



IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

650 W. State Street • P.O. Box 83720 • Boise, ID 83720-0037
208/334-2270 • FAX: 208/334-2632

Email: board@osbe.idaho.gov
www.boardofed.idaho.gov

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Contact: Blake Youde 208-332-1591 (office)
208-696-9447 (cell)
blake.youde@osbe.idaho.gov

IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT

(Boise). The Idaho Public Charter School Commission (PCSC) has released its 2014 Annual Report, providing a performance summary of the 35 charter schools it authorizes. The report examines the academic, financial and operational performance of each PCSC-authorized charter school.

The report compares the individual PCSC-authorized charter schools to neighboring traditional public schools and finds that more than half of the charter schools are among the top performing public school options, charter or district, in their respective communities. Rankings from the State of Idaho's five-star rating system for public schools are used to gauge academic performance.

An examination of the schools' finances found that three-quarters of the schools are considered to be in good financial standing or better. All of the charter schools are in good standing or higher from an operational perspective, based on a review of each school's management and compliance practices.

PCSC's annual report cites a disparity in charter school enrollment of minority, Limited English Proficiency, special education and free & reduced price lunch students compared to their neighboring public school districts. Addressing this disparity is a PCSC priority. "I have appreciated the Commissioners' increased attention to this issue in recent months," said Alan Reed, Chairman of PCSC. "Before approving new charters, we ask petitioners, 'What are your strategies for reaching special and underserved populations?' We appreciate that many of our schools go out of their way to make sure that all students know they are welcome to enroll," he continued.

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The annual report has been developed to provide school leadership with comparison data, in addition to the individual, annual performance reports already provided to each school by PCSC. Additionally, the report provides families and state policymakers with a resource for comparing performance of a charter school to other local public schools, as well as the charter schools throughout the state.

“The report is designed to help schools identify areas for improvement. It also contains useful information for families who wish to make well-informed school choice decisions,” said Tamara Baysinger, PCSC Director.

The 35 charter schools authorized by PCSC serve approximately 14,950 students, which is 5% of all public school students in Idaho. A copy of the 2014 Annual Report as well as detailed individual school reports can be found on PCSC’s website (<http://chartercommission.idaho.gov/>).

The Public Charter School Commission is Idaho’s statewide, independent authorizer charged with overseeing the performance outcomes of the public charter schools it authorizes.

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