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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Board of Education Unanimously Approves Spokane School District's Charter Authorizer Application

YAKIMA, Wash. – The State Board of Education (SBE) unanimously voted to approve Spokane School District's charter authorizer application under the state's new charter school law at today's board meeting. Spokane School District (Spokane) is the second largest school district in the state, and the first to apply to be a charter school authorizer.

One of SBE's responsibilities for implementation and oversight of the charter school law is to review and approve or deny applications from local school boards to be authorizers of charter schools. A high-quality team of evaluators reviewed [Spokane's application](#), assigned a rating to each part based on [criteria in adopted SBE rules](#), and interviewed school district representatives.

"Today is a historic day for the board," said board member Cindy McMullen. "We have approved Spokane as the first school district charter authorizer. The board conducted a rigorous review process and found Spokane's application to be of very high quality."

"It is very important that charter schools be done well," explained Acting Chair Mary Jean Ryan. "Spokane has demonstrated commitment to and passion for creating a portfolio of choice options for students, particularly at-risk populations. They have a clear and compelling vision for chartering that is well aligned with the purpose of Washington's charter school law, and have shown themselves well-prepared to be a quality authorizer."

A charter school authorizer is an entity with the powers and duties to review, approve or reject charter school applications; enter into, renew or revoke charter contracts with nonprofit corporations seeking to operate charter schools; and oversee the charter schools the entity has authorized. Eligible authorizers are:

- School district boards of directors that have been approved as authorizers by the SBE, for charter schools located within the school district's own boundaries;
- The Washington Charter School Commission, for charter schools located anywhere in the state.

School districts interested in becoming charter school authorizers in 2014 must submit a notice of intent to SBE by October 1, 2013 and submit an application by December 31, 2013.

More information about charter schools can be found on our website at:

www.sbe.wa.gov/charters.php.

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