

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Charter Actions Requiring a Vote

- Approve a Charter Application
- Approve a Charter Renewal (15 yrs.)
- Approve Charter Continuance (5 or 10 yrs.)
- Approve a Charter Amendment Request
- Approve a Charter Agreement
- Give a Charter Notice of Concern
- Lift the Charter Notice of Concern
- Commence Charter Revocation Proceedings
- Revoke a Charter
- Board Action, Other _____

Non-Voting Board Items

- Public Hearing Item
- Discussion Item
- Read into Record

Policies

- Open a New Policy or Changes to a Policy for Public Comment
- Approve a New Policy
- Approve Revisions to an Existing Policy

PREPARED BY: Teri Quinn, Senior Manager, School Quality and Accountability

SUBJECT: Charter Amendment: Washington Latin Public Charter School

- Program Replication
- Enrollment Ceiling Increase

DATE: July 15, 2019

The following proposal was open for public comment from April 12, 2019 until May 20, 2019, and the DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) held a public hearing on May 20, 2019. DC PCSB received thirteen public comments, of which eleven were in support of Washington Latin Public Charter School's (Washington Latin PCS) request to expand, and two were opposed to the school's proposal. Attachment B contains a summary of these comments, and each submission can be found [here](#).

Recommendation

DC PCSB staff recommends that the Board approve Washington Latin PCS's charter agreement amendment request with conditions as described below and approve DC PCSB Board Chair Rick Cruz to sign the amendment on the Board's behalf.

Per DC PCSB's [Enrollment Ceiling Increase Policy](#), if a school "meets items A-C and misses no more than two applicable indicators below for PK-12," the Board shall "Consider [the] Application and, pending analysis, recommend Approval with Conditions or Denial." Washington Latin PCS misses one indicator; a full assessment of the school's performance under the policy's standard for approval can be found

later in this memo. Therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

- 1) The school will actively consider admitting students in grades 10, 11, and 12, engaging its faculty, board, parents, and students in the decision. The school will report the results of this decision to DC PCSB by March 1, 2020.
- 2) The school will not permit its sibling preference to be used across its two campuses. This change will be memorialized in the school's charter agreement as follows:

If the school chooses to adopt a sibling preference, such preference shall not apply to siblings attending different campuses of the school.

- 3) The school will update its student discipline policy, reserving out-of-school suspensions for only the most serious situations. An updated draft of the policy, which will include these modifications, will be voted on by the school's board at its August 2019 meeting to go into effect for the 2019-20 school year.
- 4) The school will ensure that each faculty member whose job responsibilities include interfacing with students at least 25% of the time will participate in comprehensive training in trauma-informed practices during the 2019-20 school year.
- 5) The school will add stops or provide separate vans/buses for students living in Wards 5 and 7 whose families request such service, provided there are a minimum of five such students. No fee will be charged to families whose children qualify for free or reduced-price meals.
- 6) The school will implement the plans outlined in its letter to DC PCSB from June 7, 2019, found at Attachment C, including:
 - a. Targeted recruitment of lower-income students,
 - b. Redesign and test at-risk support strategies,
 - c. Strengthen the RTI (Response to Intervention) Model,
 - d. Hire an At-Risk program manager, and
 - e. Expand the reach of restorative discipline and trauma-informed initiatives.
- 7) The school will be eligible for charter renewal in school year 2020-21. If the school's charter is renewed, it will need to negotiate a new charter agreement with DC PCSB. Provided the charter is renewed, should the DC PCSB Board determine, at the time of the renewal decision, that the school has failed to make satisfactory progress in addressing disproportionality in the use of exclusionary discipline, the number of at-risk students served, and/or the

performance of historically underperforming subgroups, the new charter agreement shall contain a mission-specific goal or goals to hold the school accountable in the remaining areas of concern.

- 8) Finally, due to an oversight, the location of the school's existing campus at 5200 Second Street NW is not currently listed in the school's charter agreement. Therefore, the charter amendment will include this corrected location.

Proposal

Washington Latin PCS submitted a charter agreement amendment request for two amendments—an enrollment ceiling increase and a program replication to open a second two-campus facility in school year (SY) 2020-21 that includes a middle school (grades 5-8) and high school (grades 9-12).

