



MEMORANDUM

To: Washington State Charter School Commission
From: Marcus Harden, Executive Director
Date: February 27, 2025
Re: Full Approval of Impact Public Schools' Transition to Kindergarten (TK) Applications

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to inform Impact Public Schools and the public of the Washington State Charter School Commission's decision to grant full approval for Impact Public Schools' Transition to Kindergarten (TK) programs at the following schools:

- **Impact Black River Elementary**
- **Impact Commencement Bay Elementary**
- **Impact Puget Sound Elementary**
- **Impact Salish Sea Elementary**

Background

In 2020, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) established Transitional Kindergarten (TK) as a program for four-year-old children who lack access to high-quality early learning experiences and require additional preparation to succeed in kindergarten. OSPI identified five key pillars for TK programs, which informed the Commission's policy, ensuring alignment with the Charter School Act and charter public school operations.

In 2023, the Washington State Legislature replaced Transitional Kindergarten with Transition to Kindergarten (TK) while maintaining its focus on serving students with limited early learning opportunities. Under the new law, charter public schools authorized by the Commission may offer TK beginning in the 2025-26 school year, following OSPI regulations.

TK as a Strategy to Close Opportunity Gaps

TK serves as a critical strategy to close early opportunity gaps and has been increasingly supported by state leadership, including the Governor, OSPI, and local school districts. To be eligible for TK, students must:

1. Be four years old by August 31 of the entry year.
2. Lack access to high-quality early learning experiences.
3. Be determined as needing additional preparation for kindergarten success.

Commission Approval Process

At its December 12, 2024, meeting, the Commission conditionally approved TK applications for Impact Public Schools' four campuses, pending fulfillment of the following conditions:



1. Good Standing – Confirmation that Impact Public Schools met all Commission requirements, including community engagement and five-year budget projections.
2. Enrollment Policy Compliance – Submission of an enrollment policy aligning with the new TK eligibility and admission criteria.
3. Screening Process Approval – Submission of a screening process and tool that meets OSPI and Commission requirements.

Final Approval

On January 24, 2025, Impact Public Schools submitted all required materials for review. After thorough evaluation, Commission staff confirmed that all conditions were met. Under the delegated authority of Executive Director Marcus Harden, Impact Public Schools' TK applications are now fully approved without condition effective 3.1.2025 for the following campuses:

- **Impact Black River Elementary**
- **Impact Commencement Bay Elementary**
- **Impact Puget Sound Elementary**
- **Impact Salish Sea Elementary**

Next Steps and Implementation

Per OSPI's TK policy, the Commission will formally notify OSPI of the approval of these TK programs. Each approved school will receive a contract amendment officially granting authorization to offer a Transition to Kindergarten (TK) program.

The Commission remains deeply committed to transparency, quality assurance, and equitable access, ensuring that TK programs are held to the highest standards and effectively serve the students and communities most in need. The TK program is a critical strategy for closing opportunity gaps by providing four-year-olds—who would otherwise lack access to high-quality early learning— with the foundational skills necessary for success in kindergarten and beyond. Through rigorous oversight and accountability, the Commission will ensure that TK programs fulfill their mission of expanding educational equity and preparing Washington's youngest learners for a strong academic future.

To ensure the TK program serves its intended populations, the Commission will enforce strict oversight measures, including but not limited to:

- **Targeted Enrollment:** Schools must enroll students meeting the state's TK eligibility criteria, prioritizing those without access to quality early learning.
- **Screening & Assessments:** Schools must use Commission-approved tools to identify and support students needing additional kindergarten preparation.
- **Monitoring & Compliance:** The Commission will conduct regular site visits, performance reviews, and audits to ensure schools meet OSPI regulations and TK standards.



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- **Data Accountability:** Schools will submit progress data, community engagement reports, and sustainability plans to demonstrate impact and resource stewardship.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Families, educators, and communities will have opportunities to provide feedback to ensure the program aligns with student needs and equity goals.

By implementing these measures, the Commission will ensure that TK programs are not only authorized but also effectively serving the children and families for whom they were designed. For any questions or further information about TK please contact [OSPI TK](#), for further information or questions about Impact Public Schools please visit [IPS](#), any other questions or inquiries please contact the [Washington State Charter School Commission](#).

Marcus Harden
Executive Director