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Commission Votes to Revoke Charter Contract of Pullman Community Montessori

Commission details resources and information for supporting families and students

Revocation process pursues stewardship of public funds, transparency, student safety

Olympia, WA – The Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) on Friday May 31 approved staff’s recommendation to revoke the charter contract for Pullman Community Montessori (PCM), a charter public school. On Tuesday June 4, the PCM School Board voted to accept revocation. The Commission is the main authorizer of charter public schools in Washington and is an independent state agency. In Washington, charter public schools are tuition-free, open-to-all, public schools operating as non-profits within a strict accountability framework that grants them additional flexibility in serving students.

This is the first Commission-initiated [revocation of a charter contract](#) in Washington State and follows rigorous oversight protocols. In voting to revoke the charter contract, the Commission found material and substantial violation of the school’s commitments, including PCM’s capacity to maintain financial viability. The revocation of the charter contract is effective June 30, 2024, which will result in school closure.

“Our first responsibility is to the interests of the students served by charter public schools in our state,” said **Chair Christine Varela**. “Following a comprehensive investigation by our staff within the strict regulatory responsibilities that govern oversight of charter public schools in Washington and including evaluation of information provided in complaints from community members, we are revoking the charter contract for PCM. We recognize the deep commitment that many PCM families have to their school community and our agency will serve as a partner to supporting students’ transition forward in their education.”

At the state regulatory level, there is a school termination protocol that will occur over a period of several months. This includes assembling a Transition Team to lead the closure process, developing a school closure plan, notifying families and school staff, working with local school districts to facilitate student transfers, notifying lenders and contractors, transferring records, and disposition of assets. The State Auditor’s Office will perform a final accountability audit. At the crux of this transition are the students of

PCM, their education and their safety and well-being.

PCM will hold a home school connections meetup for current PCM families on **June 10 at 4:00pm in Room 115 of the Gladish Center**, 115 NW State St, Pullman, WA 99163. Representatives from the Pullman School District will be present to discuss district enrollment procedures, support, and information on special education processes.

Both charter public schools and traditional public schools can represent the heart of many communities. While the process of oversight is technical, it is not indifferent to the real-life experiences of students and families.

The Washington State Charter School Commission is the [main authorizer](#) of charter public schools in Washington and is an independent state agency. It was formed with the mission of creating a rigorous and comprehensive proposal process for qualified non-profits who wish to open a charter public school. The agency also monitors and provides oversight holding schools and charter public school boards accountable to high standards of quality. The Commission was formed following the passage of Initiative 1240 by state voters in 2012, which created the charter public school system in our state. In 2023, the Washington State Legislature increased the responsibility of the Commission to hold charter public school boards more accountable for financial oversight of schools, and to respond to patterns of complaints against schools. In Washington, all charter public schools are non-sectarian, open to all students, tuition-free, publicly-funded, staffed by certified teachers and held accountable to the same state and national standards as traditional public schools.

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

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 to hold 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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