If approved, Washington Latin PCS will open the new location in SY 2020-21 with grades 5-6, to educate approximately 95 students in each grade. Thereafter, the school will add a new grade level each school year until it reaches maturation in SY 2026-27, serving approximately 720-730 students in grades 5-12 at this new location. In order to accomplish this replication, Washington Latin PCS seeks to increase its maximum enrollment ceiling from 784 students to 1,490 students in SY 2026-27.

Rationale

Washington Latin PCS is a multi-campus local education agency (LEA) that currently operates a middle school and high school campus within a single shared facility in Ward 4. Both the middle and high school campuses are high performing Tier 1 schools that have consistently outperformed the charter sector average over the past several years. On average, Washington Latin PCS only has capacity to accept between 120 and 130 new students each year, although its waitlists often exceed 1,000 students seeking to enroll in the middle school, and over 400 students for the high school. Due to increasing demand for its high-quality programs, Washington Latin PCS seeks to increase its enrollment ceiling and replicate its model to open a new 5-12 school in SY 2020-21 that will provide an opportunity for more students in the District to attend a high-performing middle and high school.

Below is a detailed summary for each of Washington Latin PCS's amendment requests, along with DC PCSB staff's assessment of the proposal.

Program Replication

Washington Latin PCS seeks to replicate its existing Tier 1 classical education school with a new two-campus middle and high school in a location that has not yet been determined. The school's mission is:

The Washington Latin School is a 5-12 college preparatory school offering a vigorous program of arts and sciences within an environment that encourages serious scholarship, independence of thought and clarity of expression.

Since June 2018, Washington Latin PCS has engaged current faculty, parents, and community leaders to inform them of the school's impending plans to expand. By SY 2026-27, the school expects to achieve several key outcomes, including creating space to educate over 700 additional students to ensure more DC students graduate high school prepared for college and careers. Washington Latin PCS is committed to narrowing the performance gaps between students of different racial and economic backgrounds, and the school aims to give back and support the community by developing graduates who become thoughtful contributors in their communities.

To ensure the proposed new school maintains the same high-quality performance as the LEA's existing campuses, Washington Latin PCS intends to use SY 2019-20 as a planning year to hire founding staff for the new school, so these individuals may participate in extensive onboarding for a full school year to learn from existing Washington Latin PCS staff. The school also plans to open slowly, with grades 5 and 6 in year one, and add one grade each year until it reaches maturation in SY 2026-27. The new school's size will be the same as the existing location, with approximately 730 students in grades 5-12 in total.

To further ensure quality, once the new school opens in SY 2020-21, Washington Latin PCS plans to have a combination of centralized staff that maintain operations across both campuses, in addition to autonomous staff that work directly at each school for academic leadership and execution. Furthermore, Washington Latin PCS is considering the possibility for both schools to participate in joint professional development opportunities over time.

While the school has not yet identified a proposed location for this replication, Washington Latin PCS states it will strongly consider a location where there is a "quality gap," and the school is committed to finding a location that will support its commitment to a diverse student body.

Enrollment Ceiling Increase

Washington Latin PCS currently educates approximately 696 students in grades 5-12 across two campuses that share a single facility in Ward 4. To accommodate the proposed program replication, Washington Latin PCS seeks an initial enrollment ceiling increase of 151 students in SY 2020-21 with an incremental annual enrollment ceiling increase each year until both locations are at maturation in SY 2026-27.

The table below shows Washington Latin PCS's current enrollment authorization compared to its proposed authorization.

School Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27 Maximum
Authorized Ceiling	784	784	784	784	784	784	784	784
Proposed Ceiling	784	935	1,030	1,125	1,220	1,310	1,400	1,490
Difference	0	+151	+246	+341	+436	+526	+616	+706
Grades Served at Location 2	NA	5-6	5-7	5-8	5-9	5-10	5-11	5-12

Enrollment Ceiling Increase Standard for Approval

Per the [Enrollment Ceiling Increase Policy](#), all schools that wish to be considered for an enrollment ceiling increase must demonstrate the following:

- A) Performance:
 - i. Tier 1 for single campus local education agencies (LEAs) with a single Performance Management Framework (PMF) that use the PK-8 or HS PMF¹
 - ii. Tier 1 for adult education schools
 - iii. For multiple campus LEAs or campuses with two PMFs under the PK-8 and/or HS framework(s): Tier 1 on at least 2/3 of campuses, AND an overall PMF average of 50% or more over the past three years, AND no campus can be below 45%
 - iv. For Alternative Accountability schools: meet 100% of academic charter goals (student achievement and student progress), AND meet 100% of all school environment/ student engagement goals.

