



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

November 10, 2022

Eileen Cannistraci, Chief Executive Officer  
Insight Cyber Charter School  
350 Eagleview Blvd., Suite 350  
Exton, PA 19341

Dear Ms. Cannistraci,

Based on a thorough review of Insight Cyber Charter School's (Insight) renewal application and other documentation, and a mutual agreement concerning enrollment parameters, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Department) is renewing Insight's charter, subject to the information contained in this letter and any areas for correction noted within the Decision to Renew Charter and Appendix A. The renewed charter shall be effective for a term of five years, beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2028.

The Department will continue to monitor and examine Insight's operations throughout this term to determine whether Insight is meeting the terms of its charter, the requirements of the Charter School Law, and other applicable state and federal mandates. By granting a renewed charter, the Department does not waive and expressly reserves the right to notify Insight of any violation of the terms and conditions of its charter and to seek correction of such violation. In addition, the Department does not waive and expressly reserves the right to take action against Insight in the form of charter revocation or nonrenewal for reasons including, but not limited to, those discussed in this letter or the attached Decision to Renew Charter and Appendix A.

Please note that the Department will continue to monitor the progress of Insight's students by reviewing students' academic achievement, assessment participation rate, academic growth, and adjusted cohort graduation rates. Beginning Fall 2018, the academic performance of all public schools, including cyber charter schools, is evaluated based on standards for annual meaningful differentiation as identified by [Pennsylvania's ESSA State Plan](#). Each year, the Department will calculate each public school's progress toward meeting or exceeding long-term goals.

The Department will require any cyber charter school that is designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TSI) to take specific corrective actions. Through regional improvement teams, the Department will provide technical assistance and support in developing, implementing, and monitoring evidence-based strategies aligned to each school's most pressing needs. Cyber charter schools designated for CSI or A-TSI will be required to partner with regional improvement teams for the duration of their designation. Failure to exit CSI status may serve as a basis for revocation or nonrenewal of the cyber charter's charter.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Randy Seely, Division Chief, Division of Charter Schools by email at [rseely@pa.gov](mailto:rseely@pa.gov) or by telephone at (717) 705-0353.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Hagarty".

Eric Hagarty  
Acting Secretary of Education

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Insight Cyber Charter School** : **Charter Renewal Effective:**  
**Renewal Application** : **July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2028**

**Decision to Renew Charter**

Pursuant to the Charter School Law (CSL), 24 P.S. §§ 17-1701-A – 17-1751-A, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Department) has the authority and responsibility to renew or not renew the charter of a cyber charter school. 24 P.S. § 17-1741-A(a)(3). The Department may decide not to renew a charter based on the criteria set forth in section 1729-A of the CSL, 24 P.S. § 17-1729-A. A cyber charter school must be in compliance with the material conditions, standards, and procedures contained in the written charter; meet the requirements for student performance set forth in 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4; meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management and audit requirements; be in compliance with the CSL and all other applicable law; provide all material components of each student’s education; and maintain the financial ability to provide services.

The Department granted a charter to Insight Cyber Charter School (Insight) for the term of July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2020. Insight submitted a renewal application to continue operating a cyber charter school and has continued to operate its cyber charter school by extension of the previous charter term until such time as the Department finalized a renewal decision.

Based on a comprehensive review of Insight’s operation during the charter term beginning July 1, 2017, including the information submitted with its renewal application; information gathered by the Department’s representatives; and other sources of data, the Department is renewing Insight’s charter to operate a cyber charter school, subject to this Decision to Renew Charter, the areas for correction noted within Appendix A, and the mutually agreed-upon enrollment parameters outlined herein and in the charter should Insight become designated for Comprehensive School Improvement (CSI). With the exception of the agreed-upon enrollment parameter, which becomes effective immediately should Insight be designated as a CSI school, Insight may continue to operate its cyber charter school until the commencement of the term of the renewed charter.

The baseline enrollment number from which the enrollment parameter would be calculated would be Insight’s highest enrollment as of the year of designation; the baseline number would be used to calculate a one-time 10% enrollment increase that may not be surpassed during any time period Insight is designated for CSI. As an example, if Insight is designated for CSI in the 2022-23 school year and its highest enrollment, as verified by PIMS, was the 2020-21 school year, then the Department would use the 2020-21 enrollment data as the baseline.

The renewed charter shall be effective for a term of five (5) years beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2028.

The Department reserves the right to continue to assess and review Insight’s operation and to take action to revoke Insight’s charter based on any information that was or could have been reviewed prior to this charter renewal or discovered during future or ongoing assessments or reviews. The Department does not waive and expressly reserves the right to notify Insight of any

violation and to take action against Insight, if necessary, including revocation or nonrenewal of the charter.

The Department is also providing written notice to Insight of areas of the operation of its cyber charter school that require attention and correction. This notice is provided to allow Insight the opportunity to address areas that may not be in compliance with applicable requirements. Failure to address areas identified by the Department may result in additional action by the Department, including revocation of the charter.



