



Spokane Public Schools  
*excellence for everyone*

# Charter Renewal Recommendation Report: Pride Schools Charter School

December 2023

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# INTRODUCTION

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Charter schools are a type of public school, approved and overseen by a state or district authorizer. In Washington State, there are two charter school authorizers:

- Washington State Charter School Commission has numerous charter schools across the state.
- Spokane Public Schools (SPS), currently the state's only district authorizer, has two charter schools that fall within its district boundaries.

On November 6, 2012, the voters of the State of Washington passed Initiative 1240, codified at RCW 28A.710, providing for the establishment of public charter schools. RCW 28A.710 provides for school districts to be approved by the Washington State Board of Education (SBE), to be Authorizers of charter schools located within the school district's own boundaries. In 2013, Spokane Public Schools was authorized by the SBE as a School District Charter Authorizer, with renewals in 2016 and 2022. SPS has authorized three charter schools since this time. Currently, SPS oversees two charter schools, PRIDE Prep (dba Pride Schools) and Lumen High School, with the third charter school, Spokane International Academy moving outside SPS boundaries and transferring authorizing responsibilities to the WA State Charter School Commission.

Spokane Public Schools provides oversight, technical assistance, and measures accountability for each charter school using three performance frameworks (Academic, Financial, Organizational), which includes monitoring for compliance with state and federal laws in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent of Public Institution and the State Auditor's Office.

## SPS Mission

Every SPS student engages in joyful and challenging learning experiences throughout their educational journey that prepare them to become lifelong learners and graduate with the knowledge, skills, habits, agency, and community connections they need to pursue their passions and desired post-secondary opportunities.

## The SPS Promise: A dream, access & opportunity

To ensure we are meeting our commitment to creating a collaborative learning community where every student and every staff member knows that they belong, we outlined these guiding principles:

- equity
- being student-centered
- inclusion
- innovation
- trust & collaboration

# OVERVIEW OF THE CHARTER RENEWAL PROCESS

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Charter renewal marks a critical juncture for a school, and the renewal decision is one of the Spokane Public School's most important responsibilities as a charter school authorizer. At renewal, the Authorizer must determine whether a school has met its public commitments to the children and families it serves, as well as to the community. The renewal process requires thorough analyses of a comprehensive body of quantitative and qualitative data based on annual performance reviews over the charter term; the school's renewal application; and a renewal site visit. It culminates in an Authorizer's decision to renew or non-renew the charter.

In terms of the criteria by which the authorizer will make its renewal decisions, in accordance with RCW 28A.710.190(5), the authorizer will base its decisions in evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the performance frameworks set forth in the charter contract; this encompasses information contained in annual performance reports, information provided by the school to the authorizer in the charter school renewal application, information gathered by the authorizer during the renewal inspection, public comment provided during the renewal process, and any/all other information that pertains to a charter school's compliance with charter contract provisions.

**The renewal recommendation will present a recommendation for renewal, non-renewal, or renewal with conditions, and will summarize the evidence basis for the recommendation including, but not limited to, relevant evidence from the performance report, the school's renewal application, the renewal visit, and any other relevant performance information.** Schools will have an opportunity to respond; to present testimony and supporting documents at a public meeting; to have legal representation; and to call witnesses. The Authorizer will document all decisions in writing with the reasons for the decision.

RCW 28A.710.190(1) states:

A charter contract may be renewed by the authorizer, at the request of the charter school, for successive five-year terms. The authorizer, however, may vary the term based on the performance, demonstrated capacities, and particular circumstances of a charter school, and may grant renewal with specific conditions for necessary improvements to a charter school.

RCW 28A.710.190(5) states:

In making charter renewal decisions, an authorizer must:

- (a) Base its decisions in evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the performance framework set forth in the charter contract;
- (b) Ensure that data used in making renewal decisions are available to the school and the public; and
- (c) Provide a public report summarizing the evidence basis for its decision.

# CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT EXPLICIT RENEWAL CRITERIA

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Explicit Renewal Criteria Framework	
<b>Academic</b>	<p>Based upon the most current data combined with trend data from the previous three years, charter schools whose Academic Performance Framework scores result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Tier 1 or 2 are presumed to be renewed.</li><li>• A Tier 3 rating, renewal is in question.</li><li>• A Tier 4 rating, non-renewal is presumed.</li></ul>
<b>Organizational</b>	<p>No school or organization is perfect, and the existence of one or more “does not meet” ratings does not, in and of itself, indicate unsatisfactory organizational performance. The Authorizer looks for organizational performance that is predominantly compliant with no areas of repeated non-compliance. Based upon the most current data combined with trend data analysis from life cycle of the current charter contract term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Renewal is presumed if a charter school’s performance meets the established expectations or whose actions demonstrate that remedies regarding deficiencies were successfully implemented.</li><li>• Nonrenewal is presumed if a charter school’s performance does not meet expectation or whose actions did not demonstrate that remedies were implemented regarding identified deficiencies.</li></ul> <p>Where there have been instances of non-compliance, the Authorizer staff will consider the following for their analysis for recommendation to the school board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Severity of the compliance issue and impact on students.</b> For example, violation of health and safety requirements would generally be a more serious issue than the late filing of a report.</li><li>• <b>Number and duration of non-compliance issues.</b> The Authorizer staff will weigh repeated non-compliance more heavily in its overall assessment.</li><li>• <b>Timeliness of the remedy.</b> If the school has remedied the issue promptly on its own initiative or following notification from the Authorizer, the Authorizer staff will weigh the violation less severely than if the school has not remedied the issue promptly.</li><li>• <b>Current status.</b> Although the Authorizer considers the school’s complete performance history relevant and applicable, it will generally weigh recent performance and current compliance status more heavily than past performance.</li></ul>

<b>Financial</b>	<p>Based upon the most current data combined with trend data analysis from life cycle of the current charter contract term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewal is presumed if a charter school's financial performance demonstrates historic and future viability. In other words, a school who has demonstrated an ability to generate sufficient income to meet operating expenses and debt commitments is presumed to be renewed.</li> <li>• Nonrenewal is presumed if a charter school's financial performance demonstrates historic and future financial insolvency. In other words, a school who has demonstrated and/or is projecting an inability to pay its debts is presumed to be nonrenewed.</li> </ul>
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# SCHOOL OVERVIEW

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SCHOOL NAME	Pride Schools Charter School
SCHOOL ADDRESS	811 East Sprague Avenue, Spokane, WA 99202
SCHOOL CONTACT	Paige Albrecht, Chief Executive Officer, <a href="mailto:paige@prideschools.org">paige@prideschools.org</a> , (509) 309-7680
SCHOOL WEBSITE	<a href="http://www.prideschools.org">www.prideschools.org</a>
NEIGHBORHOOD LOCATION	East Central
AREAS SERVED	Spokane and Vicinity
SCHOOL MISSION	The mission of PRIDE Schools is to honor the diversity and capacity of people through innovative education design. Our students are inspired to create, innovate, and challenge the status quo in a world that demands better designed systems, new solutions, and increased communication.
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Pride Prep, serving grades 6-8, allows students to be confronted with real-world problems, hands-on learning, and performance assessments. Our projects offer many entry points for students with varying learning styles and interests, integrate several subjects together at once, are teacher designed, and provide students with an excellent chance to demonstrate critical thinking, artistry, and a deeper understanding of key concepts.</li><li>○ Innovation High School, serving grades 9-12, is structured within an International Baccalaureate framework, offering both MYP and DP program credits. We are passionate about project-based learning, providing experiences for students to thrive, and find belonging. IHS prepares students for a bright future in college, the workforce, and beyond.</li></ul>
GRADES SERVED	6-12
FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION	2015-16
TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT (Oct. 2023)	452

