



**PULLMAN PUBLIC
COMMUNITY FREE
MONTESSORI K-9**

Pullman Community Montessori

Board Meeting - Working Session

Date and Time

Thursday April 4, 2024 at 5:15 PM PDT

Location

Room 115
Gladish Center
Pullman

Public comment is reserved for regular board meetings. If you would like to make public comment please attend one of the regularly scheduled board meetings.

The purpose of this working session of the board is to:

- Interview candidates who have volunteered for board service.
- Update the community on board action related to Notices of Perceived Problems # 1 and #2, and to the Notice to Revoke.
- Updating community on an upcoming opportunity to attend the WA charters conference.
- Update community on changes to board and finance committee.

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			5:15 PM
A. Record Attendance		Beverley Wolff	1 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
B. Call the Meeting to Order		Robin McDonald	1 m

II. Candidate interviews 5:17 PM

Candidates have submitted their completed board application (resume, questionnaire, conflict of interest statements) and references have been called.
 Board members have reviewed candidate applications ahead of the meeting.
 Interviews will consist of a series of questions and follow-up questions around the themes of:

- Skills and expertise
- Team work experiences
- Time and energy
- Philosophical alignment to PCM and charter schools.

Following the interviews, current board members will vote on whether to extend an invitation to the candidates to join the board.

We thank each candidate for their willingness to step up and apply for board service.

A. Stephanie Bixby interview	Vote	Robin McDonald	20 m
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Upon interview of all candidates, Trustees will discuss the candidates in terms of what they will contribute to the board (skills, expertise, background, commitment) before voting on whether to extend a board seat invitation to the candidate.

B. Michelle Bosley Interview	Vote	Robin McDonald	20 m
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Upon interview of all candidates, Trustees will discuss the candidates in terms of what they will contribute to the board (skills, expertise, background, commitment) before voting on whether to extend a board seat invitation to the candidate.

C. Efren Ramos Interview	Discuss	Robin McDonald	20 m
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Upon interview of all candidates, Trustees will discuss the candidates in terms of what they will contribute to the board (skills, expertise, background, commitment) before voting on whether to extend a board seat invitation to the candidate.

III. Response to the Commission 6:17 PM

A. Response to NPP # 1 and #2, Response to Notice to Revoke	Discuss	Robin McDonald	30 m
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Board members will discuss steps already taken and plan for additional steps/action items in response to NPPs and Notice to Revoke.

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
For transparency, the notices from the commission and the board's responses are attached.			

IV. WA Charters Conference 6:47 PM

Sharing info about upcoming conference, and ways board members, families and community members can get involved.

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----------------|-----|
| <p>A. WA Charters Conference opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration • Discounted overnight stays • Bus from Spokane - please note, link is currently not working. • Hardship Scholarships | FYI | Robin McDonald | 5 m |
|---|-----|----------------|-----|

V. Other Business 6:52 PM

- | | | | |
|--|---------|----------------|-----|
| <p>A. Appointing new members to the finance committee</p> | Vote | Alan MacPhee | 5 m |
| <p>B. Selecting board members to attend various events</p> <p>Selecting board members to attend upcoming finance committee meetings, meetings of SCC and town halls, in order to share responsibilities and avoid quorum at meetings.</p> | Discuss | Robin McDonald | 5 m |
| <p>C. Accepting resignation of Ana Burton</p> | Vote | Robin McDonald | 2 m |

VI. Closing Items 7:04 PM

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------|----------------|-----|
| <p>A. Adjourn Meeting</p> | Vote | Robin McDonald | 1 m |
|----------------------------------|------|----------------|-----|

Grounding Docs: [Board Norms-We are LEADERS too-Structure and Responsibilities Overview](#), [PCM Logic Model](#), [EEMPS Rubric](#), [School-Wide Reflective Practice Inventory](#), [Bylaws](#)

Resources: Key Resources BOX Folder, [OPMA Resources](#), [App Board Commitments & Background](#), [Committee Descriptions](#), [Org Charts](#), [Board Member Application Full Packet](#), [Prospective Board Member Questionnaire](#)

Coversheet

Stephanie Bixby interview

Section: II. Candidate interviews
Item: A. Stephanie Bixby interview
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: Bixby, Stephanie - Redacted Resume.pdf
Bixby, Stephanie - Redacted Questionnaire.pdf

Stephanie Bixby



Experience

MAY 2023-AUG 2023

ACOSTA, WASHINGTON - *CUSTOMER SERVICE REP*

- Stocking Shelves
- Organizing Product
- Inventory
- Building Displays

SEP 2020-OCT2020

OVERSTOCK.COM, WASHINGTON - *CUSTOMER SERVICE REP*

- Answer incoming calls
- Help customers proceed with check-out
- Help customers with returns
- Help find customers products that went missing

APRIL 2019 - SEP 2020

JENSON, SPOKANE, WA - *E-COM*

- Pick up orders from warehouse
- Build Boxes to fit product
- Run boxes to truck for shipment

MAY 2018- MAR 2019

ZIPS DRIVE-IN, AIRWAY HEIGHTS, WA - *SWING SHIFT MANAGER*

- Wash Dishes
- Run register
- Take Orders from Customers
- Run Drive-thru
- Stock Store

NOV 2017- Feb 2018

EMPLOYERS OVERLOAD, VANCOUVER, WA - *TEMP WORKER*

- Depends on job

MAY 2017- NOV 2017

WAL-MART, EUGENE, OR - *SALES ASSOCIATE*

- Set up store during remodel
- Build fixtures
- Run register
- Take care of plants in Garden
- Set up seasonal area
- Help customers find items they need

APR 2017- MAY 2017

CINEMARK, SPRINGFIELD, OR - *CONCESSIONS*

- Run Cash register
- Fill orders

MAR 2017- APR 2017

STAFFING PARTNERS, EUGENE, OR - *TEMP WORKER*

- Depends on job

APR 2016- JUN 2016

STAFFING PARTNERS, EUGENE, OR - TEMP WORKER

- Depends on job

JUL 2014- OCT 2014

STAFFING PARTNERS, EUGENE, OR - TEMP WORKER

- Depends on job

OCT 2013- NOV 2013

AT HOME CARE GROUP, EUGENE, OR - AT HOME CAREGIVER

- Provided in home caregiving services

DEC 2012- APR 2013

JACK IN THE BOX, SPRINGFIELD, OR - CASHIER

- Prepared food using grill, deep fryer and prep table
- Operated POS cash register
- Took customers orders at counter and drive-thru
- Processed cash and credit transactions maintaining an accurate till
- Assembled orders correctly and provided excellent customer service
- Maintained clean work area and used safe food handling protocols

JAN 2012- DEC 2012

VECTOR MARKETING, SPRINGFIELD, OR - SALES REPRESENTATIVE

- Made appointments and sold cutlery door to door
- Provided customer service and demonstrated products
- Responsible for inventory of merchandise and sales transaction records

OCT 2012- NOV 2012

CHURCHILL ESTATES, EUGENE, OR - CAREGIVER

- Provided care to residents
- Assisted with toileting, grooming and feeding
- Assisted with walking to and from the dining room
- Provided additional care as needed
- Communicated effectively with family and other caregivers including physicians

MAR 2012- APR 2012

FIRST AVENUE ANIMAL SHELTER, EUGENE, OR - KENNEL ASSISTANT

- Assisted kennel workers by walking dogs, feeding, watering and grooming
- Made sure the animals were safe

SEP 2011- NOV 2011

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, EUGENE, OR - LINE SERVER

- Set up and break down breakfast line
- Help set up lunch line
- Served customers and provided service as needed
- Worked according to food safety standards

MAY 2010- JUL 2010

TRUCK N TRAVEL, EUGENE, OR - BUSSER

- Clean and set tables
- Sat customers and provided menus
- Took drink orders
- Assisted customers as needed
- Cleaned and set tables for next customer

SEP 2007- OCT 2007

AUNTIE ANNE'S PRETZELS, TIGARD, OR - *SERVER/CASHIER*

- Rolled, baked and stocked pretzels
- Stocked warmer with products
- Filled orders and worked register

PCM PROSPECTIVE BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

After reviewing our [Board Member Application Packet](#), please complete this questionnaire. You are welcome to write in 'bulleted' format. Your time and thoughtful response is greatly appreciated. Along with this questionnaire, please complete the [Conflict of Interest Disclosure & Acknowledgement](#) form. Please return completed documents, including your RESUME, to lsullivan@mypcm.org or deliver to our main office at Gladish Community & Cultural Center [Room 212](#).

1. What do you find appealing about PCM's **Mission** and **Vision**?

I love both the mission and vision as a whole, I feel this is the best option for some of the students, parents and teachers in kind. Hands on learning, place based learning and peer learning which I've seen while at the school itself has been a large impact on the children. Hearing from the students how welcome and cared about they are keeps the hope going.

2. What skills, connections, acumen, and/or characteristics would you bring to the PCM board to further us on our pursuit to achieve our mission and vision?

Connections, the closest I have to that is my buddy who owns his own independent production company called Hapstance Films. A company that has been awarded and well-noticed by large cities including its hometown of Portland, OR. I've studied to build radio programs, and movies and been part of a streamers business. I've been published many years ago, but life got ahold of me and I've kept to freelance journalism which again is at the wayside while I raise my children. Now my focus is the children and helping their school which they love so much.

3. Can you consistently commit an average of 12 hours per month towards growing your skills and fully participating in board responsibilities (promotional events, board meeting preparation and participation, board training, and/or committee meetings)?

Please provide 2 references that can speak to the skills, connections, acumen and/or characteristics you spoke to above.



Coversheet

Michelle Bosley Interview

Section: II. Candidate interviews
Item: B. Michelle Bosley Interview
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: Bosley, Michelle - Redacted full app.pdf



Our mission is to prepare all students to reach their full potential for future success in high school, college, career, and life, using the rich resources of our community.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure & Acknowledgment

Instructions: Check "yes or no" to each question in the table below. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, provide an explanation at the end, labeling explanations with the number of the corresponding question. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

<input type="checkbox"/> I have no conflicts or potential conflicts to disclose (<i>skip to acknowledgments</i>).	NO	YES
1. Do or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family, have any contractual agreements with the proposed charter school?		
2. Do you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family have any ownership interest in any company contracting with the proposed charter school?		
3. Did or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family lease or sell property to the proposed charter school?		
4. Did or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family sell any supplies, materials, equipment or other personal property to the proposed charter school?		
5. Have you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family guaranteed any loans for the proposed charter school or loaned it any money?		
6. Are or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family, be employed by the proposed charter school?		
7. Did you or your spouse provide any start-up funds to the proposed charter school?		
8. Did or do you or your spouse, or other member of your immediate family, have ownership interest, directly or indirectly, in any corporation, partnership, association or other legal entity that would answer "yes" to any of the questions 1-7?		
9. Does any other board, group or corporation believe it has a right to control or have input on votes you will cast as a founding member or member of the Board of Trustees?		

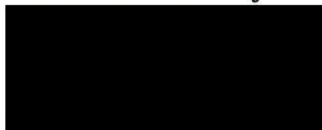


Our mission is to prepare all students to reach their full potential for future success in high school, college, career, and life, using the rich resources of our community.

10. Do you currently serve as a member of the board of any public charter school?		
11. Do you currently serve as a public official?		
12. Have you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family applied to establish or participated in the establishment of a charter school?		
13. To the best of your knowledge, are there situations not described above that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest between you and the proposed charter school, or which would make it difficult for your to discharge your duties or exercise your judgment independently on behalf of the proposed charter school?		
14. I have an additional conflict of interest not listed in the options above. <i>Please describe:</i> _____ _____ _____ _____		

If you checked YES to 1-13 provide explanation:

Michelle Bosley



Employment History

Boost Collaborative - Program Assistant - 09/2019 - Present

- Successfully schedule all patients with therapies in accordance with IFSP language
- Demonstrate ability to read and understand medical records and IFSP contracts
- Collaborate with therapists, parents & Family Resource Coordinators to achieve plan goals & organizational objectives
- Developed language & communication templates to create successful outreach & consistent patient follow-through
- Complete & submit monthly enrollment reports to Whitman County
- Network with child care providers to schedule therapy visits on site

Experient, Inc – Human Resources Manager Frederick, MD 7/2011 – 6/2013

- Oversee Human Resources needs for a staff of 250 in multiple locations
- Advise managers in coaching and disciplinary strategies
- Communicate benefits information, policy updates and staffing changes to employees
- Inform executive leadership of changes or issues in morale
- Support a positive work environment through planning social events and philanthropy
- Edit the company Intranet page and weekly newsletter using SharePoint & Publisher
- Travel frequently to work in different roles at large events across the country
- Handle the specific needs of a traveling workforce
- Maintain Organizational charts
- Coordinate PMP, CMP and CME certification training eligibility with Learning & Development

Staffmark - On-Site Manager Thurmont, MD 7/11 – 02/12

- Head recruitment efforts for light industrial and professional services positions
- Create and execute hiring strategies dependent on the varying nature of positions offered and fill deadlines.
- Network with local employment agencies and service groups to locate potential employees
- Negotiate mark up and pay increases with the client company annually and on a case by case basis
- Advise the client company regarding legal and compliance issues
- Ensure that compliance with federal state & corporate guidelines is met and that necessary reports are completed and submitted on time
- Participate in unemployment and worker's compensation hearings
- Consulted with other branch managers to assist them in taking a more strategic / advisory role in their client relationships

Staffmark - Account Manager Thurmont, MD 6/08 - 7/11

- Initially resolved significant aging issues and maintained minimal aging thereafter
- Interview and select employees for positions with a commercial printing & mailing facility
- Counsel employees on attendance and performance issues
- Enter and submit weekly payroll and invoice adjustments
- Maintain all accounts receivable and accounts payable processes
- Responsible for generating and analyzing attendance, financial and performance reports using People Soft and InfoShare
- Communicate daily with client managers regarding employees
- Assist employees with concerns related to medical insurance, taxes, worker's compensation and unemployment insurance

- Directed a project translating important information for non English proficient applicants into Chin Burmese

Train To Work - Student Counselor Frederick, MD 2/06 - 5/08

Train To Work served to match hiring partners, dislocated workers, and federal funds in order to train and place resources into specific, guaranteed jobs. In my role as a recruiter and student counselor, I acted as a point of contact for potential employees who were in the Train To Work selection process.

