



WASHINGTON STATE
Charter School Commission
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Washington State Charter School Commission

CHARTER SCHOOL SITE VISIT GUIDE

**A Resource for School Leaders and Staff of the
Commission-Authorized Charter Schools**

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Washington State Charter School Commission

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Note: These standards and procedures may be modified or amended by the Commission. Notice of any subsequent modifications or amendments to this document will be provided to charter schools and posted to the Commission’s website.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Purpose

The purpose of site visits is to serve as a tool to inform continuous improvement for the Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission), its authorized schools and to provide data points in determining a charter school's compliance with the *Organizational Performance Framework*. *Site visits are conducted for schools in their first year of operation only and will be henceforth referred to as "First Year Site Visits."*

Background

Established in April 2013, the Commission is the state's only state-wide charter school authorizer. The Commission is responsible to provide oversight to charter schools, and to that end, to develop, implement, and publicly report on standards and methods for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of charter schools. As a result, the Commission is responsible for non-renewing and/or revocation of a charter school's charter contract when the school fails to meet the provisions of their *Charter Contract*, and the academic, financial and organizational performance frameworks. This includes monitoring for compliance with all public school state and federal requirements.

Mission

To authorize high-quality public charter schools and provide effective oversight and transparent accountability to improve educational outcomes for at-risk students.

Values

Student-Centered
Cultural and Community Responsiveness
Excellence and Continuous Learning
Accountability/Responsibility
Transparency
Innovation

Vision

Foster innovation and ensure excellence so that every student has access to and thrives in a high-quality public school.

MONITORING PROCESS OVERVIEW

General Process

The Commission has developed a charter school monitoring process that meets the authorizer's responsibilities under RCW 28A.710.100 (1) (e).

(1) Authorizers are responsible for:

- (e) Monitoring, in accordance with *Charter Contract* terms, the performance and legal compliance of charter schools including, without limitation, education and academic performance goals and student achievement; state and federal organizational and financial requirements; and
- (f) Determining whether each *Charter Contract* merits renewal, nonrenewal or revocation.

The Commission's monitoring process aligns with the terms of the *Charter Contract* and the *Performance Framework*.

The Commission Monitoring Review is an annual process, consisting of the following components:

- Formal site visit and/or quarterly school reviews to include interviews of school leadership, board member, student and families, teacher, special education and ELL staff and operations staff, and classroom visits
- Desk audit/documentation review.

The First Year Site Visit is not intended to evaluate or judge instructional practices, but instead to determine compliance with the *Organizational Performance Framework*.

Each fall the Commission will schedule First Year Site Visits in the spring and work collaboratively with the schools to develop a site visit schedule. Consistent with the Commission's *Performance Framework* and *Charter Contract*, the Commission conducts formal site visits during the first year of each school's charter term. The cumulative evidence collected during these site visits, become part of a body of evidence that inform the necessity for intervention, the Annual Performance Report and ultimately renewal recommendations that are provided to Commissioners. The Commissioners make all final charter renewal decisions.

Below is a summary of in-person and self-reporting monitoring schools can expect to complete during their charter terms.

Monitoring Schedule					
Oversight Component	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Report Card and Washington School Improvement Framework rating School Specific Goal reporting 				
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triannual Board Observations Quarterly School Reviews Annual Compliance Calendar 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Year Site Visit SPED WISM (OSPI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidated Program Review (limited) Accountability Audit (SAO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability Audit (SAO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidated Program Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewal Visit
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly School Review Annual Compliance Calendar 				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Statement Audit (CPA Firm) 			

Given the close ties between school oversight and the renewal process, the Commission evaluates authorized charter schools through the lens of the Commission *Performance Framework* and the *Charter Contract* during all visits. These visits provide evidence of compliance and inform feedback that is provided to the schools regarding the extent to which schools are meeting the *Performance Frameworks* expectations and the provisions of their *Charter Contract*.

The Commission understands the many burdens on a school's schedule and appreciates the cooperation of school leaders and staff throughout the site visit process. The Commission has designed this guidance document to provide practical information about First Year Site Visits, so schools know what to expect and how to prepare. Familiarity with the following procedures and protocols will help to ensure that each visit runs smoothly. At the end of this document is a checklist (Appendix A) to assist schools in preparing for and participating in the school site visit.

First Year Site Visits

The Commission will formally visit all schools during their first year of operation; however, the Commission retains the right to conduct site visits as frequently as it deems necessary to monitor a

school's progress toward meeting expectations as stated in the *Charter Contract* and *Performance Framework*. First Year Site Visits generally last between two and two-and-a-half-days, depending on the unique circumstances of the School and/or concerns of the Commission. Site visit teams visit classrooms, review documents and interview school leaders, the School Board, parents, students, teachers and other personnel. The *Performance Framework*, *Charter Contract*, Annual Compliance Calendar, and Pre-Opening Conditions Calendar are used as guides for gathering evidence. The First Year Site Visit allows the Commission to hold the School externally accountable for how it operates. It serves as one of a number of ways the Commission will collect data to evaluate a charter school's organizational performance and effectiveness in order to determine a school's rating on each measure as well as a rating for the framework as a whole. The Commission will not publish data collected during the site visit on its website, but it will incorporate evidence collected during the site visit into the school's Annual Performance Report, which is published on the website. The First Year Site Visits will focus on required public school state and federal health, safety, civil rights and other requirements, as well as the School's compliance related to adherence to the educational program detailed in the *Charter Contract*.

