WASHINGTON STATE
Charter School Commission
STUDENTS • INNOVATION • TRANSPARENCY

For Immediate Release
November 6th, 2026

Washington State Charter School Commission Announces Executive Leadership Transition

Press Release

Executive Director, Marcus Harden, to pursue new opportunity in public education.

Olympia, WA - The Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) announced today that Executive Director Marcus Harden has accepted a new opportunity in public education. Harden's last day with the Commission will be November 20, 2026.

"On behalf of the Commission, I want to thank Marcus for his service and leadership," said Commission Chair Kyle Burleigh. "We appreciate his commitment to the Commission and to the broader public education community. We wish him every success in his next opportunity."

Burleigh continued, "The Commission's work is ultimately about the students, families, educators, and communities served by Washington's public charter schools. We are proud of the work happening across the state to create strong public schools where students have opportunities to learn, belong, and thrive. Our commitment to supporting that work through meaningful partnerships, technical assistance, and rigorous accountability remains unchanged."

The Commission will provide additional information at the appropriate time on the deliberative process ahead regarding the staff leadership of the Commission.

Throughout the leadership transition, the Commission's statutory responsibilities and ongoing work will continue. The Commission remains focused on its role as the primary authorizer of charter public schools in Washington and the system of academic, operational and financial frameworks that comprise rigorous accountability for the charter public school sector.

Current priorities include transparent, evidence-based accountability; ongoing rulemaking; school renewal and expansion; and technical assistance to school leaders. The Commission will continue working with charter public schools, families, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), legislators, and other education partners.

To learn more about the Commission, its responsibilities and charter public schools in Washington, please visit our website: https://charterschool.wa.gov or contact charterschoolinfo@k12.wa.us

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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 holding charters 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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