- Sourced, screened and selected potential employees
- Resolved financial or emotional issues through appropriate community referrals
- Directed students through best interview practices in order to assure job placement
- Researched and applied for government funding for individuals and groups
- Helped potential employees navigate the scheduling, funding, and selection process necessary to enter and succeed in the program.
- Was responsible for demographic and employer research upon which marketing decisions were Based

Education

Spokane Falls Community College 2000 - 2002

Associations / Certifications

Former member of The Society for Human Resource Management
Certified Professional of Human Resources (PHR)

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I love that Montessori leverages children's natural curiosity and focus development to instill a love of learning while effectively teaching the skills and principles that students in American schools are expected to gain. A lot of us have experienced the hurdle of having to learn how to learn, within the rigid structure of traditional education settings. Children are natural learners and learning does not have a wrong way any more than it has only one way. I feel that the standard school model teaches adherence and rote more than it teaches knowledge. To that end can rob children of their full potential for learning.

In Pullman, we have some factors that limit our ability to broadly implement more progressive learning techniques. Much of our population is transient, so long term planning can be challenging. Pullman needs an alternative model for education, and I believe that long and shorter term residents and their families will benefit from PCM as an option and an example.

2. What skills, connections, acumen, and/or characteristics would you bring to the PCM board to further us on our pursuit to achieve our mission and vision?

Personally, I'm easy going and tend to have a sense of humor about just about everything. My corporate background was Human Resources. I did HR in blue collar rural Maryland, as well as in the large event industry which allowed me to travel as a lead sales person as well. I have some volunteer / outreach experience including at the International Rescue Committee, working with new Americans from Burma to get employment & housing. I also co-taught ESL to Salvadoran refugees in Maryland and worked briefly with DC Marijuana Justice to support medical marijuana legalization.

In Pullman I work at Boost Collaborative Child & Family Support Services. That includes assisting in events such as Family Fair and Night of Champions. I've also been on the board of Families Together of Whitman County since 2019. My husband and I have been married for 25 years and our oldest has severe Cerebral Palsy. She graduated from Pullman high school in 2020. We navigated the public school systems of Spokane County, Frederick County and Whitman County with her, as well as many surgeries and medical interventions. I occasionally sing with the Joe Street Jokers here in Pullman and am currently helping Boost's implementation of the Parent To Parent program, post Families Together. I like being a helper.

3. Can you consistently commit an average of 12 hours per month towards growing your skills and fully participating in board responsibilities (promotional events, board meeting preparation and participation, board training, and/or committee meetings)? Yes.

Please provide 2 references that can speak to the skills, connections, acumen and/or characteristics you spoke to above.



Coversheet

Efren Ramos Interview

Section: II. Candidate interviews
Item: C. Efren Ramos Interview
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: Ramos, Efren - Board app full_Redacted.pdf
Conflict of Interest Disclosure filled (1).pdf

Efren Ramos

Professional Experience

Palouse Empire Fairgrounds- Operations Coordinator

February 2024- Present

- Ongoing communication with Fairgrounds personnel and clients pertaining to completed work orders, future work orders, and supplies needed for the property.
- Itemize all county tools and organize accordingly on a quarterly basis.
- 40 hours worked weekly.
- General maintenance, landscaping, cleaning of facilities painting, and garbage removal.
- Operate tractors, lawnmowers, and haul trailers.
- Ensure the chlorine levels in the water are up to standards.

Palouse Painting- Business Owner

May 2023- Present

- Inspect potential properties and take measurements for paint jobs.
- Assuring all paint request are met in a clean and timely manner.
- Communication with customers in order to execute their desired paint job.
- Send out itemized receipts with supplies used (primer, paint, roller sleeves, tape, etc.) along with time, clean up costs, and taxes.
- Ensure that all bonds, licenses, and insurances are up to date.

Washington Apartment Rentals- Project Manager

July 2014- Present

- Ongoing communication with property manager pertaining to completed work orders, future work orders, tenant requests, and supplies needed for the properties.
- Assuring all tenants request are met in a clean and timely manner.
- Itemize all agency tools and organize accordingly on a quarterly basis.
- 20-30 hours worked weekly.
- General maintenance, landscaping, carpet stretching, painting, and garbage removal.

City of Pullman Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee - Secretary

February 2023- Present

- Record and type minuetts for committee in a timely manner.
- Communicate with other DIEB members following the Open Public Meeting Act and Public Records Act guidelines.
- Collaborated with other members to set dates for future events.

Efren Ramos

- Devised fundraising ideas.
- Collaborate with local partners in order to bring awareness to the newly formed DEIB Committee.

Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse-*Temporary Maintenance Coordinator* *June 2019-August 2019.*

- Assessed and completed the necessary repairs required for the agency's shelter annual site visits.
- Worked with the agencies shelter coordinator to design and construct a fence to meet grantors requirements.
- Worked with Moscow office to assess necessary repairs of facility.

Education

Washington State University
Bachelors of Arts in Criminal Justice

December 2018

Skills

- Ability to multitask and complete work by required deadlines.
- Bilingual/biliterate (English & Spanish).
- Punctual, ability to come in earlier if necessary.
- Strong communication and organization skills.
- Understanding of fast pace work environments.
- Self-goal orientated
- First Aid & CPR certified for infants, children, and adults

References

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

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1. What do you find appealing about PCM's **Mission** and **Vision**?

As an individual who believes that there is always more than one path to the destination; I believe that PCM's mission aligns well with that philosophy. Every child is different and should not be subjected to a "one size fits all" approach when it comes to their education and needs. The same could be said about the school's vision.

2. What skills, connections, acumen, and/or characteristics would you bring to the PCM board to further us on our pursuit to achieve our mission and vision?

Currently I am an elected member of the City of Pullman's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee. I believe I am able to bring a different point of view and will be able to look for grants and devise ways in order to fundraise for the school. I also have years of experience coaching youth sports from wrestling, t-ball, and soccer. All of which require dedication, discipline, and perseverance. A few qualities which I have gained from playing and coaching those sports. I am also a firm believer of Hirschi's Social Bond Theory which can be applied to any situation involving children.

3. Can you consistently commit an average of 12 hours per month towards growing your skills and fully participating in board responsibilities (promotional events, board meeting preparation and participation, board training, and/or committee meetings)?

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<input type="checkbox"/> I have no conflicts or potential conflicts to disclose (<i>skip to acknowledgments</i>).	NO	YES
1. Do or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family, have any contractual agreements with the proposed charter school?		
2. Do you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family have any ownership interest in any company contracting with the proposed charter school?		
3. Did or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family lease or sell property to the proposed charter school?		
4. Did or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family sell any supplies, materials, equipment or other personal property to the proposed charter school?		
5. Have you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family guaranteed any loans for the proposed charter school or loaned it any money?		
6. Are or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family, be employed by the proposed charter school?		
7. Did you or your spouse provide any start-up funds to the proposed charter school?		
8. Did or do you or your spouse, or other member of your immediate family, have ownership interest, directly or indirectly, in any corporation, partnership, association or other legal entity that would answer “yes” to any of the questions 1-7?		
9. Does any other board, group or corporation believe it has a right to control or have input on votes you will cast as a founding member or member of the Board of Trustees?		



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10. Do you currently serve as a member of the board of any public charter school?		
11. Do you currently serve as a public official?		
12. Have you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family applied to establish or participated in the establishment of a charter school?		
13. To the best of your knowledge, are there situations not described above that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest between you and the proposed charter school, or which would make it difficult for your to discharge your duties or exercise your judgment independently on behalf of the proposed charter school?		
14. I have an additional conflict of interest not listed in the options above. <i>Please describe:</i> _____ _____ _____ _____		

If you checked YES to 1-13 provide explanation:



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<input type="checkbox"/> I have no conflicts or potential conflicts to disclose (<i>skip to acknowledgments</i>).	NO	YES
1. Do or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family, have any contractual agreements with the proposed charter school?	X	
2. Do you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family have any ownership interest in any company contracting with the proposed charter school?	X	
3. Did or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family lease or sell property to the proposed charter school?	X	
4. Did or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family sell any supplies, materials, equipment or other personal property to the proposed charter school?	X	
5. Have you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family guaranteed any loans for the proposed charter school or loaned it any money?	X	
6. Are or will you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family, be employed by the proposed charter school?	X	
7. Did you or your spouse provide any start-up funds to the proposed charter school?	X	
8. Did or do you or your spouse, or other member of your immediate family, have ownership interest, directly or indirectly, in any corporation, partnership, association or other legal entity that would answer “yes” to any of the questions 1-7?	X	
9. Does any other board, group or corporation believe it has a right to control or have input on votes you will cast as a founding member or member of the Board of Trustees?	X	



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10. Do you currently serve as a member of the board of any public charter school?	X	
11. Do you currently serve as a public official?		X
12. Have you, your spouse, or any member of your immediate family applied to establish or participated in the establishment of a charter school?	X	
13. To the best of your knowledge, are there situations not described above that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest between you and the proposed charter school, or which would make it difficult for your to discharge your duties or exercise your judgment independently on behalf of the proposed charter school?	X	
14. I have an additional conflict of interest not listed in the options above. Please describe: _____ _____ _____ _____		

If you checked YES to 1-13 provide explanation:

Coversheet

Response to NPP # 1 and #2, Response to Notice to Revoke

Section: III. Response to the Commission
Item: A. Response to NPP # 1 and #2, Response to Notice to Revoke
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material:
PCM NPP #1 Response.pdf
PCM NPP #2 Response.pdf
PCM Immediate Correction of Safety Deficiencies Response and Safety Plan.pdf
Immediate Corrective Action Feb 2024 (2).pdf
NPP Final (1).pdf
Revocation Notice PCM 032224 (1).pdf



PCM Notice of Perceived Problem

March 4, 2024

Dear Washington State Charter Commission,

I am writing on behalf of the Pullman Community Montessori board of directors to provide an update on our ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with state regulations and standards. We believe deeply that maintaining compliance is crucial for our school's operations and, most importantly, for the well-being and education of our students.

Our team has been diligently working to address the areas of concern highlighted in the Notice of Perceived Problem #1 by the Commission. Some of them have already been addressed prior to the notice being rendered. I am pleased to report that significant progress on remaining areas of concern has been made, and we are confident in our ability to achieve full compliance. Please see the table below for a response, and some clarifications, to each of the areas highlighted by the Commission. Please let us know if any additional information is required by the Commission.

Thank you,

Robin McDonald, Board Member
Pullman Community Montessori



PCM Notice of Perceived Problem #1 Response

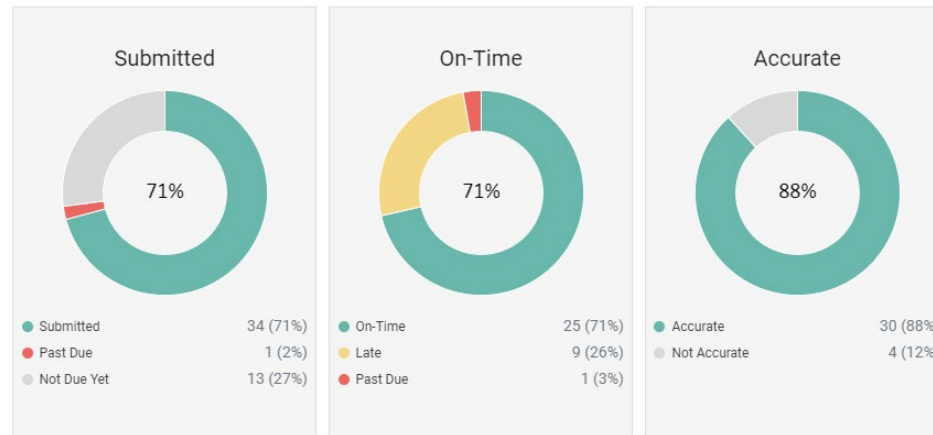
Area of Concern	Concerns	Updates, Information
<p>Lack of Effective Financial Oversight of the School: Student Enrollment</p>	<p>The school is currently at 69% of budgeted enrollment. As of February 12, 2024, the school reported 94 enrolled students compared to 136 budgeted.</p> <p>Insufficient cash flow to complete the school year without significant changes to operational and organizational structure.</p>	<p>The Board and the HOS understand that enrollment drives financial viability. They are working towards stabilizing enrollment and contingency planning for additional enrollment decreases.</p> <p>The budgeted enrollment was 136. As of September, we had 122. The recent enrollment drop has brought us to 85 as of 3/4/2024.</p> <p>PCM has responded to the enrollment drop by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with PCM families to address concerns to prevent further issues that lead to disenrollment (Parent committee, Town Halls). ● By implementing immediate budget cuts outlined below for the remainder of the 2023-24 budget period. The board voted to approve the budget with these changes at the February 26 board meeting. ● By reworking the growth plans for 2024-25 onward to ensure growth is achievable considering our current enrollment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This has included working with Gladish to ensure they remain flexible with PCM's growth within the building. They said they would be. ● By considering what future model changes may need to be made to achieve a sustainable budget and avoid future issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Head of School presented preliminary scenarios at the Feb 26 board meeting. ○ The board will choose a direction on this in early March and the Commission will be presented with a proposal to initiate considerations thereafter.