For First Year Site Visits, Commission staff or its designee(s) will conduct the site visits. Schools will receive notification, logistical information, and preparation materials at least one month in advance of the site visit.

As part of the Commission document review and site visit, schools that are being monitored must provide the Commission with any and all documentation that is required under the *Charter Contract*. Additionally, charter schools will be reviewed on all aspects indicated on the Commission *Annual Compliance Calendar*.

Some charter schools require more frequent monitoring. A charter school's performance, as measured by the *Performance Framework*, is the primary source of data used to determine whether a charter school would require more frequent monitoring. In addition to the *Performance Framework*, the following data points will also be considered by the Commission to determine the extent that more frequent formal monitoring is required:

- Time school has been in operation;
- Feedback from parents, students, staff and community (e.g. complaints, surveys, phone calls, letters, or email correspondence, end-of-year reports, etc.);
- Compliance to the *Charter Contract*;
- Number of students served by the School;
- Complaints filed with OSPI and/or other state/federal agencies;
- Timely and accurate responses to Commission inquiries.

PREPARING FOR THE VISIT

Scheduling Visit Dates

First Year Site Visits are conducted between April and June. Prior to a visit, the Commission will contact the School's identified leader regarding the planned visit dates. Factors considered in selecting these dates include holidays, testing and professional development schedules of the schools, and Commission staff, as well as the availability of external monitors. While the Commission attempts to accommodate a school's schedule, planned visit days are generally not changed unless a serious conflict exists, namely if a large number of students will not be in attendance or participating in typical instruction. Once a school leader knows the day(s) of the site visit, he/she should share that information with staff and board members and begin preparing for the visit.

The Commission considers the totality of the circumstances in evaluating the information gathered during a site visit. The Commission asks that schools refrain from varying the School's regular daily routine in anticipation of the visit.

Point of Contact

The Commission's Deputy Director is the initial point of contact for issues related to First Year Site Visits. As the visit date approaches, the Commission will assign a Site Visit Team Leader to your school and will work with the School to develop a schedule for the days of the visit. The schedule will include classroom visits, interviews, time for document review and time to debrief with school leaders and other staff. In the weeks leading up to the visit, the School's primary contact will be the assigned Site Visit Team Leader, though schools should always feel free to contact the Deputy Director with questions or concerns that the Team Leader may be unable to address.

Team Composition

The Commission's Deputy Director is responsible for creating site visit teams. Site visit teams could include external consultants. The Commission team considers multiple factors such as school performance, past visit reports, school size and location in order to build monitoring teams with expertise that corresponds to the unique profile of each school.

The Visit Schedule

The Commission site visit team generally conducts a First Year Site Visit over the course of two to two-and-a-half days, depending on the size and structure of the School. Using the teacher schedules and the School's organization chart provided by the School Leader, **the Commission Site Visit Team Leader**

Most days typically begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m. If this timeframe falls outside of the School's normal operating hours, please inform the custodial and security staff of the site visit team's expected presence and inform the site visit team of special procedures for entering or exiting the building before or after regular school hours.

Sample schedules

Charter School Commission Site Visit - Day One		
	Date	
Time	Team Lead	Team member 2
8:00	Arrival – Team Orientation	
8:30	Teacher Interview	Assessment Coordinator Interview
9:15	Civil Rights Coordinator Interview	Community Engagement Coordinator Interview
10:00	Classroom Visits (2)	HICAP Coordinator Interview
10:30	School Leaders Interview	
11:15	Parent Panel Interview	Student Group Interview
12:00	Student Group Interview	Parent Panel Interview
12:45	Lunch	Lunch
1:45	Board Member(s) Interview	Teacher Interview
2:30	Teacher Interview	Classroom Visits (2)
3:15	Document Review	Document Review
4:00	Team Discussion/ Drafting	
4:30	Debrief with School Leaders	

Day 2

Charter School Commission Site Visit - Day Two		
	Date	
Time	Team Lead	Team member 2
8:00	Arrival – Team Orientation	
8:15	School Operations Manager Interview	Document Review
9:00	ELL Coordinator Interview	Classroom Visits (2)
9:45	SPED Teacher Interview	HICAP Coordinator Interview
10:15	Document Review	Teacher Interview
11:00	SPED Coordinator Interview	Student Group Interview
11:45	Parent Panel Interview	504 & McKinney Vento Coordinator Interview
12:30	Lunch	Lunch
1:30	Classroom Visit (SPED)	Classroom Visit
2:00	Team Notes Review	Team Notes Review
3:00	Team Discussion/ Questions/ Drafting	
4:00	Debrief with School Leaders	

individual staff members by name, but should reflect all positions in the School and relationships with any management company or charter management organization.

