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Charter Public School Awarded WA State Recognition for Outstanding Achievement

Agencies overseeing public schools honor public schools in Washington which demonstrate progress toward closing gaps, increasing student growth and data-based student achievements

Olympia, WA – The Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) today applauded Rainier Prep for earning Washington State’s Recognition for Outstanding Achievement. The annual award, by the Washington School Recognition Program, a partnership of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, and the Education Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, recognizes K-12 public schools from across the state which meet high standards for student outcomes.

Rainier Prep, a 5th-8th Grade charter public school, scored among the top 10 percent of public schools across Washington state in both proficiency and growth in English Language Arts and math, for multiple student groups in the 2022-23 school year. Additional measures such as student attendance and English learner student progress, are also factored in to the state’s recognition formula. Rainier Prep serves 333 students, 95% of whom identify as members of the Global Majority (i.e., Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other students of color) and 69% of whom are from families with limited incomes.

As published in a recent column in the [South Seattle Emerald](#), **Rainier Prep school leader Karen Lobos shared** that, “for eight years, we have delivered on our community’s vision for an exceptional college-prep public middle school option with the flexibility to innovate and meet the needs of all of our students. By integrating a foundation for academic growth with a robust, personalized advising and coaching program, our students, families, and partners are working together to navigate best-fit pathways for success in high schools, degrees, and careers.”

“We are so pleased to highlight Rainier Prep for their dedicated service to their students and their community,” said **Christine Varela, Commission Chair**. “This award reflects rigorous evaluation among

our peers in our state’s public school system and is a testament to the work of students, families, teachers and staff at Rainier Prep. As a tuition-free, non-sectarian charter public school that is open to all, we’re looking forward to the achievements of Rainier Prep students and graduates in the years ahead and thankful for the commitments of Rainier Prep’s community to support its students. All the public schools recognized by the program should be congratulated for all they do for the students they serve.”

The [Washington School Recognition Program](#) recognizes schools for closing opportunity gaps and student growth and academic achievement by using the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF). In alignment with federal requirements, the WSIF uses multiple measures of data.

There are three routes for schools to be honored by the Washington School Recognition Program:

- **Closing Gaps:** These schools make significant advancements for all students or specific student groups in the area identified for improvement.
- **Growth:** These schools have at least one student group among the highest performers on at least 60% of WSIF measures.
- **Achievement:** These schools show high performance on at least two of the following measures: attendance, dual credit completion, English language arts (ELA) assessments, graduation rates, math assessments, and ninth grade on-track.”

The Washington State Charter School Commission is an independent state agency and the [main authorizer](#) of charter public schools. 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 Washington, all charter public schools are tuition-free, non-sectarian, open to all students, 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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