		<p>PCM has made the following adjustments to meet 30+ days of cash on hand by August 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 staffing cuts (not re-hiring the Older Elementary Teacher and laying off an Instructional Assistant and Food Service Specialist). ● The OE students moved to 205a next to the AC students, opening room 102 up for subletting. Dave will remain the AC teacher and Jordan will be the long-term sub for the OE cohort. The teachers will collaborate. There are times when the cohorts will be separate and times when they will join as a community. ● Beginning March 1, PCM's contract with the YMCA for ½-day Wednesday enrichment has ended due to insufficient enrollment in the YMCA before and after care program, which was a requirement of PCM's agreement with the YMCA (a cost-savings of \$11K). ● PCM negotiated with Gladish to reduce rent between April and August. We also negotiated to have Gladish actively work to lease the room to others, which would help PCM recoup more rent costs (this is not guaranteed, so we did not factor this in). ● The remaining year's budget was scrubbed to see if there were other places we could tighten up the budget (ex., Field trips, office expenses, transportation costs). <p>These changes are providing 31 days of cash on hand by August 2024. This is the <u>budget file</u> that the Board approved for the remainder of the SY.</p> <p>PCM continues to implement recruiting efforts as originally outlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contracted with Palladium for social media marketing ● Text bank pushes with WA Charters ● Direct marketing ● Refuse stuffers in Albion, Colfax, and Pullman ● Exhibitions of work in our community (mostly AC) - held event on February
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		<p>13, future events in March, April, and May.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open houses on February 27 and March 20 ● City of Pullman Business of the Month in April (featured in community paper, posts on social media, attendance at the Pullman Chamber meeting). <p>The Board Treasurer and back-office provider Joule Growth Partners met with the Commission's Finance Committee on 2/28 and are working on the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A detailed plan of cash flow for the remainder of the school year ● A communication to families regarding the financial state of the school. ● A contingency plan for closure, for either mid-year or end-of-year closure.
<p>Lack of Effective Organizational and Educational Oversight of the School: Compliance</p>	<p>Continued pattern of late compliance submissions. Of the 38 Epicenter compliance submissions required by the charter contract, 12 (or 32%) have been submitted late this school year (August 1, 2023-February 16, 2023).</p>	<p>The Board recognizes the need for additional operational and compliance capacity. They have reached out to WA Charters and Schools Ops about additional remote and onsite support for compliance reporting.</p> <p>Based on the compliance calendar, PCM is tracking annually from September 1 to August 31; 71% of deliverables were submitted on time, 26% were late, and 1% were past due. The HOS met with the Commission on 3/4/24, and they agreed this dashboard reflects accurate data and that Epicenter data is not up to date. See the linked PCM Compliance tracker and snapshot below.</p> <p><u>PCM Compliance Tracker</u></p>



To ensure the on-time completion of compliance submissions improves, we will update our existing compliance tracker and improve on the following procedure.

Procedure for Completing Compliance Submissions on Time

Update the Tracker

- Tasks from the compliance tracker are added to the Compliance Google Calendar. This is viewable by all admin and office staff.
- Improvement: tasks will be assigned in Microsoft To Do to specific person with three reminders.
- Improvement: task will be checked off when completed.

Regular Check-In Meetings

1. Schedule Regular Meetings:



		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Set up a recurring meeting in the calendar, inviting the Head of School, Operations Manager, and all team members involved in compliance tasks. Depending on the volume of tasks and proximity to deadlines, meetings can be weekly or bi-weekly. <p>2. Prepare for Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prior to each meeting, the Operations Manager should review the Google Compliance Calendar and Microsoft To Do, noting any tasks that are at risk of being late.● Prepare an agenda that includes reviewing the status of each task, discussing any barriers to completion, and strategizing solutions to any issues. <p>3. Conduct Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Start with a brief overview of the current compliance submission status.● Review each task individually, focusing on those that are overdue or at risk.● Discuss any support the responsible person needs to complete their task on time.● Update the Microsoft To Do with an action plan for any tasks that are off track, including reassigning tasks if necessary. <p>4. Follow-Up Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● All members will check the running meeting organizer. Ensure action items are updated in Microsoft To Do.● Ensure that the PCM Google Compliance Calendar is updated based on the discussions and decisions made during the meeting.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If needed, the team will communicate with the Commission as far in advance as possible to request deadline extensions due to staff shortages, which may impact fidelity to this procedure. <p>Monitoring and Updates</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuous Monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage team members to update Microsoft To Do after any progress or completion of tasks. ● The Operations Manager should monitor the system regularly to identify any tasks that may fall behind schedule. 2. Ad Hoc Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If a significant issue arises between scheduled meetings, arrange an ad hoc meeting with the relevant stakeholders to address the issue promptly. 3. Adjustments and Improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continuously look for ways to improve the process based on feedback from team members and observations from the check-in meetings. 4. Documentation and Record-Keeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that all compliance documentation is properly filed in Box and accessible for audit purposes. ● Keep a record of all meeting minutes and decisions made regarding compliance tasks (use standard meeting organizer format). 5. Review and Feedback
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodically review the effectiveness of the PCM Compliance tracking system and the check-in meeting process. Solicit feedback from the team on how the process could be improved and implement feasible suggestions. <p>By following this procedure, the school can enhance its ability to complete compliance submissions on time, leveraging the collaborative and organizational strengths of the PCM Compliance tracker and regular communication through check-in meetings.</p>
	<p>The School's 22-23 school year Annual Performance Report (due 10/1/23) is currently outstanding, after multiple extensions and missed deadlines.</p>	<p>The HOS is working to submit this no later than March 11. The school understands this is significantly past due and appreciates the grace. They are working diligently to provide the Commission with all the requested compliance documents.</p>
	<p>Did not immediately notify CSC of decreased enrollment when it fell below 80% on 1/30/24. Submitted on 2/2/24 after CSC staff reminder.</p>	<p>The school did notify the Commission of enrollment status falling below 80% on 1/30 but did not email the formal Decrease in Enrollment Form until 2-2-24.</p> <p>In the future, the school will make all efforts to ensure the use of the Commission's formal form with the first correspondence.</p> <p>Folder of Enrollment Emails Sent</p> <p>CSC was notified on the following days (in green):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wk01 > 1/29, 1/30, 1/31, 2/01, 2/02, Wk02 > 2/05, 2/06, 2/07, 2/08, 2/09 Wk03 > 2/12, 2/13, 2/14, 2/15, 2/16



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wk04 > 2/19, 2/20, 2/21, 2/22, 2/23 • Wk05 > 2/26, 2/27, 2/28, 2/29, 3/01 • Wk06 > 3/04 <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 2/7 The Operations Manager sent the totals to HOS, but they weren't forwarded to the CSC. That email is included in a separate folder in the link above. ❖ 2/09 -2/20 The Operations Manager misunderstood that the notifications still needed to be sent to the CSC daily. She thought the reason was to track the direct impact that DJ had on student W/Ds. Since most of the class had withdrawn and that room was now stable, she did not send the reports. They were still being tracked internally as is standard. There were no withdrawals from 2/09 thru 2/20. ❖ 2/22 The Operations Manager's misunderstanding was corrected and she was delegated the task of sending the update directly to the CSC and copying Board Chair and HOS to streamline notifications.
	<p>OSPI notified CSC on 1/30/24 that PCM had not submitted the restraint and isolation data for the 22-23 school year. Written summary reports must be submitted by Jan 1st annually.</p>	<p>Restraint and Isolation data is submitted to OSPI directly from our Student Information System through CEDARS File S. We reviewed our 2022-23 submission because of this flag from OSPI. We re-submitted the data on 2/22/24. See screenshots of documentation here: Folder of Restraint & Isolation data.</p> <p>We have added this to our Google Compliance Calendar, created an SOP, and added it to Microsoft To Do (SOP linked) so that responsible staff understands how to submit it properly and who to check in with.</p> <p>Additionally, we have updated our Nautilus report form in Transparent Classroom</p>



		<p>to more quickly identify incidents where R&I was needed and required a report. This got backlogged previously, where information was in Transparent Classroom but not yet in our Student Information System, but the form improvement will eliminate this issue.</p>
	<p>A former employee submitted concerns on 1/26/24 about the limited number of individuals trained in restraint. On the CSC visit on 2/1/24, CSC observed the use of restraint in a lower elementary classroom. Individual incidents of restraint and isolation need to be reported.</p>	<p>PCM, at the projected size of 136 students, strives to maintain 4-5 restraint-trained staff members. Right after winter break, we dropped to 3 restraint-trained staff until the 2 new SPED IA's were trained at the end of January. PCM is currently at 4 restraint-trained staff. We will maintain this number for the remainder of the school year. This is more than sufficient for our population size and needs and ensures at least two staff members are available during staff outages.</p> <p>The incident of restraint on 2/1/24 was reported. The data was re-submitted on 2/22/2024. A copy of the report can be found here: <u>Folder of Restraint & Isolation data</u>.</p> <p>The use of restraint and isolation with any student is an absolute last resort and is used only if necessary to control spontaneous behavior that poses an imminent likelihood of serious harm to the student or others. The use of restraint by PCM staff is undertaken in accordance with state and federal law.</p> <p>We maintain a commitment to training the intentionally chosen staff members to respond to crisis situations to prevent the overuse of restraint. The full staff has received de-escalation training along with related follow-up workshops. They also receive 1:1 on-site coaching sessions from the True Measure Collaborative.</p>



<p>Administrative Team Capacity</p>	<p>The approved admin structure is not being implemented with fidelity. While there is a Montessori Coach (MC), many duties on page 387 of the charter app are being fulfilled by HOS. In the JD, the MC should have acted on behalf of HOS in their absence, but that didn't happen this Winter.</p> <p>On 1/30/24, the board is considering hiring an AP instead of MC. Compromising the requirement for the role in the approved charter is in danger of violating program terms. This lack of administrative support has impacted the school's compliance with the charter contract.</p>	<p>The Board recognizes the need for additional instructional leadership and staff leadership capacity to support the current administrative team. They are working to secure on-site coaching and support for the Head of School for the remainder of the school year.</p> <p>The MC was intended to fill their full role this year in a week on-site, week remote schedule. When we had difficulty getting the international candidate here, the best course of action was to have the MC sub in the classroom to avoid enrollment loss. The process took longer than expected (we had hoped initially to have them start after Fall break). We experienced issues with educational credit equivalency for the NWEd program after it was determined experience and education credits would satisfy the H1B application. This resulted in the candidate not being eligible this year. We began looking for a sub to complete the year following winter break. This process got behind with the release of DJ and the following actions. A sub was hired and began on Feb 21. Unfortunately, Jill will have to take medical leave. None of these issues could have been foreseen.</p> <p>This winter, the school contracted with <u>Letty Rising</u>, an experienced Montessori school leader, to be the interim Head of School from January 9th - February 8th and therefore did not need the Montessori Coach to fill in on the Head of School's behalf. The HOS was not going to be off site for the full week each week and lived 10 minutes from the school and planned to be available for communication.</p> <p>Due to the unforeseen need to release DJ, the Head of School remained onsite to handle various urgent matters. Letty Rising supported the classrooms and teachers, filling more of the MC's role. The HOS continued to support the school during this time on a part-time basis and has provided administrative support during this period.</p> <p>The board is not pursuing an Assistant Principal role for this school year at this time.</p>
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	<p>Inadequate systems to facilitate staff transitions resulted in a series of allegations and complaints by former employees to the school community, CSC, a state legislator, and state agencies. Need a better system for facilitating staff transitions to reduce the negative impact on the community.</p>	<p>We maintain a <u>staff retention tracker</u> which outlines how positions have evolved and transitioned over the years. The majority of the staffing roles fall under the expected transition or low concern reason. They left PCM because they were moving or for health/family/other employment reasons.</p> <p>We have offered exit interviews to all departed/exited staff. The interviews are with the HOS and/or a board member. Almost all employees have participated in this activity. If a grievance was presented with their departure (3 employees, one just last week), we make all efforts to address their concerns per our grievance policy.</p> <p>PCM follows a strict protocol when employees leave, are terminated, or are laid off. Their email is immediately disconnected in addition to their access to any PCM system. Their badges and codes are also immediately cleared. Two former staff members opted to use their personal email addresses to email the parent community following their departure from PCM.</p> <p>Improvements can be made by developing an exit survey form in Transparent Classroom (similar to the exit survey for families) that the staff member can complete along with (or in lieu of) their exit survey.</p>
<p>Board Capacity and Governance</p>	<p>Since the Spring of 2023, the board has been operating below the required number of trustees. Minimum is five. The fifth member was voted on 2/9/24, but one member is exiting end of February.</p>	<p>As of February 2024, we had the required number of trustees as stated in our bylaws. As of 2/26/24, we dropped back down to 4 trustees with the sudden resignation of one of our board members. Dorrie Main verbally resigned from the board after the executive session on 2/26. The board is working to find her replacement and continue board recruitment efforts. We have several strong board candidates interested in joining the board and committees. At least one will be interviewed at the next working board meeting in March.</p> <p>The board recently recruited Robin McDonald and interviewed her at a working session of the board on Feb 9, 2024, and voted her in at the same meeting. Robin has been an active board member, attending all meetings. Robin has participated</p>