## Enrollment and Demographics

**Figure A – Student FTE by Grade**

Enrollment Data Pride Schools - FTE Average											
School Year:	Data	Grade Level								RS/OD	Total
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
Actuals: 2015-16 (beginning)	Beginning of Year FTE	77	76						-	153.00	
Actuals: 2016-17	FTE Year Average	78.6	78.8	79.2					-	236.60	
Actuals: 2017-18	FTE Year Average	102.3	99.2	98.79	95.66				-	395.95	
Actuals: 2018-19	FTE Year Average	100	103.37	102.46	91.35	93.33			-	490.51	
Actuals: 2019-20	FTE Year Average	95.29	109.25	102.02	86.54	89.56	64.83		17.14	564.63	
Actuals: 2020-21 (all grades)	FTE Year Average	91.2	118.5	138.4	109.1	95.7	79.94	66.9	20.5	720.24	
Actuals: 2021-22	FTE Year Average	78.28	90.3	102	107.2	77.29	73.46	74.3	11.81	614.64	
Actuals: 2022-23	FTE Year Average	55.20	74.90	77.80	65.10	86.04	62.82	68.79	13.70	504.35	
Projection: 2023-24	Sept FTE Count	45.00	50.00	71.00	72.00	65.00	79.35	63.12	15.53	461.00	

**Figure B – Demographics of Student Population 2022-23 School Year**

Pride Schools Enrollment Demographics (Subgroup Counts as of October 2022)				
Gender	% of Enrollment	Special Programs		% of Enrollment
Female	47.0%	Low Income		60.8%
Gender X	0.8%	Homeless		1.9%
Male	53.2%	Military Parent		0.4%
Race/Ethnicity	% of Enrollment	Mobile		5.5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.8%	Section 504		
Asian	1.0%	Students with Disabilities		23.2%
Black/African American	1.9%			
Hispanic/Latino of any race (s)	16.6%			
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	0.4%			
Two or More Races	12.7%			
White	66.7%			

# **RECOMMENDATION**

## **Pride Schools Charter School**

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**FIVE YEAR RENEWAL**

### **Executive Summary**

Pride Schools Charter School was authorized as an independent and autonomous public school under the Washington Charter Schools Act, Chapter 28A.710 RCW, as Pride Prep Charter School. Due to the Supreme Court's decision delaying the operation of charter schools in Washington State, Pride's first full year of operation as a charter school authorized by SPS began in the fall of 2016. Their initial five-year contract was renewed with conditions for an additional three years of operation in the spring of 2021. The short-term conditional renewal was based on academic and financial performance concerns, compounded by the impact of the COVID pandemic. Pride Schools Charter School has met the terms of their conditional renewal and is now eligible for a five-year renewal term. Their current contract will end on June 30, 2024.

Pride Schools serve a diverse population of students from 13 surrounding districts, 60% of whom are low income and 23% are receiving special education services. Pride Schools' Innovation High School is the only public high school in Spokane to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma; they were authorized as an IB World School in September 2019. Pride Prep Middle School serves students in grades six through eight.

Pride Schools Charter School is currently operating with a new management team as of July 2023. The new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was promoted by the board of directors after serving for a year as Pride's Chief Operations Manager. A new Principal was hired in July 2023 to lead the middle and high school programs and the school has maintained a Dean of Students. These changes lowered the number of administrators from four to three. The new leadership team has been effective in decision making and leading the school's stability and improvements. A clear relationship of support and trust between the Board Chair and the CEO was observed during the renewal inspection and board meetings, with increased transparency between the board and management. Continuity of the current leadership team and structure are recommended to support continued improvements and sustainability of the school.

Pride Schools academic performance has been moving in an upward trajectory since the short-term conditional renewal. Washington State Proficiency data, determined by the Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA) grades 6-8 and 10, shows continued academic improvements for Pride Schools for 2021-22 and 2022-23. The academic performance of the school resulted in a Tier 4 overall rating for 2021-22. The Tier 4 rating is mainly due to the school's low Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), in overall and subgroup ratings. SPS determined the 2021-22 Pride Schools WISF data contained errors due to incorrect data reporting of the Graduation Requirements Year (GRY),

effecting on-time graduation dates for 2020-21 and 2021-22 graduating classes. Pride has fully implemented the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) to monitor student academic growth and inform classroom instruction and student intervention as observed in the renewal inspection. The school uses Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support learning pathways for students and has implemented Lexia and Dreambox adaptive learning tools for student intervention in English and Math, respectively.

