only 16% of all K-12 public schools in Washington State earned recognition under the criteria of the program for the 2024-25 School Year. Rainier Prep was also [additionally acknowledged by the State Auditor](#), alongside three other charter public schools, for leading practices that support at-risk students and are promising for consideration and use across the broader K-12 public school system in Washington State.

All three schools were recognized for growth among student populations that have historically been underserved by public education in Washington – students of color, students receiving special education services, and students from low-income families. This pattern reflects what charter public schools across the state were designed to do: meet the specific needs of the communities they serve.

These outcomes are notable in context. Charter public schools in Washington receive [significantly less state funding](#) per student than traditional public schools, while serving a higher percentage of students of color and students from low-income families. The recognition announced today reflects what these school communities are accomplishing despite that gap — a gap that is neither sustainable nor equitable. Students in Washington's charter public schools deserve the same investment as every other public-school student in the state.

"This recognition is just one example of the critical role fulfilled by charter public schools in Washington's public school system," said **Marcus Harden, executive director of the Washington State Charter School Commission**. "These schools are designed in partnership with the communities they serve, and the results announced today are a credit to the teachers, school leaders, families, and students who built them. We are proud to celebrate every one of them."

The Washington State Charter School Commission is the state's independent authorizer of charter public schools, established by voters through Initiative 1240 in 2012.

Charter public schools are authorized following a rigorous application process led by local community leaders, which means that the classrooms of each school reflect the community being served. According to OSPI's 2024-25 Report Card Enrollment data, approximately 64% of students in Washington's charter public schools are students of color, and approximately 58% are from low-income families. Statewide, students of color make up approximately 52% of the public-school population, and approximately 50% of students are identified as low-income. Approximately 16% of charter public school students are students with disabilities, consistent with the statewide public-school average.

To learn more about the Commission, its responsibilities and charter public schools in Washington, please visit our website: <https://charterschool.wa.gov>.

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