- **Teacher Schedules:** Provide schedules that clearly indicate where each teacher will be and what subject and grade he or she will teach throughout the days of the visit. Please also indicate non-instructional time, e.g., prep or planning periods, team meetings, lunch, etc. Again, in order to facilitate scheduling, please be sure to clarify class names and locations. If a teacher’s schedule contains class names for internal purposes such as “Harvard” or “801B,” please provide an explanatory key. The Commission uses this information to schedule teacher interviews with every effort to avoid conflicts with classroom instruction, though situations may arise when the visit team may ask that coverage be provided for a teacher in order to accommodate an interview. The Commission recognizes that teacher schedules are subject to change from the beginning of the school year and asks that school leaders highlight these changes during pre-visit discussions with the Site Visit team leader. *School should also include related services provider schedules to include all contracted personnel.*
- **Supporting Evidence showing adherence to Educational Program Terms from *Charter Contract*:** Review Educational Program Terms in *Attachment 4* to the *Charter Contract*. Provide any additional materials that may help the site visit team better understand how the school is implementing the Educational Program Terms. Materials may include Personalized Learning Plans, discipline records, extended day calendars, mentor group attendance records, evidence and assessment of student projects, student schedules, goals and proficiency data from Math and ELA daily sessions, etc. Schools must provide evidence of implementation of educational terms as stated in the charter contract.
- **School staff hiring process:** Provide any documentation outlining the process for hiring staff and demonstrating how the school materially complies with applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the *Charter Contract* relating to employment considerations. Evidence may include sample job postings and/or offer letters.
- **Student and Employee Handbooks:** Handbooks should include evidence of school’s discipline policy, complaint process, comprehensive policy related to serving the educational needs of homeless children and youth in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, nondiscrimination policy and procedure for students and employees, sexual harassment policy and procedure for students and employees
- **Student application:** Provide templates in all languages the school shares with families during the student application process.

- **Enrollment forms:** Provide templates in all languages the school shares with families during the student enrollment process. Enrollment forms should include a *student housing questionnaire*, *request for immunization records* and a *home language survey*.

- **Nondiscrimination Statement:** Each of the following documents that contains a nondiscrimination statement with all required components. Please upload only the relevant page(s) or indicate the page number where the statement is located:
 - ☐ A. Website
 - ☐ B. Newsletter
 - ☐ C. Student/parent handbook or a similar publication.
 - ☐ D. Job announcement or employment application.

Logistics

The site visit team seeks the following accommodations:

- **Coordination:** The School Leader should designate someone to serve as a liaison for the site visit team. That person should be available throughout the visit to troubleshoot issues with the schedule, help team members locate documents or other evidence and ensure that the site visit team has the chance to gather as much information as possible about the School’s program and accomplishments.
- **Meeting Space:** The site visit team will require a private meeting space (e.g., a small conference room, vacant classroom, or lounge) for the duration of the visit.

The Commission understands that space is often limited in charter schools and recognizes that taking over a space for an entire visit may cause disruption to some staff. That said, a private meeting space is essential to the successful conduct of the site visit. This space will be used for team discussions, document review and interviews with members of the School community, if necessary. Place and clearly label requested documents for review in this room.

Note, too, that all of the site visit team members utilize laptop computers during the visit. Please ensure that adequate power outlets are available in the team's meeting room, which

may require providing a power strip and/or extension cords. Also provide the School's guest Wi-Fi access code and password.

- **Meals:** The Commission asks schools to provide the team with the names of, or preferably lunch menus from, nearby restaurants that deliver. The team, which may ask school staff to accept delivery of meals, will cover all costs. Please note that team members as state employees are required to pay for their own lunch and that the School **should not** provide food or beverages for the team members during the School site visit.

DURING THE VISIT

Site visit team members will visit classrooms, interview teachers, students, families, coordinators, administrative staff and school board members and review documents during the visit. Team members then analyze the evidence collected from these to generate conclusions about the links between student achievement data, the educational program and organizational capacity.

Document Review

Site visit team members also examine a broad range of documents during the visit. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits the Commission (as the School's authorizer), its staff, and external reviewers to inspect student records including student performance data, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and discipline records during a site visit. All external members of the visit team have signed, and are bound by, confidentiality agreements.

Please make all requested documents available for review in the team's private meeting space upon its arrival. Please also provide these materials in an organized and clearly identified manner, e.g., in labeled binders or folders. The School should also arrange electronic access to documents too large or unwieldy to print (e.g., curriculum documents or school policies). In addition, throughout the visit, the site visit team may request additional documents to pursue a particular line of inquiry.