¹ For Indicator A, the school must meet the criteria based on the most recent PMF or goals assessment from the previous school year.

B) A compelling case that there is demand for the expansion. The description of the scope, pace, and need for the enrollment ceiling increase reflects knowledge of the current demographic and growth projections of the city, found [here](#).² Note that DC PCSB does not consider school financial issues as a need.

C) Evidence that the school has engaged and responded to community stakeholders, including families and school staff. If a new facility has already been identified or the expansion will be accommodated in the school's current facility, the school has demonstrated engagement with neighbors and any impacted advisory neighborhood commission (ANC).

Minimum Criteria	Meets Criteria? <i>Yes or No</i>	Evaluation
A. Performance/ School Quality Report	Yes	Both Washington Latin PCS campuses are Tier 1 schools per the 2018 School Quality Report. The LEA's middle school earned a score of 72.2% on the most recent Performance Management Framework (PMF), and the high school earned a score of 93.4%. Additionally, the LEA's three-year average PMF score is 84%, well above the required 50%
B. Compelling Case for Demand	Yes	As an LEA, Washington Latin PCS currently has 1,755 students on its waitlists for its middle and high school programs. The school reports that it accepts between 120 and 130 new students each year in grades 5-9. The LEA has a re-enrollment rate annually of above 95% for its middle and high schools, leaving few opportunities for students to enroll after 5 th grade. Thus, this amendment will allow the school to enroll more DC students who are seeking a high quality middle and high school education.

² Analysis on Charter Programs, Need, and Growth: <http://www.dcpsb.org/file/charter-programs-need-and-growth>.

Minimum Criteria	Meets Criteria? <i>Yes or No</i>	Evaluation
C. Evidence of Community Engagement	Yes	As part of its charter agreement amendment application, Washington Latin PCS provided a detailed summary of its “stakeholder engagement” efforts, which have included the distribution of mass emails to faculty and parents, monthly “Chat and Chew” sessions with families, a meeting with DC Councilmember Brandon Todd on 9/5/18, and a meeting with the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) on 3/20/19. Additional details about the school’s community engagement efforts is summarized in the “Notification” section below.

If a school satisfies all three items above, staff will recommend approval if a school also demonstrates achievement in all applicable indicators below:

1. Has been in operation for at least three years;
2. Maintains an audited enrollment within 90% of its projected enrollment for the past two years;
3. Has a re-enrollment rate of at least 85%;
4. Undergoes a clean Financial Audit Review (now called the Financial Analysis Review), in which the most recent audit findings may not be “Require Additional Monitoring;”
5. Has not received any Notices of Concern within the past six months;
6. Has not received any “Not Compliant” ratings on its most recent Compliance Review report;
7. Is fully accredited (*If beyond year nine of operation*);
8. Performs at or above the city average on the state assessment for historically underperforming subgroups, *or* must have a median growth percentile (MGP) score at or above the city average;
9. Has rates of exclusionary disciplinary for out-of-school suspension (OSS) that are not outliers for the overall student population, at-risk students and students with disabilities; and
10. Has rates of exclusionary discipline using out-of-school suspension at the LEA level for at-risk students or students with disabilities that are not triple the rate of their non-subgroup peers for the previous school year. (Note: This flag is lifted if the rate is at or below the sector average for that subgroup.)

As elaborated in the table below, Washington Latin PCS meets **9 of 10** applicable criteria.

