CHARTER SCHOOLS AND WASHINGTON STATE

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THE BASICS

- Charter schools are public schools
- Charters are valid for a specific number of years and must meet accountability measures to earn reauthorization
- Charter schools are open enrollment
- Charter schools can be unionized or non-unionized
- Currently, 5,000 charter schools operate in 39 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
- Charter schools are not permitted in Washington
Authorizers, Caps and Targets

- Charters are granted by authorizers, including:
  - Local school boards
  - State boards of education
  - Charter-specific boards
  - Universities

- Most states cap the number of charters:
  - Low: Idaho, Oklahoma – 6
  - High: California – 1,250
  - 18 states do not cap charters

- Most charters target certain student populations:
  - Low-income
  - Academically struggling
IMPACT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: OVERALL RESULTS MIXED

Student Academic Gains: Charter Schools vs. Traditional Public Schools

- Perform Better, 17%
- Perform Worse, 37%
- Similar, 46%

Impact on Student Achievement: High-Performing Charter Network

Percentage of KIPP Schools with Significant Effects in Math, by Year

History in Washington State

- 1996: Initiative to the Legislature – rejected
- 1997-99: Bills in the Legislature – Passed House, failed in Senate
- 2000: Initiative to the people – rejected
- 2003: Bills in the Legislature – Passed Senate, failed in House
- 2004
  - Bills in Legislature – Passed both chambers
  - Veto referendum – Law rejected by voters
OPTIONS UNDER CURRENT LAW

- Federal intervention model – restart
- Allowed under federal law for persistently low-performing schools
- Schools may reopen under an educational management organization (EMO)
  - For-profit or non-profit organizations providing “whole-school operation” services to districts.
  - Typically not charter management organizations, although not prohibited
  - Schools operated by EMOs are not necessarily granted the same autonomies as charter schools. Ex, in Washington, EMOs would be subject to state collective bargaining laws and agreements.
  - Community members are not able to partner with EMOs to open their own schools.
CHARTER LAW OPTIONS

A charter law could be created one of three ways:

1. Initiative to the Legislature
2. Initiative to the people
3. Bill through the Legislature
Questions?

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