In order to minimize the work in preparing these documents for the visit, and to enable the Commission to understand the School's actual operation, please provide, whenever possible, existing documents. If school leaders have any questions about the requested documents, they should contact the Team Leader well before the visit date.

- **Map of School:** Provide a basic floor plan that team members can use to locate classrooms and offices. This does not need to be a formal blueprint.
- **Assessment Documents:** Provide examples of the School's key assessments, such as interim assessments or unit tests. In addition, documents, tools and results should be provided that demonstrate the School's systems for collecting and analyzing data and indicate how the School Leader and staff use assessment results. These documents might include **sample** data binders, rubrics, item analysis, action plans or report cards.

- **Evaluations:** Provide all protocols for evaluations of teachers, all contracted personnel, administrators, school leaders, the Board and management company or partner organization, if applicable.

- **Professional Development:** The Commission will review evidence of professional development to ensure teachers and staff receive adequate training in content areas, to serve special populations (including ELL, health, homeless and foster care, and highly capable), and regarding civil rights compliance, including employee responsibilities to report and respond to discrimination the school's discrimination complaint procedures. Evidence of professional development must include evidence of content, evidence of participation, and evidence of support of implementation:
 - A. Examples of evidence of training content:
 - Agenda for each training.
 - Contracts.
 - Clock hour forms.
 - Training materials or citation of training materials.
 - B. Examples of evidence of participation:
 - Schedule of trainings and sign-in sheets.
 - Invoices.
 - Meeting notices.
 - C. Examples of school support of implementation of professional development:
 - Follow-up coaching calendar, completed observation form.
 - Staff meeting agendas.
 - Evidence of collaboration.

- **Section 504 plan documentation:** including the following: parent consent for initial evaluation, evaluation documentation, parent consent for initial placement, Section 504 plans, and evidence of manifestation determination meetings (if applicable)

- **Course and Program Enrollment analysis:** A description of the process the school uses to annually review disaggregated course and program enrollment data to identify potential disparities based on sex, race, ELL status, and disability. The Commission understands that evidence of implementation of the process may not be available as schools are in their first year of operation.

- **Student discipline analysis:** A description of the process the school uses to annually review disaggregated discipline data to identify potential disparities based on sex, race, ELL status, and

disability. The Commission understands that evidence of complete implementation of the process may not be available as schools are in their first year of operation.

- **Homeless Student Transportation (if applicable):** Completed forms, written agreements, transportation request forms, logs, etc. to show evidence of coordinated transportation services. Includes type of transportation service provided, any arrangements or agreements with neighboring LEAs, start and stop dates, etc.
- **Homeless Student Intake Forms (if applicable):** (separate from housing questionnaire) Specific to homeless students. (Form used to determine homeless student's needs, provide referrals for services such as medical, dental, housing and mental health, and inform parents and unaccompanied youth of available school services and supports.)
- **English Language Learners:** The Commission will review evidence the School has and implements procedures to identify and determine initial and continuing eligibility of English Learners.
 - ☐ A. Procedures for the identification, assessment, placement, and reporting of potential ELLs.
 - ☐ B. Home Language Survey (HLS) or information on LEA registration forms that incorporate required elements from the HLS and are retrievable from any student file.
 - ☐ C. State-approved English language proficiency placement test score sheet with administration date, retrievable from any student file.
 - ☐ D. State-approved English language proficiency annual test score sheet, retrievable from any student file.
 - ☐ E. Written parent waiver of English language development services, retrievable from any waived student's file.
 - ☐ F. Parent notification forms:
 - Initial placement.
 - Continued eligibility.
 - Transition from English language development services
- **Highly Capable (HICAP) Learners:** The Commission will review evidence the School has and implements procedures to identify, refer, and select HICAP students.
 - ☐ A. One example of a public announcement for a major HCP identification activity.
 - ☐ B. List the languages and describe the communication channels LEA uses to announce major HCP identification activities.
 - ☐ C. Identification procedure. Documentation must include:

- Referral process
 - Screening process (if in place)
 - Assessment process
 - Selection system
 - Appeal process
 - D. HCP selection: board policy.
 - E. One completed referral that includes a parent/guardian signature indicating consent to test *and*, if eligible, to participate in the program.
- **Collaboration with the local Child Welfare Agency (if applicable):** To show adequate service provision for students in foster care, provide evidence that the school has collaborated with Children’s Administration through ongoing and regular contact. Evidence may include logs, meeting minutes, correspondence, agendas, etc.
 - **Signage:** The Commission will observe if the following signage is posted:
 - Gun-free, drug-free, and tobacco-free signage has been posted at the main entrances to buildings accessed by students, parents or the public.
 - School documents (forms, posters, brochures and parent information) show the name and contact information of the designated homeless student liaison and provide information regarding services and supports for students experiencing homelessness.
 - OSPI Sexual Harassment Poster or the LEA’s sexual harassment policy is posted in all school buildings in a location visible to both students and staff.

