



Spokane Public Schools
excellence for everyone

**College-Ready Collaboration Compact
Between Spokane Public Schools and
PRIDE Prep Charter School**

I. Background and Overview of Spokane Public Schools

A. District Overview

Spokane Public Schools is the largest school district in eastern Washington and the second largest in the state. We aim to keep our students engaged in school, on track for graduation, and prepared for college and career without need for remediation. To do this, we offer several alternative programs, from Montessori and parent participation programs, to gifted classes and programs for at-risk students. In addition to our 34 Elementary, 6 Middle and 6 High Schools, Spokane offers several other school options that support different ways of learning.

The diverse population at SPS includes 29,275 students with 1,314 ELL students speaking 56 different languages; approximately 30% are children of color, and almost 60% of students who qualify for federal free/reduced price meals¹. Of our 3,226 employees, 1,758 are classroom teachers, who have an average of 13 years' experience. Roughly 74 percent have at least a Master's degree.

SPS is fortunate to have consistent community support, including dozens of partnerships with businesses and non-profit organizations. Voters traditionally approve levies, which fund nearly one-quarter of the district's budget. And in 2009, voters approved a \$288 million bond to continue facilities and technology improvement throughout the district. Construction projects through 2015 include the renovation of four elementary schools, one high school and a middle school gym; safety and technology upgrades and maintenance upgrades district-wide.

B. District Goal: T-2-4

Grounded in the vision of "Excellence for Everyone" Spokane has set a goal for itself to prepare students to successfully complete some form of higher education: technical, 2-year or 4-year. Spokane Public Schools believes that a great school system:

- Builds on the strengths and gifts of each child, ☐
- Provides students from poverty the same opportunities for success after high school as students from non-poverty homes, ☐
- Instills in every student the belief that they can achieve more than they think possible, and ☐
- Assures that every adult in the system is committed to the successful completion of some form of higher education for every child. ☐☐

¹<http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?groupLevel=District&schoolId=230&reportLevel=District&orgLinkId=230&yrs=&year=2012-13>

We have moved the finish line past graduation to help ensure our students are **ready**, that they get **in**, and then make it **through** their choice of higher education. ☑

C. Role of Charter Schools in Spokane Public Schools

Spokane Public Schools became a charter school authorizer so that it could actively cultivate charter schools that align to SPS' vision statement of *Excellence for Everyone* by closing the achievement gap, serving all students, and ensuring that all students are prepared for a variety of post-secondary pursuits. As the first school district approved to authorize charter schools in Washington, SPS takes seriously the opportunity and responsibility to serve as a model of effective charter authorizer practices and effective district-charter collaboration. As part of these goals, SPS is implementing a portfolio strategy as a continuous improvement model for SPS to dramatically affect student outcomes at scale. The objectives of the SPS portfolio strategy² are to create diverse options for families, particularly those in disadvantaged neighborhoods, by opening new high-performing, autonomous schools; increasing schools' programming options; give charter schools autonomy, including control of budgeting and hiring; actively facilitate collaboration and exchange across schools and governance models; and hold schools accountable to common performance standards. SPS' authorization of and collaboration with charter schools is an important step in the implementation of this strategy.

II. Shared Values/Guiding Principles:

A. High Quality Choices.

In order to serve *all* students, SPS seeks to offer a variety of high-quality choices that allow families to meet student needs and aspirations. Within SPS today there exists a strong foundation of school choices. However, the SPS community has indicated a clear desire to expand the choices currently available and to ensure that all available school choices set high expectations for students. Public charter schools are a strategy for meeting this demand for more high-quality choices in a way that complements the current portfolio of options within SPS.

In addition to providing more choices, public charter schools can serve as a nimble arm for introducing new innovations into SPS³, particularly those designed to match learning experiences for teachers and students with learning styles and interests.

² SPS is working closely with the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington to implement the 7 Components of a Portfolio Strategy. See: <http://www.crpe.org/portfolio>

³ SPS is inspired by the work of Vijay Govindarajan, a professor from Dartmouth College. While most of Professor Vijay's research and work centers on businesses and business innovation, the ideas are still applicable to education. Specifically, in his research, he discusses the need for organizations to innovate and the ideal conditions that allow innovation to exist.

B. Beliefs and Values:

As SPS expands its portfolio of choice options to address these community priorities, it embraces the following beliefs and values:

- All students are *our students*, regardless of whether they are served in a district-run, charter school, or some other governance or operational model
- Charter schools should have the autonomy to innovate and the relationships with SPS to share that innovation
- Best practices should be shared quickly and widely across district-run and charter schools
- We all improve when we challenge each other to do better
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III. Joint Efforts

The signatories to this document will make a good faith effort to address the following:

A. Creating diverse options for families

- Attempting to develop and implement a common enrollment process district-wide
- Pursuing the feasibility of providing or facilitating transportation for students to their school of choice
- Providing methods for making students and families aware of the school choices available to them and how they can access them, as demonstrated by enrollment of students in charter schools that reflects the overall demographics of SPS students
- Addressing enrollment preferences at all SPS schools (e.g. siblings)
- Providing high-quality school choices in all SPS neighborhoods

B. Increasing schools' programming options

- Encouraging the development and replication of school models, providers and leaders with a demonstrated ability to facilitate strong outcomes for students

