



# Washington State Auditor's Office

## News Release

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### **Audit finds issues with management of state's first public charter school**

**OLYMPIA** – Public charter schools are required to follow state laws holding them accountable for the use of public resources. The state Charter School Commission asked our Office to conduct an audit of First Place Scholars Charter School, the first school to receive public funding under Washington's Charter School Initiative, passed by voters in 2012.

Our accountability audit found school management did not correctly report required information to the state, had not properly accounted for the use of some public funds, inappropriately mixed the business expenses of the private parent organization with the public charter school, and failed to follow provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

First Place Inc., a Seattle nonprofit, has provided educational and other services to homeless and low-income youth for more than 20 years. In the 2014-15 school year, the organization's private school became the state's first public charter school.

After we concluded our audit work, but before our report was published, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional Initiative 1240, the law authorizing charter schools to receive state funding as common schools.

You will find on our [website](#) a brief summary of the accountability audit findings, the full report, including a response from school management, and other materials that offer context to the report.