

For Immediate Release
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Charter Board Partners Expands Nonprofit to Serve Schools in Washington State

Washington D.C. - Charter Board Partners, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit focused on improving the quality of public charter school governance, is expanding its operations to Washington state.

Charter Board Partners (CBP) has developed a comprehensive model for strengthening charter school boards that has met with success in Washington, D.C., and garnered national attention since its founding in 2010. CBP has partnered with about two dozen public charter schools in the District of Columbia over the past three years to recruit and train charter school board members and support better governance for charter school boards. The nonprofit's expansion into Washington state marks the beginning of an effort to bring the organization's successful work to charter schools across the country.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recently awarded a grant to CBP to help launch its national expansion efforts. The Gates Foundation [announced](#) a \$500,000 grant to CBP in support of CBP's national membership program, which will be made available to all charter school boards nationwide, as well as the development of governance tools and resources. The grant will also help to support CBP's work in Washington state to recruit and train charter school board members and provide tools and support as the schools begin their operations. CBP's national expansion is also being supported with investments from NewSchools Venture Fund and the Walton Family Foundation.

Washington state voters approved a law giving children access to public charter schools a little more than a year ago. The first group of prospective charter school operators submitted applications last fall. The Spokane Public Schools' board approved the state's first charter school last week, and the Washington State Charter School Commission is expected to rule on more than a dozen applications for schools statewide on Thursday. Charter schools are public but operate with more independence than traditional district schools, giving them the flexibility to try new educational approaches. They are held accountable by local or state authorizing agencies, and low-performing charter schools can be closed and have their charters revoked. Every charter school is governed by an independent board of trustees.

"We are grateful to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, NewSchools Venture Fund and the Walton Family Foundation for helping to make our expansion possible," said Carrie C. Irvin, president and co-founder of Charter Board Partners. "All children deserve a quality public education. Charter schools are one promising way to improve the quality of public education, and a strong board is essential for a strong charter school. We are eager to begin working on the ground with Washington state's first public charter schools to help make sure they have strong boards from day one."

About Charter Board Partners:

Charter Board Partners works with public charter schools to build strong and strategic boards that help schools succeed. The nonprofit's work includes: recruiting and training board members; matching board candidates to charter school boards; setting high standards for effective governance to guide the work of boards; and helping individual charter boards identify key areas for improvement, set realistic goals and monitor progress. The organization was founded in 2010 with seed funding from NewSchools Venture Fund. Additional funding has been provided by: the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Carlyle Group, Latham & Watkins, PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Walton Family Foundation and the Washington, D.C., Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

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