		<p>in a hiring interview, along with school leadership and a staff member. Robin is a parent of students in our school and a local businesswoman with experience in HR, budgeting, management, and marketing.</p> <p>Christopher Albano has completed his application packet and will be interviewed at our next working session on March 14. Christopher has attended recent board meetings to observe and learn. Christopher is a Communications & Electronic Systems expert with a proven record for the careful management of sensitive information and situations. He is passionate about public education, with an interest in Full Inclusion and Montessori methodologies. He is respectful of the unique challenges and legal constraints that come with operating inside the public sphere.</p> <p>Alan McPhee is in the process of learning more about serving on the finance committee/potential board service/potential job shadowing of the current treasurer. Alan is a retired CPA, and has a grandson attending the school. He has indicated his intent to complete his application packet for board service. The Board Chair and Treasurer will follow up with him. If he completes his application and decides to proceed, we will also interview Alan at our March 14 working session.</p> <p>We are working towards having seven board members and will continue our extensive outreach to our community to further round out the skill set of our board and committees.</p>
	<p>The approved charter includes three advisory bodies:</p> <p>Community Advisory Council (families and community members) Provides feedback about</p>	<p>At the February 14, 2024 Special Board Meeting, the board of trustees reviewed action steps gathered from the PCM Families Town Hall (January 31, 2024). The board of trustees is restarting/launching two committees, Academic Excellence and Leadership Support and Evaluation Committee (LSEC). The board has struggled to maintain committees due to a lack of participants and a small board size.</p> <p>A board member, head of school, and co-chairs of the recently re-activated</p>



	<p>how the school and leadership are performing.</p> <p>Specialized Support Council (families of children in need of elevated services) Serves as a sounding board and support group directing families to resources, services, and information.</p> <p>Student Advisory Council (students + Montessori Coach + 1 parent volunteer) Bridging the student-adult world, share ideas, and surveys the students.</p> <p>The Board has not ensured that the structures it put in place as part of the charter application, to ensure that communication and collaboration were consistent, have been implemented.</p>	<p>Support and Coordination Council (SCC) are meeting regularly - bi-weekly - to improve the flow of information and communication between the school, parents, and community. In our second year of operation, feedback led us to revise our council structure. Families desired one council with discrete opportunities to volunteer and participate when it fit their interests and schedules. The SCC replaces the Community Advisory and the Specialized Support Council. The SCC started last spring, co-chaired by Elise Albano and Dorrie Main, but unfortunately didn't continue through the end of the school year.</p> <p>The community was not as interested in the Student Advisory Council and Specialized Support Council and preferred to have one centralized council. We have solicited feedback from students directly and through classroom surveys (ex. what kind of activities the kids were interested in). This allows us to gather more feedback from more students.</p> <p>Board members have connected with the volunteer and fundraising committees from the SCC and scheduled a meeting to discuss opportunities this year to address immediate needs in the classroom that we can support as a community.</p> <p>The Board and School Leadership will hold additional Town Hall Meetings in collaboration with the SCC. Format and frequency were a topic for discussion at the board meeting on 2/26 during committee reporting time.</p>
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	<p>The Board is obligated to oversee the School so that the School complies with its legal and contractual obligations. The Board also has responsibility for the School's performance, even when some of the obligations are delegated to the Head of School. The Board has been made aware of the Perceived Problems, above, but has not exercised adequate governance in order to ensure compliance and/or remedy identified performance, legal, and/or contractual concerns.</p>	<p>The board provides oversight of the Head of School's leadership in several key domains:</p> <p>Compliance Oversight: The board has added working sessions and special meetings to address the concerns of families, staff, and the community. The board reviews the PCM compliance tracker (linked above) at monthly board meetings.</p> <p>Parent Community Oversight: Board members consistently attend the Support and Coordination Council to ensure the parents' and community's concerns are heard. There is a new standing item for the SCC to report out at the regular board meetings similar to what the SCC was encouraged to do last year. Board members have made available open office hours where parents, staff, or community members may schedule time to connect either in person or by phone. This was communicated to families through Parent Square as well as with flyers at the front office, one-on-one interactions with staff and parents in the halls, and a notification through the SCC to parent groups on Facebook.</p> <p>Staff Oversight: Board members have connected with 6 staff members and 1 parent to schedule meetings and have already met with 3 staff members and scheduled a meeting with 1 other staff member and the parent. The purpose of these meetings is to get insight into culture and climate at the school and staff experience.</p> <p>Direct HOS Oversight: The board chair meets with the Head of School on a semi-monthly to weekly basis to provide support and guidance.</p> <p>Continuous Board Oversight Improvement: The current board chair has received regular governance coaching and support from BoardonTrack (BOT) and WA Charters since the Fall of 2023 and will continue until the rest of the school year. This coaching has included the completion of an annual BOT board self-assessment to drive board improvements.</p>
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		<p>BoardOnTrack will provide deepened support from March 1 onward to the board in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review the Feb. 26 board meeting recording and provide feedback on ways to strengthen board meeting operations.- Review board agendas before board meetings.- Governance coaching calls with board members on topics like:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Navigating challenging issues and dynamics- Generating ideas for board recruitment- Better utilizing the BoardonTrack portal- Supporting leadership transition and contingency planning
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	<p>There is not strong evidence to suggest that the Board is holding the Head of School accountable to resolving concerns brought up by members of the school community, which has contributed to students withdrawing from the school.</p>	<p>The Board is working diligently and around the clock to identify a viable plan for major changes at the school while considering operational, financial, and sustainability impacts.</p> <p>Board members have met with the HOS to ask questions and gain context. Board members have surveyed staff twice (once before winter break, and once after winter break) and met with staff members individually. Board members have responded to questions from families and the community and encouraged parties to reach out to the school and attend board meetings and SCC meetings. The board chair has worked with the HOS and SCC to get information to families that is considered most important to families.</p> <p>The board held an executive session at the February 26 Regular Board Meeting to evaluate the performance for the Head of School. No actions were taken during the executive session. Returning to the regular session following the executive session, the board asked for more time to take action and acknowledged change is necessary.</p> <p>The Board is holding a Special Meeting on March 5th, 2024, to follow up on the discussion at the February 26th Monthly Board Meeting about the Head of School's performance and discuss the resignation (effective end of the academic year) submitted by the Head of School to the Board on March 1, 2024. The Board will also discuss the possibility of engaging an independent, 3rd party-led investigation regarding the concerns shared in the Commission's three corrective action notices. The Board has notified the Commission of the special meeting and the resignation. The Board is also working to secure on-site coaching and support for the Head of School for the remainder of the school year and has preliminarily discussed this with Letty Rising, the former interim Head of School who filled in when the current HOS was on leave earlier this year. The Board is also working with WA Charters to have an employee, who is also a former charter elementary school principal, be on-site at scheduled intervals throughout the spring to support with leadership capacity-building and community communications.</p>
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Notice of Perceived Problem #2

Dear Washington State Charter School Commission,

I am writing on behalf of the Pullman Community Montessori (PCM) Board of Directors to provide an update on the Notice of Perceived Problem #2 (NPP). We believe deeply that maintaining a safe learning environment is our top priority as a school and paramount for the well-being of our students, staff, and families. The Board also understands its contractual obligations as parties to the approved charter contract.

Our team has been diligently working to address the areas of concern highlighted in the NPP by the Commission. In order for the school to address any concerns, stakeholders must follow the approved and publicly-shared [grievance process](#). PCM understands its obligation as a public school to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, and the Board believes it's critical to note that several of the concerns noted by the Commission did not come through the approved and appropriate notification channels so that the school and Board could deliver appropriate and timely resolution. We are working hard to address any gaps and challenges with our current processes.

I am pleased to report that significant progress on the remaining areas of concern has been made, and we are confident in our ability to achieve full compliance. Some of the issues identified have already been addressed prior to the notice being rendered. Please see the table below for a response, and some clarifications, to each of the areas highlighted by the Commission. Please let us know if any additional information is required.

Thank you,

Bev Wolff, Chair of the Board of the Directors
Pullman Community Montessori



Area of Concern	Context of Concern	Updates & Information
<p>Threats of retaliation from the Head of School</p>	<p>In the Commission’s meetings and correspondence with both current and former teachers, the threat of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of the Head of School indicating one’s job being at risk if negative information was made public by employees, was described multiple times.</p>	<p>The specific allegation named by the Commission here has to do with a staff meeting in which the HOS issued a reminder to staff that sharing confidential information outside of the school's outlined channels of communication was grounds for termination. This, along with adhering to professional expectations outlined in the staff handbook, has been an issue this year and the staff subsequently had a staff-wide discussion about it.</p> <p>The expectations were clearly outlined in the Staff Handbook, through meetings held before and during the school year, and through trainings staff have participated in related to: The Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act (FERPA), 20 USC 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99 (regarding student educational records); Washington State Student Education Records Law, RCW 28A.605.030; The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 USC 1400 et. seq. and 34 CFR Part 300 (protecting the confidentiality of personally identifying information contained in students records of students with disabilities). Particularly relevant sections of the staff handbook include: Professional Expectation (pg 45), Employee Behavior/Personal Conduct (pg 46), Confidentiality (pg 49), External Information and Public Relations (pg 50), Staff use of social media and tech (pg 51), Corrective Action (pg 53).</p> <p>No staff member filed a grievance about this concern or brought it to the HOS or to the Board, which is the body that handles concerns regarding the HOS, per the school’s publicly posted grievance policy.</p>



		<p>The Board discussed the NPP at the March 5 Special Board Meeting. The following next steps came out of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given that several of these allegations did not come through the school’s approved grievance process, the Board will initiate a third-party investigation into the claims of retaliation. The Board has met with Schwabe Law Firm and is in the process of starting the investigation. • The Board immediately put into practice the following process to address allegations of retaliation by the Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Board member will attend as a note taker for a meeting between HOS and another party who is bringing a concern. ○ Meeting notes and any action steps will be shared after the meeting with all parties, to ensure that the notes reflect what was shared at the meeting. ○ A date for a follow-up will be arranged. ○ The party bringing a concern to the HOS may also invite an additional person to attend for support. • The Board required that the HOS make no hiring or firing decisions without consulting with the Board first. • The Board required that all important communications about changes, etc. are done in partnership with a Board member, to ensure alignment with school policies and procedures. • Trustee McDonald will continue to offer Board office hours twice a week. The first office hours took place on 3/6, and two parents and 1 teacher attended. She has been vocal about making sure people know they can reach out to her, leaving flyers at the front office with her PCM email and office phone number. She had 4 1:1 conversations with staff members prior to the open office hours about how they feel about the current situation and what they feel the school needs to move forward. • Directors McDonald and Burton will be reaching out to HOS to collaborate on a HOS Transition Support and Accountability Plan, as the HOS’
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		<p>resignation was accepted by the Board through a vote at the 3/5 meeting. The Board is committed to supporting the HOS through this transition, and making it as successful as possible for everyone involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board is available and responsive to stakeholder concerns and ideas. Directors Wolff and McDonald and WA Charters attended a meeting with teachers and, separately, with families in the SSC on 3/7. • Director Wolff will continue to meet weekly with HOS to offer support and be a thought partner. The Board has requested that a brief summary of their meetings, any action items, and progress toward goals are communicated after the meeting.
	<p>In the Commission’s meetings and correspondence with parents, the experience of and fear of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of targeting one’s student for reporting safety issues was described.</p> <p>Section 5.25 of the charter contract prohibits against any direct or indirect intimidation, interference, or coercion of the employee in disclosing alleged improper action by the School, and hinders safety improvements.</p>	<p>The Board and HOS are taking the steps listed above to address this allegation. In addition, it is critical that all stakeholders follow the school’s approved grievance process. The Board reminds the public about this process at each Board meeting. It is also posted on the school’s website.</p>



