



Strategic Plan Priority | System Design

Goal: School and district structures and systems adapt to meet the evolving needs of the student population and community as a whole. Students are prepared to adapt as needed to fully participate in the world beyond the classroom.

Cover: Transfer of Contract for Spokane International Academy to the Charter School Commission

PREPARED FOR THE JANUARY 2020 BOARD MEETING

Discussion and Action

Spokane International Academy has requested a transfer of contract from Spokane Public Schools to the Charter School Commission. The Board will consider approval of this transfer.

Materials included in packet:

- Spokane International Academy Petition
- Announcement of New Building for Spokane International Academy

Synopsis:

Spokane International Academy has decided to relocate to a new building within the boundaries of Mead School District. This necessitates a transfer of charter contract to the Charter School Commission because Spokane Public Schools is the sole district charter authorizer in Washington and Spokane International Academy will no longer be within the boundaries of the district. Pursuant to WAC 180-19-260(7) Spokane International Academy's board submitted a petition to the State Board of Education to transfer the contract to the Charter School Commission. Although the law does not require the consent of Spokane Public Schools, staff reached out to the district to ensure that there are no concerns. Spokane Public Schools did not express concerns with the transfer of contract. Staff also reached out to Mead School District, Spokane International Academy and Commission staff. Mead School District's Superintendent did express any concerns with the transfer. Staff have reviewed the documentation and recommend the Board approve of the transfer of charter contract to the Charter School Commission.

Business Items:

- Approval of Transfer of Contract for Spokane International Academy to the Charter School Commission



PETITION FOR THE TRANSFER OF A CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT

RCW 28A.710.210(3) A charter contract may not be transferred from one authorizer to another or from one charter school to another before the expiration of the charter contract term **except by petition to the state board of education by the charter school or its authorizer**. The state board of education must review such petitions on a case-by-case basis and may grant transfer requests in response to special circumstances and evidence that such a transfer would serve the best interests of the charter school's students.

Please complete this form - with concise information and a list of back-up documentation that you have available should the State Board of Education wish to review it - and submit it to Parker Teed, Basic Education Manager, parker.teed@k12.wa.us.

DATE: September 24, 2019

CHARTER SCHOOL: Spokane International Academy

AUTHORIZER: Spokane Public Schools (Current)

PARTIES TO THE CURRENT CHARTER CONTRACT:

Spokane International Academy and Spokane Public Schools

DATES (START AND END) OF CURRENT CHARTER CONTRACT:

Start - August 23, 2016

End - August 22, 2021

PETITIONER (THE PARTY REQUESTING A TRANSFER OF CURRENT CHARTER CONTRACT):

Spokane International Academy Board of Directors

PROPOSED NEW CHARTER SCHOOL OR AUTHORIZER:

Washington State Charter School Commission

PERSON COMPLETING THIS PETITION: Travis Franklin, SIA Head of School

EMAIL: franklin@spokaneintlacademy.org

PHONE: (509) 321-8950

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Please describe the special circumstances that you believe warrant the State Board of Education to make an exception to the “A charter contract may not be transferred from one another to another or from one charter school to another before its expiration” (“except by petition to the State Board of Education by the charter school or its authorizer”).

Spokane International Academy currently occupies two temporary sites that allow for the enrollment of our Primary (K-5) and Middle (6-8). We have attempted to find a permanent site for the past four years that can accommodate both programs on a single campus which was the intent of our original application. Since Spokane Public Schools is our current authorizer, we are limited to looking within their boundaries. After conducting our search in partnership with our real estate broker, SPS staff, and Washington Charter School Development, we have come to the conclusion that there is no suitable building in Spokane that fits our enrollment size and our financial capacity.

As such, we expanded our search to include outlying areas of the greater Spokane region in order to continue to serve our current students and to grow to serve our expected future student enrollment. We have found a facility that is affordable and could accommodate any future growth and allow us to demonstrate our full program. It is for this reason that we are seeking to transfer our contract from Spokane Public Schools to the Washington State Charter School Commission. We have been fortunate to enjoy a great relationship with Spokane Public Schools and have been pleased with our partnership from idea conception through current day.