Additional Indicators	Meets Criteria? <i>Yes or No</i>	Evaluation
1. Years of Operation	Yes	Washington Latin PCS is in its thirteenth year of operation. The school will be up for its fifteen-year charter renewal in SY 2020-21.
2. Enrollment Projections	Yes	Washington Latin PCS has met its enrollment projections within 90.0% of the target in the past two years (SY 2017-18 and SY 2018-19).
3. Re-enrollment Rate	Yes	In SY 2017-18, Washington Latin PCS's middle and high school campuses respectively had a re-enrollment rate of 97.8% and 98.0%, both well over the required 85.0%. In fact, over the past four years, both Washington Latin PCS campuses' re-enrollment rates have consistently exceeded 95.0% each year.
4. Financial Audit	Yes	Per DC PCSB's most recent Financial Analysis Review (FAR), the LEA's audit did not yield a finding of "Requires Additional Monitoring." Additional details regarding the school's finances are in the "Financial Assessment" section below.
5. Status of Corrective Action	Yes	Washington Latin PCS is not under corrective action, and the school has not received a notice of concern in the past six months.
6. Compliance	Yes	The school is fully compliant on all indicators in the school's most recent Compliance Review report.
7. Accreditation	Yes	Washington Latin PCS is accredited by AdvancED until June 30, 2023.
8. Subgroup Performance	Yes	Of the four subgroups that were assessed, Washington Latin PCS met the criteria for all four in both English Language Arts and math. The LEA had fewer than 25 Active or Monitored English Learner students in its assessed population, and therefore could not be evaluated for that subgroup.
9. Exclusionary Discipline	Yes	Neither Washington Latin PCS campus was an outlier for exclusionary discipline in SY 2017-18.
10. Disproportionality in Use of Exclusionary Discipline	No	As an LEA, Washington Latin PCS demonstrated disproportionate suspension rates among Students with Disabilities (SWD) and At-Risk students in SY 2017-18. The LEA's suspension rate for SWD was 23.4%, more than triple the rate among their General Education students (6.8%) and above the charter sector SWD suspension rate (15.0%). The LEA's At-Risk suspension rate was 26.6%, more than triple the rate among non-At-Risk students (6.8%) and above the charter sector At-Risk suspension rate (10.4%).

A school may miss up to two of the ten indicators to be considered by the Board for an enrollment ceiling increase with conditions. In this case, the school met all but one indicator, on disproportionality in exclusionary discipline. Accordingly, DC PCSB staff recommends approval with the conditions described at the beginning of this memo.

DC PCSB Staff Financial Assessment

In fiscal year (FY) 2018, Washington Latin PCS produced an operating surplus of \$735K, which yielded an aggregated three-year margin of 6.7%. The school did not present a liquidity concern with a current ratio of 9.4 and 103 days of cash on hand. The school's total net assets for the year in FY 2018 were \$8.9M, and the school's financial leverage improved from FY 2017, with a debt ratio of 0.68, indicating that approximately 68% of the school's total assets were financed using debt. Given these findings, Washington Latin PCS's proposed five-year budget for this expansion projects a reasonable growth plan, and sufficient resources to support this growth.

Notification and Community Engagement

On April 5, 2019, Washington Latin PCS submitted its charter agreement amendment application to request a program replication and enrollment ceiling increase. Per the school's application, Washington Latin PCS has conducted extensive stakeholder engagement dating back to June 2018 to inform its faculty, parents, and community leaders of the school's impending plans to expand. Some examples of the school's outreach include one-on-one meetings with key faculty, "chat and chew" events with parents, conducting faculty and student focus groups, meeting with city council members and the local ANC, and sending out mass email communications to provide updates throughout the planning process of the proposed amendment. A copy of the school's Stakeholder Engagement summary may be found on page 14 of the school's application, available here:

<https://dcpcsb.egnyte.com/dl/5YEFaT43I>.

On April 12, 2019, DC PCSB staff notified ANC Commissioner Joseph L. Bowser (4D07) of the school's request. DC PCSB also posted a notice on its website on April 12, 2019, stating it would entertain public comment until May 20, 2019. Copies of these public notices in their entirety may be found here: <http://bit.ly/2URGiHe>.

Community Response

In response to the school's proposal to expand, Washington Latin PCS received thirteen public comments—eleven in support of the school's request, and two that were opposed. The comments that support the school's proposal were primarily submitted by existing school staff and parents of Washington Latin PCS students.

The school's Board of Governors submitted a single letter electronically signed by its board members to request approval for this amendment given their enthusiasm to expand the school's classical program and serve more students in DC. The two comments that opposed the school's proposal were submitted by concerned DC residents who believe that there is limited need for another high school in DC, and that there is currently too much school choice, which is impacting the ability of neighborhood schools to maintain full enrollment.

A summary of the public comments may be found at Attachment B, and copies of the public comments in their entirety may be found here:

<https://dcpcsb.egnyte.com/fl/7hNNuthhBB>.

Response from Washington Latin PCS

In response to the Board's questions during Washington Latin PCS's public hearing on May 20, 2019, regarding the school's limited at-risk population, the school submitted additional information to DC PCSB to address the Board's concerns.

In a letter dated June 13, 2019, the school expresses its commitment "to serve a diverse student body, representing all parts of Washington, DC." Further, the school states it is seeking creative approaches to address its challenges with recruiting a more diverse student body. The school's board has discussed the possibility of developing an at-risk preference, and Washington Latin PCS is open to taking part in future dialogue about this matter with other DC charter schools to develop collaborative solutions. A copy of the letter may be found at Attachment C.