<p>Unilateral Change to Education Program Term #1</p>	<p>Developmentally appropriate age-grouped classrooms, including three-year blocking of ages by developmental appropriateness.</p>	<p>The HOS clarified in a communication sent via email to the Commission on February 9, 2024, and in the PCM Scenario Planning for Enrollment Loss shared with the Commission that the 3rd through 7th graders were not being joined into a single cohort, thus not violating our program term 1. Rather, the cohorts were being brought into similar proximity so the classroom team could address their needs.</p> <p>Per the suggestion of Commission staff, PCM opted to have Jordan Bovee (AC IA), who is emergency certificated, become the teacher of record as a long-term sub for the OE cohort. The OE cohort is housed in room 205a. The AC cohort remains in room 205. Dave Schneider will remain the teacher of record for the AC community and will mentor Jordan.</p> <p>The two classes combine at occasional points in the day to strengthen community, which can be seen in the daily schedule. Core academic courses (Math/STEM, SS, ELA) are held separately. 145 minutes of community-building time, including PE, are spent with the cohorts together. 205 minutes are spent with the cohorts apart in their respective developmental grade bands, working on core subjects.</p> <p>The ED of the Commission was on site for a visit on a day when five of the staff were out from 12:30 pm onward for a fellow colleague's funeral (2/26/24). Classroom configurations were atypical because of the significant coverage needs. All students were supervised by a certificated teacher.</p>
<p>The Board has failed to:</p>	<p>Ensure legal and contractual compliance</p>	<p>The Board received a training on its contractual responsibilities and obligations from Jessica de Barros, the Executive Director of the Charter School Commission at the Feb. 26th meeting. The Board is offering more time and support to HOS and plans to have more frequent check-ins with HOS to ensure the compliance requirements and deadlines are met on time. The Board is receiving regular coaching from WA Charters and BoardOnTrack on compliance, governance, and</p>



		<p>management of the HOS, and has regularly engaged their legal counsel to address concerns and questions, including at the last two Board meetings.</p>
	<p>Hold the Head of School accountable to resolve concerns raised by members of the school community.</p>	<p>The Board and HOS are taking the steps listed above related to enhanced monitoring and a 3rd party investigation to address this concern. The school must receive concerns to resolve them. We will look forward to engaging in this process as concerns are brought to the HOS and Board.</p>



Immediate Correction of Safety Deficiencies

March 7, 2024

Dear Washington State Charter Commission,

I am writing on behalf of the Pullman Community Montessori (PCM) Board of Directors to provide an update on our ongoing work to ensure student safety and well being and in accordance with state regulations and standards. We believe deeply that maintaining a safe learning environment is our top priority as a school and paramount for the well-being and education of our students.

Our team has been diligently working to address the areas of concern highlighted in the Immediate Correction on Safety Deficiencies by the Commission. In order for the school to address any concerns, stakeholders must follow the approved and publicly-shared [grievance processes](#). PCM understands its obligation as a public school to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of its students, and the Board believes it's critical to note that several of the concerns noted by the Commission did not come through the approved and appropriate notification channels so that the school and Board could deliver appropriate and timely resolution.

Some of the issues identified have already been addressed prior to the notice being rendered. We plan to review the safety procedures and address any lingering concerns at the 3/15 staff meeting. I am pleased to report that significant progress on the remaining areas of concern has been made, and we are confident in our ability to achieve full compliance. Please see the table below for a response, and some clarifications, to each of the areas highlighted by the Commission. Please let us know if any additional information is required by the Commission.

Thank you,

Laylah Sullivan, Head of School, sent on behalf of the Board of the Directors
Pullman Community Montessori



Overview of Immediate Next Steps

Safety Issue Identified by Commission	Immediate Next Steps to Address Issue and Initial Step Taken
<p>Student elopement on multiple different days.</p>	<p>How School Will Address Issue: The school will review and continue to enforce its Student Elopement Protocol. We follow the protocol from our de-escalation and R&I trainings with TMC. The protocol is listed below along with the number of incidents this year. The board will approve the elopement procedure as an official school procedure at the next board meeting.</p> <p>Incidence level this year (2023-24):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There have been less than 20 incidents of elopement that occurred within the building, isolated to specific students. We know their habits and have built a plan with the student and family to mitigate the situation. Currently, the incidents are much lower than at the beginning of the year (now only 1 or 2 times in a month). Students' self-regulation and communication have increased dramatically in working with the common elopers. ○ We have 4 students who have elopement potential in their plan. We have 2 more who are undergoing evaluation that will have notations in their plan. 2 of the 4 students with plans have not eloped or have done so just once this year. As far as students leaving the building, there have been 3-4 incidents this year, all resolved safely. No incidents have occurred since late fall. ○ MIA (when eye contact is lost with students) - This has occurred less than 10 times this year with students that have moved quickly and students were located within 5 minutes. Students who have left never left the sidewalk around the property or went into the street, and law enforcement has not been needed to be contacted because students were located quickly and never left campus. <p>Response System/Protocol</p> <p>We call these students elopers. The staff members have participated in over 10 <u>direct and related trainings</u> (8/18-25, 11/1 Nautilus team only review, 11/29 intervention planning</p>



	<p>reflection, 12/6 quick notes review) since the beginning of the school year. This training is part of our de-escalation training provided by the True Measures Collaborative (TMC). We also had a Nautilus protocol refresher (who to call and when) and a review of the school’s practices in relation to <u>restraint and isolation</u> (identifying who is appropriately trained). Staff members are made aware of who elopes, what the best response system is for de-escalation, and what level of safety concern there is when they elope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call the Nautilus team and send an all-staff text (if high concern/missing) and pursue the student as supervision and safety allow. ○ Nautilus assumes tracking/pursuit at an appropriate distance for the state of the student and habit. ○ Triangulation protocol is initiated with Nautilus if a high-risk student (i.e. non-habitual, highly elevated) or student is missing. Gladish management is called so cameras can be utilized to find the student. ○ Floor-to-floor and room search is initiated if the student is missing. ○ Police and family will be contacted if the student is not located within 10 minutes (this has never happened). ○ If a student leaves campus, pursuit ends, and it is an immediate call to the police (this has never happened.) ○ Family is then contacted and the child moves through our Nautilus process. <p>Initial Step Taken: The school will hold a professional development session on 3/15 to review the Safety Plan and the elopement protocol with current staff.</p>
<p>Unsafe student behavior that interrupts the educational and working environment, is harmful to themselves and others, and creates a physically and emotionally unsafe environment, including student(s) throwing chairs, students’ heads being pushed against the wall,</p>	<p>How School Will Address Issue: At PCM, our culture is rooted in the belief that discipline is positive and can be taught and is part of our everyday efforts essential to building leadership habits. These habits are critical in our pursuit of our mission. Every PCM teacher is trained in the Nautilus Approach which is a trauma-informed, attachment-based theory approach to discipline. The Nautilus Approach leverages restorative justice practices to help students develop their conflict resolution skills and repair hurt/damage when appropriate.</p>



<p>and/or kicking others on multiple different days.</p>	<p>The Nautilus approach is partnered with the Child Study process to address reoccurring or extreme events. Families are always contacted if the behavior of a student results in a Nautilus call (form in Transparent Classroom and call to family). If 3 events occur within a month, a child study team will be convened. Some children are on specific plans for physical behavior. These plans include removal of the child from the classroom if there is a significant act of physical aggression towards a student/staff or materials. To re-enter the classroom, the restore and repair process must be followed and the child has limited mobility in the classroom (freedom expanded with demonstration of responsibility and use of tools). If the act is minor, the child’s ability to move around the classroom without permission will be limited. If they can adhere to this, the child may stay in the classroom. If another minor infraction occurs, they are removed from the classroom to work in the quiet space. They may re-enter the next day under the same limited-movement protocol after the restore and repair process has been completed. Parents are always communicated with, and in some instances, come in to provide their child additional support.</p> <p>Incident levels this school year (2023-24): This data is available through Skyward. There has never been an incident of a child throwing a chair, but children have tipped chairs over.</p> <p>Initial Step Taken: The school will hold a professional development session on (3/15) to review the Safety Plan with current staff. The Nautilus procedures and protocols, in addition to de-escalation practices, will be reviewed.</p> <p>The Nautilus team will review data the week of 3/11 to ensure students are making progress.</p>
<p>Severe student bullying including at least one account of a student telling another student to commit suicide multiple times, at least one account of a student threatening to kill another student’s entire family, and at least two students being punched, in</p>	<p>How School Will Address Issue: PCM is quick to act when we receive a report from a student or parent or a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) form. We’ve only received one HIB form to date. For significant events, PCM engages in the Threat Assessment Process (this document outlines the process more thoroughly) in accordance with our discipline matrix. The school will review and enforce its HIB policy and procedure and school bus behavior policy outlined in the Transportation Handbook. These are found in the</p>



<p>school and/or on the school bus.</p>	<p>Family Handbook and shared with each enrolled family (copied below).</p> <p>The Transportation Handbook is signed by each family who uses transportation. The Office Manager will ensure our bus drivers understand how to enforce the above policies and communicate issues to the school for resolution and communication to parents. Bus families were reminded to review the Transportation Handbook as we returned from winter break. Another Parent Square note will go home to families next week encouraging them to review the Transportation Handbook again and check in with their child.</p> <p>Bus Policy Transportation Handbook 2023-24 Transportation provided by PCM is a privilege and students will be suspended from school bus transportation due to inappropriate behavior. Students are expected to follow all safety rules while riding the bus. Therefore, we expect the children to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remain in their seats, feet and body facing forward 2. Talk in quiet and respectful voices 3. Obey the bus driver 4. Keep feet out of the aisles 5. Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus 6. Keep hands to themselves and inside the bus <p>If a student does not follow the rules, the student will be referred for restorative justice action by the bus driver. The following procedures assume a typical infraction from the list above.</p> <p>Behavior that substantially endangers students or adults, will result in students receiving a heavier consequence earlier.</p> <p>1st referral - Referral from bus driver and contact home 2nd referral - Family meeting to develop a behavior plan and contract 3rd referral - bus suspension (time to be determined) If the unsafe behaviors continue, the student may lose bus privileges for the remainder of the year.</p> <p>Initial Step Taken: The HOS will hold a professional development session on 3/15 to review the Safety Plan with current staff. The plan will include the HIB and bus policies.</p>
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	<p>The HOS, Office Manager, and Bus Driver will review the bus seating chart.</p> <p>The HOS and Office Manager will hold a Bus LEADERS community circle with students to review expectations and consequences for not following the community agreements (conducted the week of 3/11).</p> <p>A Parent Square announcement will be sent to families reminding families how to report concerns and incidents of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying.</p>
<p>Additional incidents of safety issues where students were either physically harmed or threatened with harm were also reported in the current/former staff and parent meetings and communications, along with concerns of a lack of responsiveness to the safety issues by the school.</p>	<p>How School Will Address Issue: PCM has not received additional incident reports from families, and to our understanding do not have any outstanding or unaddressed incident reports. We will encourage families to inform us if their concerns have not been adequately addressed. If the school can't resolve the issue to the family's satisfaction, we will refer the family to our Grievance and Conflict Resolution Process and encourage them to reach out to the PCM Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Initial Step Taken: The PCM office will send out a Parent Square announcement to families the week of 3/11 (along with the HIB reminder) encouraging families to reach out to the school.</p>
<p>Students and staff feeling fearful for their safety at school, that there is inadequate supervision_of students to keep them safe, and being afraid to go to school.</p>	<p>How School Will Address Issue: PCM adheres to a model that operates with two staff in the classroom and on the playground. Often a third adult (either sub, parent volunteer, or SPED IA) is also in the classrooms. PCM HOS will review supervision protocols and practices noted above during the staff PD on 3/15.</p> <p>Initial Step Taken: PCM Board reps will check in with staff members to assess if their needs have been met or are being addressed by the school admin.</p> <p>PCM board will contract with a third-party investigator to look into the harassment and retaliation claims that have been presented to the school. The results of this investigation will be shared with the Commission.</p>



	The HOS will hold a professional development session on 3/15 to review the Safety Plan with current staff.
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Safety Plan

PCM proposes the following [Safety Plan](#) to the Commission for approval. It will be initiated immediately after Commission approval. The Safety Plan includes all policies and procedures that are referenced in the “Overview” table below. The table includes additional details about the policies and procedures per the request of the Commission.