Classroom Visits

In order to maximize information gathering and ensure an in-depth understanding of the School’s educational program, members of the site visit team often begin visiting classrooms at the start of the visit. While they are unlikely to visit all classes, site visit team members do attempt to visit a representative sample of classrooms, particularly those in the core areas of instruction. Note that while site visit team members visit classrooms as indicated on the visit schedule, they may also visit additional classrooms, especially in the same grade or subject as time allows or to pursue a particular line of inquiry.

During their time in the classroom, site visit team members may observe instruction and inspect curriculum resources and the work of students on display as well as in folders, journals and written assignments in order to assess the School’s compliance and fidelity to its Educational Program Terms. For instance, if a school has noted in its Education Program Term elements that all students will be enrolled in a computer science course, site visit team members will not only review staff qualifications and schedules, but will also want to attend a computer science class in session. Alternatively, if a school

Interviews

- **School Leader Interview:** At the beginning of the visit, the School Leader(s) provides a general orientation to the School, indicating current priorities, immediate challenges, and program changes, as well as the reporting structure and the roles of key personnel.
- **Instructional Staff Interviews:** These interviews primarily involve teachers from visited classes, though the team may schedule interviews with other teachers, instructional staff, contracted staff, and/or paraprofessionals. As noted above, team members make every attempt to schedule interviews with teachers when they are not instructing students; however, the Commission may request coverage for a class so that a particular teacher can participate in an interview.

Please provide accurate teacher, contracted staff and paraprofessional schedules for the day(s) of the visit in order to avoid, to the extent possible, any conflicts with classroom instruction. Please let all personnel know about scheduled interview times according to the visit schedule. It is preferable to conduct interviews in the teachers' own classrooms so that they can readily refer to their curriculum and other materials; however, when that is not possible, please identify another private space such as an unused classroom or office. In such cases, teachers, and contracted staff are encouraged to bring

documents with them such as curriculum guides, grade books, assessment calendars, etc. The School's *Educational Program Terms*, as stated in their *Charter Contract*, provide a framework for the types of questions teachers should expect to answer during the interviews. Please ensure that teachers, and contracted staff understand that the purpose of the School visit is **to evaluate the overall School program**, not individual staff members. The Commission does not use staff names and minimizes the identification of titles and positions in its site visit reports. In addition, team members do not provide feedback to individual teachers regarding their visited performance in the classroom.

- **Administrator Interviews:** The Commission interviews other school leaders, besides the principal or head of school, generally at the beginning of the visit. Site visit team members may follow up with school leaders later in the visit as additional questions emerge and clarification of issues is needed. In addition, the Commission may schedule other key staff members such as the School's Special Education Coordinator, Civil Rights Coordinator, Assessment Coordinator, ELL Coordinator, HICAP Coordinator, McKinney-Vento Coordinator, Operations leads, Community Engagement Coordinator, other school coordinators or curriculum specialists, for interviews.
- **School Board Interview:** The Board member(s) interview requires approximately 45 minutes. As oversight is one of the major responsibilities of the Board, the Commission requires that 1-3 board members attend the interview (not enough members to constitute a quorum). The Board interview primarily focuses on governance and the Board's plans for the future; it also includes discussion of school performance, legal compliance and fiscal soundness. While school leaders may be ex-officio, non-voting members of their School's Board, the Commission may ask them not to participate in part or the entire Board interview.
- **Students and Families:** The student and family interviews focus on the school's educational program from a student or parent/guardian perspective, family engagement and communication, the school environment and enrollment practices. If needed, the site visit team can schedule the family interview in the evening to accommodate parent or guardian schedules. The school should identify parents and families who provide a representative sample of the student body as a whole, and who represent special populations and at-risk students.

Debrief with School Leaders

The site visit team will provide some preliminary feedback to the Board and School leaders at the end of the visit. Participation by other school staff at this briefing is left to the discretion of the School Leader; typically, senior school leaders attend and sometimes Board members as well.

The Board will have an opportunity to comment on the site visit process and make recommendations for improvements, both during the discussion and via a follow-up form.

AFTER THE VISIT

First Year Site Visit Report

Following the site visit, the team will send the school a report based on observations, data, artifact collection, and interviews conducted during the site visit. The report will follow the line of inquiry laid out in the *Organizational Performance Framework*. The Commission will issue the report within 45 days of the site visit. Based on evidence provided and collected during the visit, the report may include required actions to which schools have a specified number of days to respond.

Required Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion and Implementation	Resources Needed (optional)	Evidence of Action to Date (optional)

Corrective Action

If the charter school is unable to produce any of the required documents or information listed under each of the compliance indicators, the school will receive a Letter of Concern. The letter will specifically describe missing or incomplete documents or information and request that the items or evidence be sent to the Commission within 10 working days of receipt of the written letter. A charter school unable to produce required documents or document compliance with all requirements could be subject to further Commission action including, but not limited to, Corrective Action.

Based on observations, interviews, data and artifacts collected during the Site Visit, the Commission may also include additional areas of Corrective Action within its report.