Pride Schools has consistently met most standards on the Organizational Performance Framework.

The financial performance of the school has improved since the conditional, short-term renewal. For 2021-22, Pride Schools met all but the enrollment variance measure on the financial performance framework. Pride Schools experienced several financial challenges throughout the first four years of operation, but the school has greatly improved upon their financial position. However, the receipt of ESSER Funding played a significant role in this improvement. Along with the other districts in our state, the loss of federal ESSER dollars beginning in the 2024-25 school year may have a significant impact on Pride's financial performance indicators. This, combined with a decrease in enrollment in recent years have created a need to reduce the school's operating budget to better align with funding received. Overall, Pride School's financial position is much better than the prior renewal, however adapting and adjusting to a post ESSER environment is paramount in maintaining the financial sustainability of the district.

Under RCW 28A.710.200 an authorizer may not renew a charter contract if at the time of the renewal the charter school's performance falls in the bottom quartile of schools on the Washington Achievement Index developed by the State Board of Education unless the charter school demonstrates exceptional circumstances that the Authorizer finds justifiable. Pride Schools was notified in their renewal Performance Report (issued August 11, 2023) of their ineligibility for renewal status under RCW 28A.710.200(2), unless they were able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances that the Authorizer finds justifiable. Pride Schools submitted a response to demonstrate exceptional circumstances on September 8, 2023. In this letter, Pride Schools referenced the errors in the 2021-22 WISF data caused by incorrect data reporting of the Graduation Requirements Year (GRY) affecting on-time graduation dates for 2020-21 and 2021-22 graduating classes. In addition, the letter referenced increased student academic growth on NWEA MAP assessments that has since shown up in the school's SBA data for 2022-23, demonstrating improvement in academic achievement. As a result, the Authorizer approved consideration for renewal based on the exceptional circumstance. A renewal application was submitted on October 6, 2023.

Extensive monitoring and increased discussions during the conditional renewal provided an opportunity for Pride Schools to provide additional information to the Authorizer over the past several years. Based on information provided in Pride School's renewal application, renewal inspection, and additional information provided during the renewal process, the Authorizer is recommending a five-year renewal.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## Pride Schools Charter School

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### Explicit Criteria

Based upon the most current data combined with trend data from the previous three years, charter schools whose Academic Performance Framework scores result in:

- A Tier 1 or 2 are presumed to be renewed.
- A Tier 3 rating, renewal is in question.
- A Tier 4 rating, non-renewal is presumed.

### Academic Renewal Recommendation Summary

The academic performance section of this report is based on data from six years of the school's Academic Performance Framework (APF) data, seven years of the school's Washington State Proficiency data, and a renewal inspection of the school.

Pride Schools Academic Performance Framework (APF) is consistent with the requirements of Washington's charter school law. The APF contains measures and metrics for student academic proficiency, student academic growth, achievement gaps, attendance, high school graduation rates and postsecondary readiness, and school-specific measures. Student academic growth is measured by the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), which is made available each spring for the prior school year.

OVERALL ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK SCORE	Original Contract					Conditional Renewal
	YEAR 1: 2016-17 Grades: 6-8	YEAR 2: 2017-18 Grades: 6-9	YEAR 3: 2018-19 Grades: 6-10	YEAR 4: 2019-20 (Not evaluated due to COVID)	YEAR 5: 2020-21 Grades: 6-12	
Tier Level = 4* <small>*Evaluated as Tier 4 due to scoring in the bottom quartile of the Washington State Improvement Framework (WSIF).</small>	Not Available	Not Available	FALLS FAR BELOW STANDARD*	Not Available	Not Available	FALLS FAR BELOW STANDARD*