Overview

A plan to prevent student elopement and a description of how the School will inform the Commission of student elopement incidents.	The school will refresh all staff on the de-escalation protocol to minimize student elopement. For students who do elope the plan for these students will be followed as outlined above. Elopement events will be tracked and shared with the Board as outlined in the last section of this table. The school will add a data tracker of “safety incidents” that will include incidents of elopement and grievances filed related to HIB to be shared with the Board and the Commission.
A plan to ensure and enhance student safety at the school and on the school bus.	This plan is outlined in the table above. Please see the school bus behavior policy outlined in the Transportation Handbook and in the Family Handbook . Both of these documents are in our Safety Plan.
A plan to provide staff professional development and direct support for challenging student behaviors.	In addition to the Safety Plan review PD scheduled for 3/15, the TMC continues to provide coaching to each classroom team and the Director of Specialized Programs. They will engage in one more site visit before the end of the year (this has not been scheduled yet). They just provided coaching and feedback about support for challenging student behaviors at their site visit on 2/4. The classroom teams will continue their weekly collab sessions with the SPED team to field any questions or concerns. The Safety Plan itself will be the guiding document for the 3/15 staff PD on addressing challenging student behaviors.
A plan to obtain an independent evaluation of multi-tiered system of support practices, policies, and procedures that includes: a	The school will request that the True Measure Collaborative, a technical assistance provider, conduct an independent review of our MTSS practices, policies, and procedures. We have requested that this review and the subsequent recommendations be completed by the end of March and are



<p>focus on behaviors at the school; a discipline review; universal supports; and Tiers 1, 2, and 3 supports. The evaluation should include recommendations and an implementation plan.</p>	<p>awaiting confirmation. The review will consist of a document review and an on-site visit and observations. The school will then develop an implementation plan, incorporating the recommendations by 3/31/24. We anticipate since TMC supported through our WSIM process that adjustments will be minor.</p>
<p>A plan for how the school will respond to harassment, intimidation and bullying without fear of retaliation.</p>	<p>PCM is quick to act when we receive a report from a student or parent or a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) form. We've only received one HIB form to date. For significant events, PCM engages in the Threat Assessment Process (this document outlines the process more thoroughly) in accordance with our discipline matrix. The school will review and enforce its HIB policy and procedure. The PCM office will send out a Parent Square announcement to families the week of 3/11 (along with the HIB reminder) encouraging families to reach out to the school.</p> <p>PCM board will contract with a third-party investigator to look into the harassment and retaliation claims that have been presented to the school. The results of this investigation will be shared with the Commission.</p>
<p>A plan for the Board to ensure compliance with the safety plan.</p>	<p>The board will review the Safety Plan and approve it at the next board meeting. The school will add a data tracker of "safety incidents" to its monthly dashboard. This will include incidents of elopement and grievances filed related to HIB. The board chair will continue to meet with the HOS weekly to monitor any safety concerns. The board agreed at the last board meeting (3/4) that the meeting notes will be shared with the entire board for transparency and accountability.</p>



February 29, 2024

Board of Directors
Pullman Community Montessori
115 NW State Street
Pullman, WA 99163

**Re: (1) Immediate Correction of Safety Deficiencies Required and (2) Notice of Perceived Problems–
Please Confirm Receipt and Note Deadlines Below**

Dear Board Members:

- (1)** I am writing to provide you notice that the Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) has reason to believe that there is immediate threat to student or employee health, safety or welfare at Pullman Community Montessori (PCM). Thus, pursuant to Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 108-40-040 (2), the Commission is requiring immediate correction of the deficiencies as set forth below. Additionally, changes in the Charter School Act in 2023 allow the Commission to conduct or require oversight activities for “a pattern of well-founded complaints about a charter school” “or other objective circumstances” that warrant Commission oversight.
- (2)** *(2) In addition to the Immediate Correction Required under WAC 108-40-040(2),* the Commission is providing a Notice of Perceived Problems (NPP). The Commission has reason to believe that PCM has not met legal and contractual obligations, including, but not limited to Contract provisions §§ 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.11, 5.21, 5.25, 8.1, 8.2, 16.2 and Applicable Law.

Background:

The January 20, 2024 NPP provides additional background. Since the January 20, 2024 NPP sent to the PCM Board, Commission staff have completed additional observations at PCM, attended a Board meeting¹, met with current and former parents and teachers, and received numerous additional complaints:

- The Commission has received a pattern of complaints from current and/or former staff and parents of the school reporting:
 - Student elopement on multiple different days.
 - Unsafe student behavior that interrupts the educational and working environment, is harmful to themselves and others, and creates a physically and emotionally unsafe environment, including student(s) throwing chairs, students’ heads being pushed against the wall, and/or kicking others on multiple different days.

¹ A Board member resigned after this meeting based in part on concerns with the Head of School and Board governance.

- Severe student bullying including at least one account of a student telling another student commit suicide multiple times, at least one account of a student threatening to kill another student's entire family, and at least two students being punched, in school and/or on the school bus.
- Additional incidents of safety issues where students were either physically harmed or threatened with harm were also reported in the current/former staff and parent meetings and communications, along with concerns of a lack of responsiveness to the safety issues by the school.
- Students and staff feeling fearful for their safety at school, that there is inadequate supervision of students to keep them safe, and being afraid to go to school.
- Threats of retaliation from the Head of School (i.e., job loss). In the Commission's meetings and correspondence with both current and former teachers, the threat of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of the Head of School indicating one's job being at risk if negative information was made public by employees, was described multiple times. In the Commission's meetings and correspondence with parents, the experience of and fear of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of targeting one's student for reporting safety issues was described. This is concerning because Section 5.25 of the charter contract prohibits against any direct or indirect intimidation, interference, or coercion of the employee in disclosing alleged improper action by the School, and hinders safety improvements.

In addition, during a site visit to the school on February 26, 2024, the Commission learned, that despite expressly advising the Head of School that the Commission would need to review and approve a change requested to the educational program terms and conditions before the School could proceed with the proposed change, the Head of School initiated the change without Commission approval. The change involved combining classrooms so that students spanning grades 3 through 7 were taught one classroom, with one teacher and one classroom assistant in the classroom. This is a failure to implement, deliver, support and maintain the Commission-approved Educational Program Term #1 : Developmentally appropriate age-grouped classrooms, including three-year blocking of ages by developmental appropriateness (ages 6-9 (lower elementary), 9-12 (upper elementary), and 12-15 (adolescent community)). The change groups the upper elementary and adolescent community together in one classroom. This unilateral change, particularly after the Head of School was advised that the Commission needed to approve the change, is a material violation of the Contract.

(1) Immediate Correction of Safety Deficiencies Required.

PCM is required to correct the following safety deficiencies immediately.

Commission Findings Requiring Immediate Correction for Safety:

- The Commission has received a pattern of complaints from current and/or former staff and parents of the school reporting:
 - Student elopement on multiple different days.
 - Unsafe student behavior that interrupts the educational and working environment, is harmful to themselves and others, and creates a physically and emotionally unsafe environment, including student(s) throwing chairs, students' heads being pushed against the wall, and/or kicking others on multiple different days.

- Severe student bullying including at least one account of a student telling another student commit suicide multiple times, at least one account of a student threatening to kill another student's entire family, and at least two students being punched, in school and/or on the school bus.
- Additional incidents of safety issues where students were either physically harmed or threatened with harm were also reported in the current/former staff and parent meetings and communications, along with concerns of a lack of responsiveness to the safety issues by the school.
- Students and staff feeling fearful for their safety at school, that there is inadequate supervision of students to keep them safe, and being afraid to go to school.

PCM is required to take immediate steps to address safety issues identified in the findings above and to explain to the Commission the initial steps taken.

In addition, PCM must propose to the Commission, in writing, a safety plan within 5 working days, with a deadline of March 7, 2024. The safety plan should be initiated immediately after approval by the Commission. The safety plan should include the following elements:

- A plan to prevent student elopement and a description of how the School will inform the Commission of student elopement incidents.
- A plan to ensure and enhance student safety at the school and on the school bus.
- A plan to provide staff professional development and direct support for challenging student behaviors.
- A plan to obtain an independent evaluation of multi-tiered system of support practices, policies, and procedures that includes: a focus on behaviors at the school; a discipline review; universal supports; and Tiers 1, 2, and 3 supports. The evaluation should include recommendations and an implementation plan.
- A plan for how the school will respond to harassment, intimidation and bullying without fear of retaliation.
- A plan for the Board to ensure compliance with the safety plan.

(2) Notice of Perceived Problem:

PCM has 7 working days to respond to the NPP, with a deadline of March 11, 2024. Per WAC 108-40-030 (6), fewer than 10 working days is being provided due to continuing issues despite extensive communication with the School, and even after the original Notice of Perceived Problem was issued on February 20, 2024.

Summary of Perceived Problems

- Threats of retaliation from the Head of School (i.e., job loss). In the Commission's meetings and correspondence with both current and former teachers, the threat of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of the Head of School indicating one's job being at risk if negative information was made public by employees, was described multiple times. In the Commission's meetings and correspondence with parents, the experience of and fear of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of targeting one's student for reporting safety issues was described. This is concerning because Section

5.25 of the charter contract prohibits against any direct or indirect intimidation, interference, or coercion of the employee in disclosing alleged improper action by the School, and hinders safety improvements.

- Unilateral change to Educational Program Term #1: Developmentally appropriate age-grouped classrooms, including three-year blocking of ages by developmental appropriateness.
- Board has failed to: ensure legal and contractual compliance; and hold the Head of School accountable to resolve concerns raised by members of the school community.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica de Barros".

Jessica de Barros
Executive Director



February 20, 2024

Board of Directors
Pullman Community Montessori
115 NW State Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Re: Notice of Perceived Problem – Please Confirm Receipt and Note Deadlines Below

Dear Board Members:

I am writing to follow up on conversations and correspondence we have had to provide you notice that the Washington State Charter School Commission (Commission) has reason to believe that Pullman Community Montessori (PCM) has not met legal and contractual obligations, including but not limited to, Contract provisions §§ 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.21, 6.4, 14.2.1, 14.2.2 (including attachment 10), 16.2, and Applicable Law (including the increased emphasis on charter school board accountability for exercising effective educational, operational, and financial oversight of the charter school added to the Charter School Act in 2023). Additionally, changes in the Charter School Act in 2023 allow the Commission to conduct or require oversight activities for “a pattern of well-founded complaints about a charter school” “or other objective circumstances” that warrant Commission oversight.

Thus, pursuant to Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 108-40-030(4), the Commission is issuing a notice of these perceived problems. PCM has ten (10) working days from the receipt of this notice to provide a written response. The Commission will consider the response and other evidence and information in determining whether to take corrective action and/or impose sanctions. Should PCM fail to provide information by the deadline, the Commission will take action based on the information in its possession. Failure to comply with the deadline is a contractual violation and will be considered in the determination about appropriate corrective action and/or sanctions, which could include revocation.

To ensure that the Commission’s ultimate decision regarding these perceived problems is based on accurate information, PCM has an opportunity to supplement any information previously provided to the Commission. Below, the Commission provides PCM with a detailed discussion of the perceived problems. This is done in service of PCM and will help to ensure that any decision is based on an accurate understanding of the facts.

Background

Under the PCM Board Governance documents (Contract, Attachment 2), PCM is required to have a minimum of five board members. PCM has frequently been under that number since the spring of 2023, only recently adding a fifth earlier this month (however, another Board member will be departing later this month, dropping the number back down to four). The Commission has raised this concern multiple times, and the Head of School and Board chair have shared plans for adding new board members.



In October of 2023 Commission staff shared concerns with the school about a developing pattern of late compliance submissions including, but not limited to, the school's 2022-23 Annual Performance Report. The issue of late compliance submissions was discussed with the school leader during their Quality School Review on October 16, 2023. Suggestions were made to have an operations staff member help with some of the school submissions, and the Commission's Oversight Manager volunteered to help orient a new staff member to the compliance software if necessary.

On November 6, 2023, Commission staff reached out to the school and Board Chair to discuss that because they were going to be losing another board member in the near future, they would be dropping even further below their required number of board members. Commission staff requested information on the Board's plans for recruiting additional Board members. The Board Chair indicated that they were continuing to do outreach, but struggling to find people willing to volunteer their time. The Board Secretary resigned on November 14, 2023, while at the same time, a new Trustee was approved to join the Board. This kept the total number of Board members at four, whereas the bylaws require five board members.

On November 7, 2023, Commission staff received an email inquiring into the use of space heaters by the school from a community member. The Commission received three additional emails from community members expressing concern over the use of space heaters in the classrooms, and inquiries from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and a state legislator about complaints they had received regarding this concern. Upon inquiring with the school, the Commission learned that the boiler in the building had not been functional since October 17, 2023, and would not be functional until the end of November. The school indicated that it was made aware of this on approximately October 17, 2023, but did not inform the Commission although the boiler not functioning had the potential to disrupt the education of students and the potential for closure of the school. On November 8, 2023, the Commission directed the school to contact the Fire Department and/or the City permitting department to ensure safety protocols for K-12 schools were being followed. On November 13, 2023, the Head of School confirmed that they received approval from the Pullman Fire Department to allow the use of space heaters in the rooms until the boiler was fully functional. At a board meeting held on November 30, 2023, the Head of School announced that the school's boiler was fully functional at that time.

On November 15, 2023, Commission staff met with the school leader and Board Chair to discuss Board capacity, financial viability, and a pattern of complaints received about the school. The Commission requested that the school share information on parent survey data and financial modeling by the end of November. Commission staff contacted the school on November 20, 2023 to remind them that the school's enrollment was close to a decrease of 20% or more students from the approved budget. Commission staff emailed the Head of School on December 20, 2023 to request a meeting to discuss the status of the school's operational plans. The Commission emailed the Head of School again on January 3, 2024 to remind the Head of School that a meeting was requested, and the meeting took place on January 12, 2024. The school did not provide the information to the Commission as requested during this time frame.

On January 26, 2024, the Head of School informed the Commission that a staff member was separated for not complying with a contractual condition regarding certification. The Head of School also shared an

email that the teacher sent to many PCM families and community members that alleged concerns in areas including lack of support for students receiving special education services and for those that don't receive special education services, student safety, and a lack of transparency from school leadership with staff and parents. Commission staff immediately required the school to send safety procedures to the Commission and initiated an investigation. Commission staff met with the school leader and the board chair on January 30, 2024 to learn more about the impact of this termination on the School, students beginning to unenroll from the school, and plans for a parent meeting to address the allegations on January 31, 2024. Commission staff shared plans to attend the parent meeting and visit the school.