The school also provided a PowerPoint presentation to be submitted into the record that provides further detail around the school's service to at-risk and other subgroups, including 1) the school's recruitment strategy, 2) the school's approach to discipline and its use of tutors with students suspended for over two days, and 3) the school's success with improving performance for students with disabilities and its plans to adapt that approach to recruiting and educating at-risk students. A copy of the presentation may be found at Attachment D.

Attachments to this Proposal:

Attachment A: Charter Agreement Amendment Application

Attachment B: Public Comments

Attachment C: Letter from Washington Latin PCS to DC PCSB dated June 13, 2019

Attachment D: Presentation from Washington Latin PCS

Attachment E: Charter Agreement Amendment (provided prior to vote)

Date: _____
DC PCSB Action: ____Approved ____Approved with Changes ____Rejected
Changes to the Original Proposal:

Attachment A

Washington Latin PCS Charter Amendment Application

A copy of the school's charter amendment application in its entirety may be found at the following link: <https://dcpcsb.egnyte.com/dl/5YEFaT43I>.

Attachment B

Public Comments on Washington Latin PCS Expansion Request

To view supporting documents in their entirety, go here:

<https://dcpcsb.egnyte.com/fl/Z83YESb4RN>. This [folder](#) contains all of the submitted comments for Washington Latin PCS’s expansion request.

Public Comment:

In Support	Summary of Comment
<p>Washington Latin PCS Board of Governors: (1 Letter of Support)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ann Elizabeth Lovett, President 2. Chris B. Wilkinson, Vice President 3. Tim Morgan, Treasurer 4. Kimberly Cole, Secretary 5. Laurie Ballenger 6. Barry Caldwell 7. Christina Culver 8. Ragini Dalal 9. Maria Demeke 10. Alyse Graham 11. Rusty Greiff 12. Patrick Mara 13. Georganne Matthews Hunter Rawlings 	<p>The Washington Latin PCS Board of Governors submitted a single letter in support of the school’s request to expand, stating their eagerness to open a new school in Fall 2020. The school’s board noted that they first began talks in 2014 about the possibility of expanding Washington Latin PCS’s program. In the letter they state, “Our work planning for growth has always been and will continue to be a collaborative process between school leadership and the Board . . . It is our hope that the next campus of Latin will share the same sense of mission, purpose, and community that we have at our current campus and that we, as members of the Board of Governors, find so inspiring in our work with the school.”</p>
<p>Washington Latin PCS Families and Community Members: (5 Support)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helene Fisher 2. Donielle Stokes 3. Jennifer Thorpe-Lewis 4. Patrick Mara 5. Yolandra A. Plummer Diallo 	<p>This group represents prospective families and current parents of Washington Latin PCS students, who fully support the school’s proposal to expand. In addition to creating an opportunity for more students across the city to benefit from the school’s program, they mentioned the following positive attributes of the school as reasons to allow the school to open another site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dedicated teachers 2. Diverse student population 3. High academic performance

In Support	Summary of Comment
<p>Washington Latin PCS Staff: (4 Support)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Caroline Coleman 2. Martita Fleming 3. Joyce Hamd 4. Cheryl Haywood 	<p>This group of staff at Washington Latin PCS, some of whom are also parents of existing Latin students, provided written and in-person comments to express their support for Washington Latin PCS's request to expand, citing the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive school culture 2. Supportive environment for teachers 3. Rigorous academic program for students
Opposed	Summary of Comment
<p>DC Residents (2 Opposed)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Valerie Jablow and William Horne 2. Suzanne Wells 	<p>These Ward 6 DC residents acknowledged the success of Washington Latin PCS and its high-performing program based on feedback they have received from their neighbors. However, they submitted comments to oppose the school's expansion request due to the factors listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Too much choice in DC has created competition for neighborhood schools to maintain full enrollment and sufficient staffing. 2. Given the competition created by school choice, this sometimes has a negative impact on students' ability to build and maintain friendships with so much students movement to different schools year after year. 3. Per the Deputy Mayor for Education's recent analysis, there is no need for a new high school because there are currently about 5,277 unfilled high school seats in the District. 4. The demographics of Washington Latin PCS include more affluent and white families which is not representative of DC as a whole, and attributes to the school's higher academic performance.