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Eric Hagarty  
Acting Secretary of Education

Date Mailed: November 10, 2022

## APPENDIX A

Pursuant to section 1742-A of the Charter School Law (CSL), 24 P.S. § 17-1742-A, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Department) has conducted an assessment and review of Insight Cyber Charter School (Insight). Based on this assessment and review, the Department has identified areas of operation which Insight must further examine and address.

Insight must be prepared to provide information and documentary evidence to the Department during any future Department review of the cyber charter school's operations that demonstrates that the cyber charter school operates in compliance with all applicable requirements.

Additionally, as described below, Insight must be prepared to provide the Department with information and documentary evidence as to how it addressed or is working to address each of the areas identified below:

- Academic Proficiency
- Academic Growth
- Graduation Rate
- Governance and Operations

### **Insight Cyber School must improve its assessment and accountability program.**

A cyber charter school must meet the requirements for student performance set forth in 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4, including state student assessment requirements in Chapter 4. 22 Pa. Code §§ 4.51-4.52. The Department expects all schools, including cyber charter schools, to improve academically from the prior year, as demonstrated by various indicators, individually, collectively, or in any combination.

The Department examined various indicators related to Insight's academic performance over its charter term, including, but not limited to, academic achievement, academic growth, and graduation rates. Since Insight's inception, students in all grade levels and all subjects have significantly underperformed on the PSSA and Keystone Exams.

In 2017-18, Insight's combined ESSA Indicator for ELA proficiency was 43.7% and in 2018-19, its combined ESSA Indicator for ELA proficiency was 33.0%, significantly lagging behind the averages of other cyber charter schools, brick-and-mortar charter schools, and traditional public schools. More concerning is Insight's combined ESSA Indicator for Math proficiency, which reached a peak of only 8.4% in 2018-19. Insight's combined ESSA Indicator for Science proficiency is slightly better, with a peak of 33.3%, but still lags behind the averages of other cyber charter schools, brick-and-mortar charter schools, and traditional public schools.

Additionally, Insight's three-year average growth rate, as reported in the Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PVASS), showed significant evidence that students did not meet the academic growth standard. Specifically, Insight's three-year average of academic growth on both the PSSAs and Keystone Exams for every measure of growth for 2017-18 and 2018-19 was either Below or Well Below target scores.

As Insight is a relatively young school, there is not a lot of data regarding its 4 and 5-year combined cohort graduation rates. The first year data was available was 2020, with only 37.35% of Insight's students attaining graduation. This is well below the averages of other cybers (59.8%), brick-and-mortar charters (86.7%), and traditional public schools (90.3%). Under

ESSA, Section 1111(c)(4)(D), “all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students” receive Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) designations.

Beginning Fall 2018, the academic performance of all cyber charter schools are evaluated based on standards for annual meaningful differentiation as identified by Pennsylvania’s ESSA State Plan. Each year, the Department will calculate for each public school, including Insight, its progress toward meeting or exceeding long-term goals. In addition, a cyber charter school that is identified for CSI or Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TSI) will be required to take specific corrective actions. Designation as a CSI school may serve as a basis for revocation or nonrenewal of the cyber charter’s charter.

Therefore, notwithstanding that the Department has renewed Insight’s charter, the Department may require corrective action and/or use designation as a CSI school or failure to exit CSI status as a basis for nonrenewal or revocation of Insight’s charter; if Insight is designated as a CSI school, Insight must be prepared to provide to the Department the following:

- A comprehensive needs analysis that identifies the root causes of inconsistent student achievement results;
- A comprehensive data analysis that examines PSSA, Keystone, and PASA data;
- An explanation of remedial programs that Insight will use to ensure progress from year-to-year;
- A written plan of action for increasing its academic performance, academic growth, and graduation rates;
- A fully executed school improvement plan to increase Insight’s academic proficiency and graduation rates so as to avoid a CSI designation status or, if designated for CSI, to exit such designation;
- Participation in quarterly review meetings—attended by Insight leadership, the assigned Intermediate Unit school improvement facilitator, and staff from the Department’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education—to ensure alignment in activities between Insight’s school improvement plan and any deficiencies noted in this renewal.

**Insight must take certain action related to finance and operations.**

Responsibility for Insight’s finance and accounting functions falls on Insight’s Board of Trustees and administration and staff. The Department has observed that, overall, Insight’s approach to managing its finance and accounting functions appears to be straight forward and reasonable. However, it appears that Insight has no formal policy as to how its fund balance should be used. Accordingly, Insight must refine its policies and procedures to adopt a new policy or clarify an existing policy related to fund balance that is in alignment with financial best practices.

Additionally, under the terms of its lease agreement with SBH Associates, L.P., Insight is responsible for maintaining insurance against claims for personal injury (including death) and property damage, under a policy of commercial general liability insurance, in amounts not less than \$2 million combined single limit in respect of bodily injury (including death) and \$2 million for property damage. Based upon the Department’s review of Insight, it appears that Insight may not be maintaining commercial general liability coverage in accordance with its lease

requirements. Accordingly, Insight must provide the Department with documentation evidencing its compliance with the lease agreement.