APPENDIX A: SITE VISIT CHECKLIST FOR LEADERS OF AUTHORIZED CHARTER SCHOOLS

The following checklist is intended to assist school leaders in adequately preparing for school site visits.

Five weeks prior to the School site visit

- ☐ Board and school leader determine School site visit main contact (coordinator). School leader shares information with the School's Board, staff, students and parents regarding the School site visit.
- ☐ Lead the School in preparing the requested materials for the visit as detailed on pages 13-15 of the *Commission Charter School Site Visit Guide for School Leaders*.

Gather the following documents

- ☐ Staff Directory
- ☐ Staff Qualifications
- ☐ Organizational Chart
- ☐ Teacher, Contracted Staff, Paraprofessional Schedules (including subjects, times, locations, and explanatory key)
- ☐ Supporting Evidence showing adherence to Educational Program Terms from *Charter Contract*
- ☐ School staff hiring process
- ☐ Student application and enrollment forms
- ☐ Student & Employee Handbook(s)
- ☐ Nondiscrimination Statement

Four weeks prior to the School site visit (Commission designated date)

- ☐ Complete and/or upload all of the above documents noted in the Annual Site Visit Calendar School Submissions folder.
- ☐ Once documents are submitted, work with the Deputy Director to clarify any uncertainties.
- ☐ School selects and notifies parents of date, time and location for an interview with Commission's site visit team.

Two weeks prior to the School site visit

- ☐ Work with the Team Leader to plan for the School site visit, including the development of a final schedule for the visit. This may take several iterations to complete.

- ☐ Arrange logistical components of the visit, including reserving a private and secure room with the appropriate amount of outlets for the site visit team to meet, conduct interviews and review documents.

One week before the School site visit

- ☐ Speak with the Site Visit Team Leader by telephone to review and finalize the visit schedule and discuss school materials and documents.
- ☐ Confirm logistical components of the visit, including a private and secure room with the appropriate amount of outlets for the site visit team to meet, conduct interviews and review documents.

The day before the School site visit

Ensure that the requested material is available, organized and clearly labeled in the team's private meeting space. Additional detail on each of the items below is noted above.

- ☐ Map of School
- ☐ Assessment Documents
- ☐ Evaluations
- ☐ Evidence of Professional Development
- ☐ Section 504 plan documentation
- ☐ Course and program enrollment analysis
- ☐ Student discipline analysis
- ☐ Evidence of Homeless student transportation and intake forms (if applicable)
- ☐ Evidence of Collaboration with the local Child Welfare Agency (if applicable)
- ☐ Finalize the schedule
- ☐ Confirm the team's private meeting space
- ☐ Remind teachers to make lesson plans, grade books and related documents related to the Educational terms, as well as artifacts of student work, available for review during the visit.
- ☐ Inform custodians, security and other relevant personnel about the scheduled arrival/departure times of the visit team and materials.
- ☐ Ensure required signage is posted at main entrances and in widely-trafficked areas accessed by students, parents, or the public

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROCESS & SAMPLE QUESTIONS

General Guidance

All members of an interview group population should be made aware of the opportunity to participate in the interviews; individuals (except for students) should be randomly selected.

All interview groups will be facilitated by a member of the site visit team. The team member will introduce him/herself and establish the context for the visit and the interview. He/she will set the norms for the conversation, establish the time frame, and let the group know that questions asked are drawn from a set pool of interview group questions. The team member facilitates the conversation, opening with common questions asked of all groups at all schools. Questioning may then become more specific and tailored to the specific school context. Whenever possible the team member will guide the focus group members to ground their answers with specific evidence and data. Attendance should be limited to the group members requested by the Commission staff. For instance, teacher interviews should be limited to instructional staff, and not include any members of the school leadership team. Please be prepared to present evidence during the interview.

Team members may record the interview and ask follow-up questions, as appropriate.

The Commission suggests 5-8 participants in each interview group. Please include no more than 10 attendees per interview group.

Interview Group	Guidance	Sample Questions
Board of Directors	<p>The site visit schedule will include an interview with members of the School's Board of Directors. For the purposes of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (42.30 RCW), a contingency of members <i>less than</i> a quorum should plan to attend this interview.</p> <p>The Commission typically schedules this meeting in the morning in order to work around the schedules of the Board members.</p> <p>The School Leader, even if s/he serves on the Board, may not attend this meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe the School's mission and vision and how they are realized in the operation of the School. ▪ Describe the role and responsibilities of the Board. What areas or decisions are outside the scope of this role? ▪ What are the board's committees and how are they deployed to accomplish board work? ▪ Does the board evaluate the school leader and CMO? How frequently are school leaders and CMOs evaluated formally? Informally? What methods/tools are used to evaluate the school leader and CMO? ▪ Does the board have an evaluation process for itself? How frequently is the board evaluated? What methods/tools are used to evaluate the board? How are evaluations used? Evaluative? Formative? Change course? ▪ What are the criteria the Board utilizes to determine whether the School is successful? ▪ Describe the board's onboarding process for new members. Following onboarding, does the board engage in ongoing professional development? ▪ What are the School's educational program terms? (Board members are not expected to memorize the terms, but should be able to