On January 29, 2024 the Head of School sent an email to the Commission stating that the school's enrollment would be falling below 80% of budgeted enrollment once two additional students' withdrawals were completed. The School was required to complete and submit a Decrease in Enrollment form to the Commission within 24 hours, but did not send notification until February 2, 2024, after being reminded by Commission staff.

On January 31, 2024 the School held a meeting with parents/families to discuss issues regarding student safety, special education, the School's financial viability, and communication with families. This included question and answer time for families with the school. Commission staff observed this meeting. Many families voiced concern about communication from the school and transparency communicating about issues the School faced, especially financial viability. Parents expressed frustration that there was not a venue to more actively engage with school improvement efforts, to which the School responded that the parent group did not have a leader. An individual volunteered to lead the parent group and scheduled a meeting for February 8, 2024.

On February 1, 2024, the Commission conducted a site visit to evaluate safety concerns raised by the terminated staff member, including the risk of hot pipes in a newly constructed classroom and safety procedures for that classroom. The Commission found that the pipes were wrapped appropriately and safety procedures for the older elementary classroom were appropriate if conducted as specified.

On February 9, 2024, the Board approved an additional member, bringing the total number of board members to five, which is the minimum required by their bylaws. The Board also announced that a member would be leaving the Board at the end of the month, so as of February 29, 2024, the Board would again be below the number required by their bylaws.

On February 12, 2024, the Head of School and Board Chair met with Commission staff and shared that the school had approximately 17 days cash on hand and was considering budget cuts and operational changes to continue operations for the current school year.

As of February 14, 2024, the School reported 94 enrolled students. This included 22 withdrawals since the beginning of January, three newly enrolled students, and one student in the process of enrollment. Fifteen of the 22 withdrawals were students who had been in the Older Elementary classroom with the teacher who had recently been separated from the School.

As of February 20, 2024, the Commission has received numerous complaints from parents and community members regarding the school since August 2023. The School proactively shared some of

these complaints with the Commission to keep Commission staff informed about the challenges faced by the school. The Commission found that some of the complaints were not violations of the contract or law (e.g., the use of space heaters, allegations that the school was not complying with the Open Public Meetings Act, safety of student restroom procedures, teacher certification concerns, and safety concerns regarding a hot pipe not being properly insulated). Some complaints are still under investigation (e.g., students receiving special education services, safety procedures on the bus and playground, and isolation and restraint practices). The majority of these complaints were within the School or School Board's area of responsibility, yet were not effectively resolved at the school level. The number of unresolved complaints from the school community indicate a pattern of a lack of effective communication with the school community, and community dissatisfaction, contributing to the decline in enrollment.

Summary of Perceived Problems

Based on information received from PCM and other information gathered in its investigation, the Commission has determined that due to the significant decrease in enrollment, the school's financial status appears unsatisfactory for the following reasons:

- **Lack of Effective Financial Oversight of the School**
 - **Student Enrollment**
 - The Commission has determined that due to the significant decrease in enrollment, and the number of days of cash on hand, the school's financial status appears unsatisfactory. The school is currently at 69% of budgeted enrollment. As of February 12, 2024, the school reported 94 enrolled students compared to 136 budgeted.
 - The school does not have sufficient cash flow to complete the school year without significant changes to their current operational and organizational structure.
- **Lack of Effective Operational and Educational Oversight of the School**
 - **Compliance**
 - The school is not meeting deadlines for submission of required compliance documents. The Commission has been communicating with the school as deadlines are missed to establish reasonable timelines for completion. However, deadlines continue to be missed. The due dates required by the Annual Compliance Calendar can be extended in extenuating circumstances, but this is meant to be an exception to standard operating procedure. The current lack of capacity to meet compliance deadlines puts the school out of compliance with the Charter Contract.
 - Of the 38 Epicenter compliance submissions required by the charter contract, 12 (or 32%) have been submitted late this school year (August 1, 2023-February 16, 2023). The most recent instance of this is the Student Transfers and Exits form due on February 1, 2024 and not submitted until February 5, 2024. While this specific submission was submitted without reminder (yet still late), it speaks to a continued pattern of late compliance submissions.
 - The School's Annual Performance Report for the 2022-23 school year is currently outstanding. The original due date was October 1, 2023, which was missed by the School. After this omission, an extension was

requested on October 5, 2023 until October 10, 2023, and granted. A follow-up email on October 6, 2023 requested an extension until October 13, 2023, which was granted. This deadline was missed and the submission is still outstanding. The School's Oversight Manager followed up with the Head of School in the Quality School Review on October 16, 2023 to discuss concerns about the school's late compliance submissions. On January 18, 2024 the Oversight Manager emailed the Head of School to inquire about the report and share the previous year's report as a resource. The Head of School replied on January 18 to say it would be done by the end of January and that she was receiving support for data analysis. She also shared this status with board members at the School's Board meeting that same day. On January 31 staff received an email from the Head of School saying due to issues at hand she'd now submit the annual report by February 16. Commission staff brought up that the Annual Performance Report for 2022-23 still needed to be completed with the school leader and Board chair in the School's Quality School Review on February 15, 2024. The Annual Performance Report is currently 122 days overdue as of February 16, 2024. As per charter contract section 14.2 "the school shall be subject to a review of its academic, organizational, and financial performance at least annually." Currently this report is long overdue, which makes it difficult for Commission staff to assess school performance for school year 2022-23.

- Notification of decreased enrollment was not submitted immediately as required by charter contract section 6.4. The school fell below 80% of budgeted enrollment officially on January 30, 2024 and did not submit the notice of decreased enrollment until reminded by Commission Staff on February 2, 2024.
- On January 30, 2024, the Commission was notified by OSPI that the school had not submitted the restraint and isolation data for the 2022-23 school year to OSPI as required by January 1, 2024. This is a violation of charter contract section 5.2, Public School Status, where it states that the school is subject to all local, state, and federal requirements for reporting. It also violates RCW 28A.600.485 (7)(a), which states "by January 1st annually, each school district shall summarize the written reports received under subsection (5) of this section and submit the summaries to the office of the superintendent of public instruction. For each school, the school district shall include the number of individual incidents of restraint and isolation, the number of students involved in the incidents, the number of injuries to students and staff, and the types of restraint or isolation used." Concerns about having a limited number of individuals trained in restraint were brought to the attention of the Commission on January 26, 2024, in an email shared by school leadership from a former employee. Use of restraint was also observed in a lower elementary classroom during the Commission's site visit on February 1, 2024. It is highly unlikely that there were zero instances of restraint in 2022-23, and this required state reporting.

- **Administrative Team Capacity**
 - The administrative team structure approved by the Commission is not being implemented with fidelity. While there is a Montessori Coach position hired, many of the duties outlined on page 387 of the charter application are duties currently being carried out by the Head of School. The Commission was made aware on January 30, 2024, that the board is considering shifting that role to that of an assistant principal for the upcoming school year. In its job description, the Montessori Coach role also serves to act on behalf of the Head of School in their absence, which this individual has not been able to do during the HOS' leave of absence this Winter. Compromising on the requirements for this role as compared to the approved charter application leaves the school without a more comprehensive system of support, and in danger of violating the educational program terms. This lack of administrative support has impacted the school's compliance with the charter contract.
 - Inadequate systems are in place to facilitate staff transitions. This has resulted in a series of allegations and complaints by former employees that have been widely disseminated to the school community, the Commission, at least one state legislator, and state agencies. A better system for facilitating staff transitions may have provided an opportunity to reduce the negative impact on the community, and opportunities to improve the school.

- **Board Capacity and Governance**
 - Since the spring of 2023, the PCM Board of Trustees has been operating below the required number of Trustees according to the Board's Bylaws as the Board experienced both departures from and additions to the Board. The Bylaws state that the minimum number of Trustees is five. While a fifth board member was voted in on February 9, 2024, another board member plans to exit at the end of February, which will bring the board back below the required number of Trustees.
 - The charter application approved by the Commission (p85) includes three advisory bodies "to help ensure that everyone has a voice." The Commission has recently learned that these key bodies, designed to provide and receive feedback when the school was envisioned, are inconsistently meeting, which has contributed to a breakdown in communication between the school, families, community, and students. These groups include:
 - Community Advisory Council to provide feedback about how the school and leadership are performing (composed of family and broader community members).
 - Specialized Support Council, to serve as a sounding board and support group, directing families to resources, service, and information or helping to identify gaps in support (composed of families of children currently in need of elevated services).
 - Student Advisory Council to help bridge the student-adult world, share ideas and acting as an information and primary support source (students + Montessori Coach + one parent volunteer). This Student Advisory Council is intended to periodically administer student surveys

to ensure the entire student body is actively involved in important issues (p.21).

The Board has not ensured that the structures it put in place as part of the charter application, to ensure that communication and collaboration were consistent, have been implemented. This has contributed to a breakdown in communication between the school, staff, and families. While the parent group has been recently reestablished, the lack of consistent support for this and other key bodies of communication has damaged the relationship between the School and the community it serves.

- The Board is obligated to oversee the School so that the School complies with its legal and contractual obligations. The Board also has responsibility for the School's performance, even when some of the obligations are delegated to the Head of School. The Board has been made aware of the Perceived Problems, above, but has not exercised adequate governance in order to ensure compliance and/or remedy identified performance, legal, and/or contractual concerns.
- There is not strong evidence to suggest that the Board is holding the Head of School accountable to resolving concerns brought up by members of the school community, which has contributed to students withdrawing from the school.

PCM is required to respond in writing to this perceived problem within 10 working days.

In determining whether the Commission will take corrective action and/or impose sanctions, the Commission will consider PCM's response submitted in compliance with WAC 108-40-030(4)(b), and other evidence and information available.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Jessica de Barros
Executive Director



Notice to Revoke the Charter School Contract of Pullman Community Montessori

A. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

1. On March 15, 2024, the Commission voted to give Notice to Revoke the Charter School Contract of Pullman Community Montessori. The Commission also delegated authority to the Executive Director to prepare a Notice to Revoke and to provide Pullman Community Montessori with the Notice to Revoke.

2. **The Notice to Revoke was issued on March 22, 2024.** The Notice to Revoke is the first step in a process to determine whether or not the Charter Contract should be revoked. WAC 108-40-110. The next step is that the school has the opportunity to provide a written response to the Notice to Revoke. **The school's written response to the Notice to Revoke must be received within 30 days of the issuance of the Notice to Revoke.**

3. The decision to give Notice to Revoke was reached after extensive investigation and evaluation by Commission staff, public comment, and a public meeting in which the Commissioners considered the recommendation¹ to give Notice to Revoke. Under the Charter School Act, revocation is allowed where a school "otherwise failed to comply" with the Charter School Act, or where the school:

- (a) Committed a material and substantial violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards, or procedures required under this chapter or the charter contract;
- (b) Failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract;
- (c) Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or
- (d) Substantially violated any material provision of law from which the charter school is not exempt.

RCW 28A.710.200. The Charter Contract also provides additional bases for revocation, including but not limited to lack of financial viability or insufficient funds available for the operation of the school. Contract § 16.2. The Washington State Legislature also added to the Charter School Act in 2023 language to increase the responsibility of the Commission to hold charter school boards accountable for financial oversight of schools.

B. REASONS FOR NOTICE OF REVOCATION

4. The Commission alleges that PCM is out of compliance with its charter contract and the law, including but not limited to : RCW 28A.710; Laws of 2023, ch. 356; WAC 108-30; WAC 108-40; Contract §§4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.11,5.21, 5.25, 6.4, 8.1, 8.2, 14.1, 14.2.1, 14.2.2, 15.1, 16.1, 16.2, 17.2, and Applicable Law.

¹ Please see the Recommendation Memorandum and Appendix in the public documents for the March 15, 2024 Special Meeting which provide additional details.

5. The Commission has received numerous complaints about PCM since late January 2024.² The Commission subsequently launched an investigation, which included gathering information, meeting with the Head of School and School Board, visiting the school to observe classrooms and recess, observing Board meetings, presenting at a Board meeting, meeting with current and former staff, and meeting with current and former families. This has been an intensive process in which numerous problems and concerns have been surfaced by the Commission and the School community.

6. Financial Viability and Lack of Effective Financial Oversight of the School

The school is not financially viable, has insufficient funds to operate and/or has an unsatisfactory financial status. The school also has deficient financial oversight. Examples of the bases for the Financial Viability and Lack of Effective Financial Oversight of the School by the Board include, but are not limited to the following:

- The School has experienced a significant drop in enrollment. The Commission has determined that due to the significant decrease in enrollment, and the number of days of cash on hand, the school has insufficient funds available for the operation of the school and that the school is no longer financially viable. As of March 20, 2024, the school reported 90 enrolled students compared to 136 budgeted. The school is at 66% of budgeted enrollment. Since January 26, 2024, 34 students have unenrolled (prior to January 26, enrollment was 113). Enrollment variance is important to track the sufficiency of revenues generated to fund ongoing operations. A school sets its budget based on projected enrollment, but is funded based on actual enrollment; therefore, a school that does not meet its enrollment targets or that experiences a sudden and severe drop in enrollment (as PCM has) may not be able to meet its budgeted expenses. The charter contract may be terminated if the Commission determines that there are insufficient funds available for the operation of the School. The contract defines insufficient funds as including, but not limited to, reduction in, or elimination of, state allocation of funds.