EVIDENCE OF STUDENTS’ BEST INTEREST: What evidence can you provide to the SBE that this charter contract transfer would serve the best interest of the charter school’s students?

We believe this contract transfer is in the best interest of our students because it will allow us to continue to serve our students in the model first envisioned. We believe strongly that by being on one campus together we can ensure tighter alignment in academic, cultural and operational expectations. It will allow us to be more efficient in our staffing and to share an economy of scale in regards to transportation, food and nutrition and leadership staffing.

Also, all estimates related to trying to make a facility work within the SPS boundaries have shown a substantially negative effect on our long-term financial sustainability. This move allows us to allocate our resources directly to impacting student outcomes as opposed to the cost of renovating and inhabiting a facility.

Once we know if our petition for transfer has been approved we will work with a group of our parents to design transportation and operational adjustments to allow for as many of our current families to attend SIA at our new site as possible. We believe our students continuing to attend SIA is in their best interest as we have seen firsthand how beneficial the program has been to their growth academically, in their character and in their understanding of the world. Given the close proximity of the new site to our current elementary site, we don't foresee losing more than maybe a handful of families in the move.

BACK-UP DOCUMENTATION YOU COULD PROVIDE UPON REQUEST OF SBE:

Spokane International Academy Is currently working with the Washington State Charter Schools Commission to complete an application to demonstrate the strength of our program for their consideration. Knowing that they would also need to accept our transfer application and ultimately serve as our authorizer, it is hoped that the comprehensive application we submit to them would contain all of the information necessary to aid in your decision. For further information about the contents of the application and their deliberative process, please email Executive Director Joshua Halsey at joshua.halsey@k12.wa.us.



Press Release

For Immediate Release: September 25, 2019

Contact: Ken Vorhees, Chair, Board of Directors, Spokane International Academy

email: boardofdirectors@spokaneintlacademy.org

Spokane International Academy Finds New Facility

Local Charter School to Bring Both Campuses Under One Roof

Spokane International Academy (SIA) has found a new facility to bring their two campuses together. Located on East Magnesium Road in Spokane, the building is nearly 100,000 square feet and will enable the growing charter school to unite their two campuses. The anticipated move-in timeframe is Fall 2020.

Currently, SIA is split between two separate sites. The K-5th grade program is in Hillyard and the 6-8th grade program is located close to downtown. Enrollment is about 500 students with approximately 250 students on their waiting list. The larger campus will merge the two sites and bring their whole K-8th grade program under one roof.

Travis Franklin, Head of School commented: "It's really exciting to finally have an opportunity to expand the program that has been offered at SIA the past five years. This new facility will give us the chance to meet some of our long-term goals which include being all together and serving a larger number of students in the greater Spokane area."

Following renovations, SIA will enjoy bigger classrooms, a large kitchen facility, outdoor greenspace, and ample parking. Importantly, the new space will allow SIA to increase the student population, as well as to continue to recruit quality teachers to support the additional students.

Ken Vorhees, Chair of Board of Directors added: "Spokane International Academy has been looking for a number of years to find a building that could meet the Spokane community's desire for SIA's approach to education. It will be very exciting to see how the new building assists the program and its talented staff with creating the finest education experience for our K-8 students and their families."

"Centralizing the entire program in one location will allow for a more cohesive experience for the students, parents, faculty and staff. Additionally, the move will reduce the overhead costs of running two sites, which will allow teachers and staff to focus more time on what is most important: the students and the program."

SIA is a Washington State Charter School. A charter school is a public school that is free and is open to any student living in Washington State. Charter schools are guided by a specific mission and are run by nonprofit organizations. They cannot be run by religious, sectarian, or private, for-profit companies. Students at charter schools receive the same state and federal funding as those in traditional public schools, but do not receive local levy funds or facilities assistance from the state.

The Board of Directors will communicate more information regarding the move with parents and the community as the plan progresses throughout the year.

Spokane International Academy mission statement:

Spokane International Academy empowers its students with the academic skills, habits of mind and global competence necessary to complete advanced courses in high school and a college degree in order to become leaders who can powerfully transform our communities.

About Spokane International Academy: <https://www.spokaneintlacademy.org/history>

More about Washington charter schools: <https://www.spokaneintlacademy.org/charter-schools>