		<p>articulate how they are implemented at the school.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your relationship with the Leadership Team. How and when does the board meet with school leader and CMO?
School Leadership Team	<p>Administrators who are directly responsible for implementing the educational program and overseeing the operations of the School should attend this interview.</p> <p>The time reserved for “additional fact finding” in the afternoon may be used to interview with this group of administrators to clarify issues or questions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the School’s mission and vision and how they are realized in the operation of the School. What are the educational program terms and how is their effectiveness evaluated? Describe the School’s educational program in terms of instruction and assessment. What are the School’s academic priorities? What are the School’s strategies for addressing identified student academic concerns and how does the School support teachers in their implementation of these strategies? How do you track the strategy? If the school has not addressed previous concerns, what do you believe to be the cause? How is the effectiveness of your performance evaluated? Describe the process for supervision and evaluation of teachers. What are your expectations for what constitutes excellent instruction? What are the School’s greatest strengths and challenges? Describe your relationship with the Board of Directors.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the roles of each member of the administrative team. What information does the school leader provide to the board and how frequently?
Teachers	<p>All general education teachers should be offered the opportunity to participate in this interview.</p> <p>The interview group should contain a representative sample of teachers in terms of their experience, years at the School, subject, and/or grade level.</p> <p>Please do not include teachers who are directly responsible for supervising/evaluating other teachers.</p> <p>Administrators and board members may not be present at this interview.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the School's mission and vision (Provided to teacher), how they are realized in the operation of the School? Describe the School's educational program terms. (Teachers are not expected to memorize the terms but should be able to articulate how they are implemented at the school) How are their effectiveness evaluated? What assessments do you use to track student learning? What are the School's academic priorities? What are the School's strategies for addressing identified student academic concerns and what support do you receive in implementing these strategies? How does the School review your performance? Are you required to follow any specific formats or procedures in your teaching and lesson planning? What professional development and other forms of support are made available to you? What information do you provide to parents and how do you communicate it?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you collaborate with Special Education and English Language Learners (ELL) staff?
Special Education, 504, English Language Learners (ELL), HICAP and McKinney-Vento Administration	<p>The School's Special Education, 504, ELL, HICAP, and McKinney-Vento program administrators will be interviewed.</p> <p>The time reserved for "additional fact findings" in the afternoon may be used for supplemental interviews with these administrators as needed to clarify issues or questions which arise during the course of the visit.</p> <p>Administrators and board members may not be present at these interviews.</p>	<p><i>Special Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is your Special Education program model? What is the Child Find process? How do you ensure FAPE? What instructional supports and services are made available to special education students at this School? What scientifically research based interventions are implemented? Describe the types and frequency of progress monitoring conducted. Describe the accommodations and modifications made in the general education classrooms for students with diverse learning needs. What have been the outcomes for students with disabilities in terms of IEP goal achievement, promotion, graduation, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment? What is their progress on internal assessments? What professional development and other forms of support are made available to you? What system(s) is in place to ensure timely FAPE obligations? What process is used for transfer IEPs? How do you ensure comparable services? How do you ensure parent participation in the IEP process? Student participation?