C. Charter school autonomy

- Making efforts to help charter schools receive services and resources available to serve all students including students with disabilities, low-income and minority students

D. Facilitating collaboration and exchange across different schools and governance models;

- At least annually, making efforts to identify specific challenges that are of importance to SPS and charter schools, and that will be the focus of substantive collaboration for the Compact. During the first year of the Compact, this will include efforts to develop and implement a common enrollment system;

- Endeavoring to maintain a “no surprises” policy that encourages open and transparent communications about success, failure, unexpected crises, and parent/community issues;
- Facilitating access to professional development and learning opportunities, and identifying opportunities for jointly developed professional learning;
- Developing on an annual basis a joint set of policy recommendations and advocacy strategies to support SPS’ vision for public school choice, including charter schools;
- Jointly seek funding to support the goals and activities of this Compact, including initially any funds to address the initial costs of addressing a possible district-wide common enrollment system;
- Forming a Portfolio Committee or other structure to quickly anticipate, identify and recommend solutions to address issues and opportunities between charter schools and SPS schools and administration;
- Identifying key milestones and metrics for measuring progress under this Compact; and
- In future years, reviewing and revising their charter and district-run schools’ shared and respective commitments to ensure they are advancing the goals and values set forth above.

E. Holding schools accountable to common performance standards.

- Developing consistent policies and procedures regarding the expulsion and disenrollment of students;
- Ensuring that high-quality school choices are available to all students by making efforts to provide them with services and resources for serving all students including students with disabilities, low-income and minority students; and
- Developing and implementing a common School Performance Framework to measure the performance of all SPS schools and charter schools.

F. Meetings and Monitoring.

Convening regular meetings of the signatories, monitoring and validating District and charter performance, modifying this document as desired, and publishing annual reports regarding progress in meeting the goals of the Compact and challenges in implementation.

IV. Spokane Public Schools Efforts

In addition to the Joint Efforts articulated above, SPS will make a good faith effort to address the following:

A. Creating diverse options for families

- Actively attracting and/or developing high-performing leaders for charter schools (for example, sponsoring a current or aspiring school leader to spend time in

residence at one or more charter management networks with a demonstrated ability to facilitate high student outcomes)

- Making unused or newly constructed school facilities located in geographic regions with persistently low-performing schools available to charter schools at or below fair market value. Access could be conditioned upon a demonstration by the charter school of a plan that is designed to effectively serve students in that geographic region
- Developing a plan for providing support to the planning and launch of high-performing charter and other innovative school options prior to the opening of such schools

B. Increasing schools' programming options

- Facilitating access to resources for all SPS students, regardless of whether any student attends a direct district-run school, charter school, contract school, or school under some other governance model – including access to per pupil funding, facilities, and instructional materials and strategies.

C. Charter school autonomy

- Adopting and implementing charter authorization practices designed to ensure quality oversight that maintains high educational and operational standards, preserves school-level autonomy, and safeguards student and public interests.⁴
- Making unused or other available district facilities available to charter schools through various means
- Offering district support services at actual full cost to charter schools, such as:
 - Special education services
 - Student information and other data systems
 - Accounting and financial reporting support
 - Food services
 - Transportation
 - Health benefits
 - Professional development offerings
- Distributing to charter schools funding, such as:
 - Pro rata share of any Replacement Educational Program Levy
 - Pro rata share of State Levy Equalization Assistance
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D. Facilitating collaboration and exchange across different schools and governance models

- Making district-provided professional development available to charter school staff
- Celebrating the successes of charter schools, including their staff and students, in the same way as SPS celebrates the success of district-run schools

⁴ These goals reflect the three “Core Principles of Quality Authorizing” put forth by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

E. Holding schools accountable to common performance standards.

- Including SPS-authorized charter schools within SPS' performance results

V. Charter School Efforts

In addition to the Joint Efforts articulated above, Charter Schools will make a good faith effort to address the following:

A. Creating diverse options for families

- Conducting community and parent outreach activities designed to facilitate awareness and equitable access for all students
- Actively recruiting students from the neighborhood where the school is located in an effort to minimize transportation costs

B. Increasing schools' programming options

- Providing access and services to effectively serve all students, including students with disabilities and low-income students

C. Facilitating collaboration and exchange across different schools and governance models

- Sharing what they do by working with SPS to create opportunities for district staff to observe and learn from their practices, as well as participate in professional learning opportunities offered to charter school staff
- Celebrating and raise awareness of the relationship with SPS

D. Holding schools accountable to common performance standards

- Holding themselves accountable for their results and share their data with SPS
- Holding themselves and other schools accountable for results, both district and charter

VI. Non-Binding Statement of Shared Values and Joint Efforts.

The signatories to this document each agree that this document and attachment to this document is intended and shall be interpreted solely and exclusively as a non-binding statement of shared values and joint efforts. None of the signatories intend to (and none shall) use or interpret this document or any attachment to this document as a replacement to, modification of, or amendment of the Charter Contract entered into by any signatory. Likewise, this document and any attachment to this document is not intended to and shall not be used, interpreted, or advanced in any way by any signatory to create, express, or imply any binding promises or commitments on or by any other signatory.

Signatories:

Superintendent, Spokane Public Schools

Shelley K. Redinger

Signature

Date

PRIDE Prep Charter School CEO

BK McDonald

Signature

Date