*\*NOTE: 2021-22 Pride Schools WSIF data contains errors due to incorrect data reporting of the Graduation Requirements Year (GRY), effecting on-time graduation dates for 2020-21 and 2021-22 graduating classes. The error in reporting the graduation year was made in 2018-19. Although Pride Schools has worked with OSPI on how to revise WSIF data, the OSPI system cannot currently update data reported in previous years.*

Pride School's Washington State Proficiency is determined by the Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA) grades 6-8 and 10. Like many schools across the state and country, Pride showed decreases in student proficiency during 2020-21 due to the pandemic. Since this time, Pride Schools academic results show continued increases in 2021-22 and 2022-23. These results indicated Pride Schools academic performance has been moving in an upward trajectory since the short-term conditional renewal.

Pride Schools: Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA)	Original Contract					Conditional Contract		
	Year 1: 2016-17	Year 2: 2017-18	Year 3: 2018-19	Year 4: 2019-20	Year 5: 2020-21	Year 6: 2021-22	Year 7: 2022-23	Year 8: 2023-24
Met ELA Standards	53.3%	52.2%	57.0%	n/a	35.2%	45.7%	54.6%	
Met Math Standards	40.7%	30.4%	30.2%	n/a	15.1%	23.8%	25.0%	

In addition to the school's performance outlined in the school's [Performance Report](#) the SPS Renewal Inspection team focused on several priority areas identified by the school in their renewal application and via leadership discussions. According to the [Renewal Inspection Report](#), "improvements have impacted the school positively, with several Site Visit Team members commenting that it seemed like a different school from the one they visited in the same capacity during the last renewal inspection." Although the renewal inspection report highlighted the need for continued growth in several areas, the new management team was "commended for the positive changes" that have been made.

The first inspection priority was academic interventions for reading and mathematics. There is evidence that student data from NWEA's Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth assessments, combined with classroom pre and post assessments, are used to differentiate instruction and support students in ELA and Mathematics classes. Middle school students set SMART goals based on MAP data and are scheduled into a "Power Hour" class to support student interventions and learning extensions, with direct instruction or utilize adaptive online curriculum using Dreambox for Math support and Lexia for Reading support. Interventions for high school are supported during the daily Crew (advisory) classroom time. High school teachers reported that the school is using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to provide options for all students to utilize supports they might need during classroom instruction, and it was recommended that newer middle school teachers will need additional training to fully implement UDL. Students reported having good access to teachers for academic support and parents shared their students are appropriately pushed academically and supported.

The second inspection priority was student support and social emotional learning (SEL), highlighted in the inspection report as an area of strength for the school. The school has created a positive culture for students and teachers. The school has a long-standing tradition of "houses" at the high school level and newly implemented "Eco Teams" at the middle school level. Students build a sense of school pride during school activities, with many after-school activities being offered for students. Students at all levels were actively complimentary and supportive of each other and found safety and encouragement in their staff relationships. The school is commended for their strong student support model, with the recommendation of continuing to strengthen relationships, student leadership, and culture at the middle level.

The third inspection priority was project-based learning (PBL) for the middle level. Pride started its charter school with a middle school program description that heavily emphasized an integrated PBL approach, but the school has struggled academically. Therefore, leadership made the important decision during 2022-23 to shift the middle level focus towards academic interventions and strengthen core curriculum with the adoption of Springboard and Open Up Math. PBL is currently a focus for only elective classes and the school indicated a "plan to research new options for Project Based Learning ... to ensure we offer high level instruction while offering a hands-on approach to learning" in their renewal Application. It was recommended that the school review and potentially revise the middle school educational program description, which is planned for spring 2024 according to the school's response to the inspection report.

The fourth inspection priority was college and career readiness for the high school level. The school brings post-secondary experiences to students for a range of college and technical fields, providing a course of study that prepares students to be college and career ready. Dual credit options include the International Bachelorette (IB) Diploma Program (DP) classes for 11th and 12th grade, Advanced Placement (AP) classes at all grade levels, and a few college in the high school classes via Eastern Washington University and University of Washington. The high school teacher community has low turnover, with teachers knowledgeable about their content and ability to leverage student relationships to help students engage in rigorous content. Pride students explore college and technical school post-secondary options via college and career fairs, college visits, speakers, and career exploration lessons.