Poor enrollment variance is a substantial indicator of potential financial issues. The Commission's standard for enrollment variance, as defined in the Financial Performance Framework, is 95%. Enrollment variance less than 85% indicates that a significant amount of funding on which a school set its expense budget is no longer available.

The school reported to the Commission on February 12, 2024 that it had 17 days cash on hand (by contrast, in October the school had 37 days of cash on hand). The Financial Performance Framework standard for schools in Year 3 and beyond (PCM is in Year 3) is 60 days of cash on hand. If a school has less than 15 days of cash on hand, they will not be able to operate for more than a few weeks without another cash inflow.

On March 14, 2024, the school provided updated information and reports now having 21 days cash on hand. The school submitted a revised 5-year draft budget to the Commission on March 20, 2024 that *anticipates* having 7 days of cash on hand by August. This projection is based on extremely thin margins and fewer staff than required under the Educational Program Terms in the contract (a change not approved by the Commission). The school's projection is based on an

² The Legislature modified the Charter School Act in 2023 to add oversight by the Commission for "a pattern of well-founded complaints."

average enrollment of 104 students. Apportionment [funding] from the state is based on average enrollment through the school year.

The Board's financial oversight and monitoring is deficient. The Commission's Finance Committee met with the board's Treasurer and Financial Analyst on February 28, 2024. At the meeting, the school was unable to definitively provide basic information on the school's "burn rate," or average monthly expenditures. The school was also unable to provide a definitive number of days of cash on hand. The school did not have a financial plan for the remainder of the school year and stated that they had not thought about what would happen if the school had to close due to financial insolvency. The school followed up with more information on cash flow management, however, as noted above, the current financial plan is fragile, and the Board does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's finances.

7. Unilateral change to Educational Program Term

- a. The school has violated the Commission approved Educational Program Terms and Design Elements of the charter contract by unilaterally changing the Educational Program Term 1 without Commission approval. This violation also implicates the Board's oversight obligations. The information below provides a brief overview of violation.
- b. Despite expressly advising the Head of School that the Commission would need to review and approve a change requested to the educational program terms and conditions before the School could proceed with the proposed change (a lengthy process), the Head of School initiated the change without Commission approval (Commissioners would need to vote on a change of this type). The change involved combining classrooms so that students spanning grades 3 through 7 (a five year grouping, rather than the three year grouping approved by the Commission) were taught in one classroom, with one teacher and one classroom assistant (or Instructional Assistant (IA)) in the classroom.
- c. The school proceeded with a unilateral change in Educational Program Term 1 without obtaining Commission approval. The unilateral change by the school was made after multiple communications from the Commission advising the Head of School and the board chair that the change could not be made unilaterally and required Commission approval.
- d. During a site visit on February 26, 2024, the Commission's Executive Director observed the classrooms operating as one. At the site visit, both the classroom teacher and the IA described the classroom as operating together, and described the arrangement as a combined classroom. One staff member stated that students were combined for almost the entire day, except for a maximum of 30 minutes when they were separated.
- e. Since receiving the Notice of Perceived Problem from the Commission on February 29, 2024 regarding the unilateral change in Educational Program Term 1 by the school, the school has contended that the classrooms are operating separately.
- f. Charter public schools authorized by the Commission must adhere to specific Educational Program Terms outlined in the charter contract. PCM has three Educational

Program Terms in its contract. Educational Program Term #1 is “Developmentally appropriate age-grouped classrooms.” This includes “three-year blocking of ages by developmental appropriateness in accordance with international Montessori standards.” As further described in the school’s Educational Program Term #1, “These stages represent sensitive periods, or periods of significant physical and/or cognitive development, where different strategies and tools are required to effectively address the needs of the individual. Content and learning environments in a Montessori classroom are customized based on these developmentally appropriate age groupings.” This Educational Program Term also includes a requirement that “Classrooms feature a dual certified teacher paired with a trained classroom assistant with paraprofessional certification.”

8. Board has failed to: ensure legal and contractual compliance; and hold the Head of School accountable to resolve concerns raised by members of the school community.

In addition to the Board oversight deficiencies identified elsewhere in this notice, additional deficiencies are described below.

a. Lack of Effective Operational and Educational Oversight of the School

The school is deficient in safety compliance, and lacks board capacity and adherence to minimum Board members. Examples of the Lack of Effective Operational and Educational Oversight of the School include, but are not limited to the following:

- Compliance The school has not met deadlines for submission of required compliance documents in the compliance calendar. The compliance calendar is issued annually to schools and identifies Commission-specific reporting requirements that schools must satisfy. The Commission has communicated with the school as deadlines were missed to establish reasonable timelines for completion. However, deadlines continued to be missed. The due dates required by the Annual Compliance Calendar can be extended in extenuating circumstances, but this is meant to be an exception to standard operating procedure. The failure to meet compliance deadlines puts the school out of compliance with the charter contract.
 - Of the 35 Epicenter compliance submissions required by the charter contract, 9 (or 24%) have been submitted late this school year (early September 2023 to mid-March, 2024).
 - The School’s Annual Performance Report for the 2022-23 school year is currently outstanding. The original due date was October 1, 2023. The Annual Performance Report is currently approximately 172 days overdue as of March 22, 2024. As per charter contract section 14.2.2, “The School shall also provide required documentation, data, information and reports identified in Attachment 10: Identification of Documentation Required for Annual Performance Report by the deadlines identified in the Master Calendar.” Currently this report is long overdue, which makes it difficult for Commission staff to assess school performance for school year 2022-23.
 - On January 30, 2024, the Commission was notified by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) that the school had not submitted the restraint and isolation data for the 2022-23 school year to OSPI as required by January 1, 2024. This is a violation of charter contract section 5.2, Public School Status, where it states that the school is subject to all local, state, and federal requirements for reporting. It also violates RCW 28A.600.485 (7)(a), which states “by January 1st annually, each school

district shall summarize the written reports received under subsection (5) of this section and submit the summaries to the office of the superintendent of public instruction. For each school, the school district shall include the number of individual incidents of restraint and isolation, the number of students involved in the incidents, the number of injuries to students and staff, and the types of restraint or isolation used.” Concerns about having a limited number of individuals trained in restraint were brought to the attention of the Commission on January 26, 2024, in an email shared by school leadership from a former employee. Use of restraint was also observed in a lower elementary classroom during the Commission’s site visit on February 1, 2024. The school notified Commission staff that this submission was completed by the school on February 22, 2024.

- **Board Capacity and Governance**

- The PCM Board of Trustees has frequently been operating below the required number of Trustees according to the Board’s Bylaws as the Board experienced both departures from and additions to the Board. The Bylaws state that the minimum number of Trustees is five.
- The composition of the Board shall at all times be determined by and consistent with the Articles and Bylaws and Applicable Law. In carrying out their responsibilities, the law imposes on Board members the fiduciary duties of care, loyalty and obedience to the law. Contract Section 4.5.
- The founding Board Chair reported to the Commission and stated in public comment to the PCM Board at the February 26, 2024 board meeting that he resigned from the board in 2023 because he intended to terminate the Head of School and did not feel he could effectively govern the school with the Head of School leading.
- The school reported on March 21, 2024, that the Board Treasurer had resigned and one additional Board member was added. The Board currently has five members. two additional Board members were added, for a total of six members.

9. **Inadequate Student Safety**

The school is deficient in compliance with student safety requirements under the law and the Contract. The Commission has received a pattern of complaints from current and/or former staff and parents of the school regarding safety issues. Inadequate safety also implicates inadequacies in the Board’s oversight responsibilities.

a. Examples of Inadequate Student Safety include, but are not limited to the following:

- Student elopement on multiple different days.
- Unsafe student behavior that interrupts the educational and working environment, is harmful to themselves and others, and creates a physically and emotionally unsafe environment.
- Severe student bullying, in school and/or on the school bus.
- Additional incidents of safety issues where students were either physically harmed or threatened with harm were also reported in the current/former staff and parent meetings and communications, along with concerns of a lack of responsiveness to the safety issues by the school.

- Students and staff feeling fearful for their safety at school, that there is inadequate supervision of students to keep them safe, and being afraid to go to school.
 - b. The Commission required the school to immediately correct the safety deficiencies identified, and the school submitted a Safety Plan to the Commission on March 7, 2024. The Commission required additions to the Safety Plan, which the school is in the process of incorporating. The safety plan must be initiated immediately after approval by the Commission.
 - a. In its response to the Notice of Perceived Problem and Immediate Corrective Action requirement, sent to the Commission on March 7, 2024, the school provided data on incidents of elopements and restraints for the current school year. The school reported that there have been “less than 20 incidents of elopement that occurred within the building, isolated to specific students” and that students have been “MIA (when eye contact is lost with students...less than 10 times” this school year. The school also shared snapshots of data with the Commission on March 8, 2024 which showed eight incidents of restraint for the 2022-23 school year involving four students, and 48 involving at least five students for the 2023-24 school year so far. This is in comparison to one incident of restraint reported to OSPI for the 2021-22 school year. The school is minimizing an alarming number of student safety incidents, which should occur rarely or never at all with an effective multi-tiered system of support practices, policies, and procedures and Tiers 1, 2, and 3 supports.

10. Threats of retaliation from the Head of School (i.e., job loss)

In addition to legal and contractual deficiencies related to threats of retaliation by the Head of School against parents and teachers, this behavior also relates to inadequate Board oversight. Examples of threats of retaliation include the following:

- In the Commission’s meetings and correspondence with both current and former teachers, the threat of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of the Head of School indicating one’s job being at risk if negative information was made public by employees, was described multiple times. Section 5.25 of the charter contract prohibits against any direct or indirect intimidation, interference, or coercion of the employee in disclosing alleged improper action by the School, and hinders safety improvements.
- In the Commission’s meetings and correspondence with parents, the experience of and fear of retaliation by the Head of School in the form of targeting one’s student for reporting safety issues was described. For example, multiple parents described the threat or the act of school administration changing student absences from excused to unexcused, thereby threatening the parent with truancy court.

The school has hired a third-party investigator to address allegations of threats of retaliation. The Board has also put in place a process for the Board to participate in meetings between the Head of School and another party who is bringing a concern, for meeting notes to be taken and shared with all parties, and for the party bringing a concern to invite an additional person to attend meetings. The Board informed the Commission on March 19, 2024, that it had placed the Head of School on administrative leave beginning on March 18, 2024, pending the outcome of its investigation.

C. CONCLUSION

The legal and contractual violations above provide a basis for revocation of the Charter Contract of Pullman Community Montessori.

Dated this 22nd day of March 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jessica de Barros', written in a cursive style.

Jessica de Barros
Washington State Charter School Commission Executive Director

Coversheet

WA Charters Conference opportunities

Section: IV. WA Charters Conference
Item: A. WA Charters Conference opportunities
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: WA Charters Conference.pdf

Attention PCM Families and Staff!

The 2024 WA Charters Conference is right around the corner and we have an opportunity to participate and network in the greater charter school community, advocate for our school, and engage in education and dialogue across a broad range of communities that have a direct impact on charter school success.

We would love to see our PCM staff and families there and WA Charters can help make it possible!

- **For staff and families-** Please follow this link for registration- <https://wacharters.org/conference/#registration>. There will also be discounted rates available for those who are staying the night, just follow this link for more details and to start that process- <https://book.passkey.com/go/WACharters24>.
- **Bus from Spokane to the Conference-** WA Charter will be offering a bus for staff and families leaving from Spokane on Friday, May 3rd at 3 pm from PRIDE Schools. Please see the information about the bus and the registration form [here](#).
- **Hardship-** if someone is experiencing hardship to pay the cost of registration, WA Charter will be offering scholarships to help. Please email board@mypcm.org for more information.

We want to make sure we get this info out ASAP so we can help as many of our families and staff who would like to participate in this event as possible!

See you there!

Coversheet

Accepting resignation of Ana Burton

Section: V. Other Business
Item: C. Accepting resignation of Ana Burton
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: Ana's resignation letter.pdf

Dear Bev and Robin,

I want to extend my gratitude to each of you for your leadership of the PCM school board over the past few months. You both have done an incredible job of navigating tumultuous waters. After reflecting on my own experience over the last four months, I have decided to step down from the Board. It has not been the rewarding and fulfilling journey I was hoping for and has soured my volunteer experience. As more details continue to emerge, I feel I need to preserve my own personal and professional reputation. Plus, I do not have the bandwidth to put in the necessary work you need from an active board member. Knowing that additional members may be voted on this coming Thursday gives me some peace as it will allow the Board to stay in compliance with 5 or more members. Unfortunately, I have a schedule conflict on Thursday, so will be unable to participate in the meeting. If you still need reference calls made, I'm happy to do so and provide a summary of their feedback.

I still support the future of PCM and am hopeful with the right leadership it will thrive again.

Please consider this note my official resignation effective Friday, April 5.

Thank you,
Ana