		<p>services are provided to communicate vital information with Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents. How do you ensure interpreters are qualified and competent to serve in the role of an interpreter or to translate documents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What professional development and other forms of support are made available to you? To staff delivering services? ▪ How do you ensure ELLs are not improperly excluded from school for disciplinary reasons? <p><i>HICAP</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the process for the identification of HICAP students? ▪ How are parents notified of the selection and appeal process? ▪ Describe the referral, screening, assessment, selection and appeal processes for HICAP students. ▪ What is the continuum of services available for HICAP students? ▪ How is the progress of HICAP students monitored? <p><i>McKinney-Vento</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the process to identify students eligible for support under McKinney –Vento? ▪ What procedures are in place to identify students who are in foster care? ▪ What supports does the school provide to students and families?
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Students	<p>Student interview groups should include only students in Grade 4 and above. Depending on the ages of the students and the size of the School, one or three interview groups will be scheduled.</p> <p>Students should represent a variety of ages, grade levels, and time spent at the School.</p> <p>Administrators and board members may not be present at this interview.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the mission of the School? ▪ How long have you attended school here? ▪ Tell us what it's like to be a student here. ▪ How does this School compare with others you've attended? ▪ What happens if someone misbehaves? ▪ How do you get help if you need it? ▪ How safe is your school? ▪ Do you find your school work challenging? ▪ What would you like to change about this School? ▪ What would you like to keep the same? ▪ Do teachers work hard to make sure that students stay in school? ▪ Do teachers pay attention to all students, not just the top students? ▪ Do teachers make sure that all students are planning for life after graduation? ▪ Do teachers work hard to make sure that all students are learning? ▪ Are all students encouraged to go to college? ▪ Do you see school as preparing you for the future? ▪ Do your teachers always keep their promises? ▪ Do you feel safe and comfortable with your teachers at this school? ▪ Do your teachers always listen to students' ideas? ▪ Do your teachers treat you with respect?
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Families	<p>This focus group should include parents or guardians whose children represent a variety of grades, years spent at the School, and including, if possible, students with disabilities and/or limited English proficient students.</p> <p>Interpreters will be provided upon request.</p> <p>Administrators and board members may not be present at this interview.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Given the School's mission and vision), what it means to your family? ▪ Why did you choose to send your child(ren) to this School? ▪ What does the School expect of your child(ren) academically? ▪ Have previous concerns been addressed? If not, what do you believe to be the cause? ▪ Is the School a safe place? ▪ What does the School do to support your child(ren)? ▪ What is your role/involvement in the School? ▪ What information does the School provide to you about your child's learning and how is it communicated? How often is it communicated? ▪ What are the School's biggest successes and challenges? ▪ What would you change about this School?
Student and family support services staff and required coordinators	<p>This focus group should include representative student support services staff including, but not limited to: family support and outreach, guidance and counseling staff, social worker, school psychologist, school coordinators, nurse, a crisis management team member, and/or community services liaison, if applicable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What training have you received to complete the requirements of your position? • What internal and external resources are available to you to help you with your job? • How do you ensure adequate services are provided to the student population you serve?
School operations and finance staff	<p>This focus group should include school staff responsible for overseeing and monitoring the school's budget and spending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the annual budget developed? Who provides input? How do you make mid-year course corrections?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you track and monitor spending? • How do you ensure funds are spent according to their assigned designations (i.e. IDEA, Title)
School Leadership Team	<p>Administrators who are directly responsible for implementing the educational program and overseeing the operations of the School should attend this interview.</p> <p>The time reserved for “additional fact finding” in the afternoon may be used to interview with this group of administrators to clarify issues or questions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe the School’s mission and vision and how they are realized in the operation of the School. ▪ What are the educational program terms and how is their effectiveness evaluated? ▪ Describe the School’s educational program in terms of instruction and assessment. ▪ What are the School’s academic priorities? ▪ What are the School’s strategies for addressing identified student academic concerns and how does the School support teachers in their implementation of these strategies? How do you track the strategy? ▪ If the school has not addressed previous concerns, what do you believe to be the cause? ▪ How is the effectiveness of your performance evaluated? ▪ Describe the process for supervision and evaluation of teachers. What are your expectations for what constitutes excellent instruction? ▪ What are the School’s greatest strengths and challenges? ▪ Describe your relationship with the Board of Directors.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you ensure students eligible for special education services are not improperly excluded from school for disciplinary reasons? <p><i>504</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the Child find Process? What services and accommodations are available to students eligible for a 504 Plan? How do you ensure Procedural Safeguards? How do you ensure students eligible for 504 services and accommodations are not improperly excluded from school for disciplinary reasons? <p><i>ELL</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What English language support services do ELL students receive and how, where and by whom are those services delivered? How does the school identify limited English proficient parents and what interpretation and translation service are available? What have been the outcomes for ELL students in terms of promotion, graduation, and SBAC assessment program passing rates? What is their progress on internal assessments? What is the process to monitor students exited from ELL services? Please describe the process the school uses to ensure that interpretation and translation
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APPENDIX C: RESOURCES DIRECTORY

Charter School Commission (Commission) Leadership Team

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1068 Washington St. SE
Olympia, WA 98501

<http://charterschool.wa.gov/>

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APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY

AMAO	Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives
CEDARS	Comprehensive Education Data And Research System
CMO	Charter Management Organization
CPR	Consolidated Program Review
CTE	Career and Technical Education
DAC	District Assessment Coordinator
EDS	Education Data System
ELL	English Language Learner
ELPA	English Language Proficiency Assessment
EMO	Education Management Organization
EOC	End-of-Course
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ESD	Educational Service District
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
HIB	Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying
HICAP	Highly Capable Learners
HIPPA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HLS	Home Language Survey
HQT	Highly Qualified Teacher
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
LEA	Local Education Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MSP	Measurements of Student Progress

NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OPMA	Open Public Meetings Act
OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
PPR	Per Pupil Revenue
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
SAC	State Advisory Committee
SAFS	School Apportionment and Financial Services
SAO	State Auditor's Office
SAS	Student Assessment System
SBAC	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium
SBEC	State Board of Education
SIS	Student Information System
SPED	Special Education
TBIP	Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WAMS	Washington Assessment Management System
WATCH	Washington Access to Criminal History
WCSA	Washington Charter School Association
WELPA	Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment
WINS	Washington Integrated Nutrition System
WISM	Washington Integrated System of Monitoring
WSCSC	Washington State Charter School Commission
WSIF	Washington School Improvement Framework