The fifth inspection priority was special education. The school inspection report highlights “the school is meeting the needs of students identified with disabilities through the evidence of the service model and through observation of special education and other teachers accommodating, modifying and providing specially designed instruction in classrooms.” The small school and classroom environment helps the school accommodate students' educational and emotional needs. The school's inclusion model is supported with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) instructional model, which could be better reinforced with additional training for newer teachers. Special education documentation was complete and special education teachers knowledgeable about required documents, procedures, and data driven goal writing and monitoring. The school is commended for significant special education improvements since the prior renewal inspection and for attempting to resolve discipline issues for special education students without exclusion from school.

In support of academic improvements, the Pride Schools charter school leadership team has prioritized new curriculum adoptions and academic interventions over the past year. Administrators have developed new community building activities at the middle school level and have a well-established high school community culture that continues. With several new middle school teachers, continued professional development for newly adopted curriculum, interventions, and UDL will be key. High special education enrollment levels continue to be an area of focus, with teachers using a push-in model and learning about Universal Design for Learning (UDL) annually over the past several years. While the academic growth data is limited and what is available is mixed, multiple signs point to strong foundational elements that given additional time to mature are likely to result in continued academic growth for the students as Pride Schools.

# ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

## Pride Schools Charter School

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### Explicit Criteria

No school or organization is perfect, and the existence of one or more “does not meet” ratings does not, in and of itself, indicate unsatisfactory organizational performance. The Authorizer looks for organizational performance that is predominantly compliant with no areas of repeated non-compliance. Based upon the most current data combined with trend data analysis from life cycle of the current charter contract term:

- Renewal is presumed if a charter school’s performance meets the established expectations or whose actions demonstrate that remedies regarding deficiencies were successfully implemented.
- Nonrenewal is presumed if a charter school’s whose performance does not meet expectation or whose actions did not demonstrate that remedies were implemented regarding identified deficiencies.

Where there have been instances of non-compliance, the Authorizer staff will consider the following for their analysis for recommendation to the school board:

- **Severity of the compliance issue and impact on students.** For example, violation of health and safety requirements would generally be a more serious issue than the late filing of a report.
- **Number and duration of non-compliance issues.** The Authorizer staff will weigh repeated non-compliance more heavily in its overall assessment.
- **Timeliness of the remedy.** If the school has remedied the issue promptly on its own initiative or following notification from the Authorizer, the Authorizer staff will weigh the violation less severely than if the school has not remedied the issue promptly.
- **Current status.** Although the Authorizer considers the school’s complete performance history relevant and applicable, it will generally weigh recent performance and current compliance status more heavily than past performance.

### Organizational Renewal Recommendation Summary

As mentioned in the Executive Summary, Pride Schools has consistently met most standards on the Organizational Performance Framework. The school’s organizational performance is based on the standards and targets established in the Organizational Performance Framework (OPF) consistent with the requirements of Washington’s charter school law. Organizational performance is a review of many data sources, included but not limited to the state auditor’s accountability audit, site visits, quality school reviews, compliance calendar submissions, board meeting observations, corrective actions, complaints, OSPI reports regarding special education and programs compliance, and other areas indicating fulfillment of legal requirements, fiduciary, and public stewardship responsibilities. These measures are relevant to the school’s organizational health and performance.

The sixth renewal inspection priority was governance and management. In addition to a new CEO, a new Principal was hired in July 2023 to lead the middle and high school programs, lowering the number of administrators from four to three. Over the 2022-23 school year, several board members transitioned off the board and new members were added with expertise in human resources and

finance. The board shared during the renewal inspection that they continue to look for new members and are specifically looking to recruit a board member with educational leadership experience. Over the past year, the board has reviewed internal controls, regularly engaged in enrollment efforts, and the new CEO has increased oversight of the school's financial management contractor.

The new leadership team has been effective in decision making and leading the school's stability and improvements. A clear relationship of support and trust between the Board Chair and the CEO was observed during the renewal inspection and board meetings, with increased transparency between the board and management. Continuity of the current leadership team and structure are recommended to support continued improvements and sustainability of the school.

The seventh renewal inspection priority was finance, enrollment, and office operations, with enrollment and office operations covering organizational items. During the renewal inspection, the Site Visit Team asked questions about enrollment, attendance, transportation, health, and safety, as well as finance areas of budget, expenditure tracking, accounts payable, payroll, credit cards, and cash receipts. According to the report, "these areas have improved substantially since the prior renewal inspection site visit and especially under the leadership of the Chief Operations Manager during 2022-23." Internal controls have been reassessed and there is a clear focus on maintaining sound internal control practices.

Since the prior renewal inspection, the office staff have developed confidence and understanding of their duties and responsibilities. Because of reporting errors leading to multiple discrepancies on the data presented within the Washington School Improvement Framework for the 2021-22 school year, the CEO has worked to prevent similar errors in the future and is taking a much more active role in the goal of improving accuracy of reporting. Pride's attendance committee meets regularly on improving student attendance, with internal 2022-23 attendance data from the school showing 82% student attendance rate. Attendance data for 2021-22 is reported as 38.2% by OSPI, so preliminary internal data showing a significant increase in students coming to school is promising for improvements in this indicator for the future.

The eighth renewal inspection priority was the organizational performance framework items. According to the renewal inspection report, the district's operational staff are diligently following compliance requirements when it comes to the items referenced in the organizational performance framework.

# **FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

## **Pride Schools Charter School**

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### **Explicit Criteria**

Based upon the most current data combined with trend data analysis from life cycle of the current charter contract term:

- Renewal is presumed if a charter school's financial performance demonstrates historic and future viability. In other words, a school who has demonstrated an ability to generate sufficient income to meet operating expenses and debt commitments is presumed to be renewed.
- Nonrenewal is presumed if a charter school's financial performance demonstrates historic and future financial insolvency. In other words, a school who has demonstrated and/or is projecting an inability to pay its debts is presumed to be nonrenewed.

### **Financial Renewal Recommendation Summary**

The financial performance section of this report is based on the standards and targets established in the Financial Performance Framework (FPF) consistent with the requirements of Washington's charter school law. Financial near-term measures include current ratio, unrestricted days on hand, enrollment variance, and debt default. Sustainability measures include total margin, debt to asset ratio, cash flow, and debt service cover ration. These measures provide an overview of the school's financial health and sustainability.

The financial performance of the school has improved since the conditional, short-term renewal that was due, in part, to the financial concerns of the Authorizer. Pride Schools experienced several financial challenges throughout the first four years of operation, but the school has greatly improved upon their financial position. However, the receipt of ESSER Funding played a significant role in this improvement. Along with the other districts in our state, the loss of federal ESSER dollars beginning in the 2024-25 school year may have a significant impact on Pride's financial performance indicators. This, combined with a decrease in enrollment in recent years have created a need to reduce the school's operating budget to better align with funding received. Overall, Pride School's financial position is much better than the prior renewal, however adapting and adjusting to a post ESSER environment is paramount in maintaining the financial sustainability of the district.

The seventh renewal inspection priority was finance, enrollment, and office operations, with enrollment and office operations covering organizational items. During the renewal inspection, the Site Visit Team asked questions about enrollment, attendance, transportation, health, and safety, as well as finance areas of budget, expenditure tracking, accounts payable, payroll, credit cards, and cash receipts. Internal controls have been reassessed and there is a clear focus on maintaining sound internal control practices. According to the inspection report, Pride's budget is developed by Joule Growth Partners (JGP), reviewed by Management and the Board, and is alignment with the district's strategic plan. It is crucial that Pride Schools continues to focus on financial sustainability by appropriately budgeting and reducing operating costs to adapt to the unique challenges that have surfaced in the post pandemic environment. The financial framework metrics will continue to be closely reviewed as these factors continue to play a role in the financial sustainability of the charter school.