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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS

focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

April 2015



Welcome

While we encourage you to read through the entire newsletter please be sure to visit the section that most closely pertains to the stage that your school is in.

The **Developing Schools section** is intended for groups ranging from the earliest exploration all the way through the development and submission of their Charter School Application.

The **Post Approval section** is intended for groups that are in their first year of operations or are approved to open in 2015.

Regardless of what stage you are in, this monthly newsletter will offer you critical resources, helpful tips and information on important events and trainings so that your school can have a solid foundation in the following Quality Outcomes:

1. Qualified and Competent School Leadership
2. Sound Operational Practices
3. Functional Governing Board
4. Effective Academics & Instruction
5. Robust Performance Management Plan
6. Clear, Mission-Driven School Culture

Please feel free to contact Lori Ventimiglia and Kathy Zlomke in the New School Development office for questions, sample documents or other resources that you are looking for as you develop your school and if you haven't come in for a face to face meeting yet, please do schedule that with us at your convenience!

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Developing Schools

This section of the newsletter is intended for charter school developing groups in the early exploration stages of starting a school, or groups that are in the process of writing their charter application.

Mock Interviews

If you have submitted an application for a charter school this spring consider setting up a Mock Interview with the Colorado League of Charter Schools to prepare for your interviews with your authorizer. The Mock Interview will give your team the practice and experience needed to effectively prepare for the next steps in your application process by giving you an understanding of your team's presentation strengths and weaknesses, learning interview strategies and gaining a sense of the types of questions you can anticipate.

Cost: \$100

Contact [Lori Ventimiglia](#) to schedule.

TIP! Building your Team

It is imperative to have a team of committed and hard-working people contributing to the wide variety of tasks related to school development. Your initial team will be considered a Steering or Founding Committee and some of these same people should transition over to the schools formal governing board upon having an approved charter application. When building your team look for people with a variety of skill sets such as the ones listed below:

- Organizational and Financial Management
- Community Development
- Facility/Project Management
- Academic/Education
- Business/Corporate
- Accounting
- Banking
- Fund Raising/Capital Campaign
- Law
- Marketing
- Human Resources
- Public Relations
- Real Estate
- Community Resident
- Parent of Child that will Attend the School
- Latino/Culture Competency
- Technology

Resource of the Month: Understanding Charter School Finance

When beginning to develop the budget, school founders should contact the Chief Financial Officer of the local school district in which they intend to apply to obtain the most accurate and up-to-date information on key sources of income or designations of charter schools' revenue, including:

- The Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) the district receives for each student;
- Any authorizer required services such as Special Education;
- Any mill levy, Title or other funds the charter is entitled to receive

Colorado public school finance calculations are based on multiple factors that affect funding formulas in each district. Complete descriptions of these areas are given in more detail in the [Colorado Charter School Financial Management Guide](#).

Upcoming Events

Charter School Boot Camp

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Wednesday, April 8 and Thursday, April 9

Time: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: The Summit Conference and Event Center, 411 Sable Blvd., Aurora

Cost: \$20 per person, per day (Coffee and Lunch included)

Description: A two-day training designed to help planning teams, in both early and late state planning, get a clear picture of the realities of opening and operating a school.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on April 6.

Webinar: Optional Delivery Model for Special Education Services with Telepractice

Hosted by MySkybridge and the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Tuesday, April 14

Time: 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Location: Online/Webinar

Cost: Free

Description: Join this webinar to learn what Telepractice is and how it can help provide cost-efficient speech therapy services for your charter school. The presenter will discuss how this service delivery model will save your school time and money. MySkybridge will also be discussed. It is a free platform for your school that will allow you to service all of your speech students.

Registration: [Click here to register](#).

Board Continuing Development Meeting and Webinar

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Friday, April 24

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver

Cost: Free

Description: A training provided four times a year (two hosted in the Denver Metro area and two via webinar) to support board members' knowledge of best practice and evolving policy changes.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on April 22.

Post Approval Schools

This section of the newsletter is intended for new charter schools entering year one of operation, or new charter schools approved to open in 2015.

Year-One Spring Visits

If your school opened in 2014 and you are interested in having a team from the League visit your school please contact [Lori Ventimiglia](#) promptly. The visit will be a mix of observing classes, speaking with a combination of leaders, teachers, students, staff, parents and board members. While our role is friendly and supportive, we do strive to look at everything through the lens of the authorizer. The Spring Visit is designed to provide you with an objective perspective across critical areas with an ultimate focus being to help your school solidify a firm foundation in the following six Quality Outcomes:

- **Qualified and Competent School Leadership:** Has instilled confidence from teachers, parents, board and students and has effectively begun to implement many components of school proposal.
- **Sound Operational Practices:** Foundations for strong fiscal management and effective business operations have been established and are being adhered to.
- **Functional Governing Board:** Obtained initial training, is committed to ongoing training, and adheres to state statutes and board policies with fidelity.
- **Effective Academics & Instruction:** Curriculum is being effectively implemented and instructional staff engages students for optimal learning.
- **Robust Performance Management Plan:** Data from Data Management system and Interim Assessments are being used effectively to guide instruction.
- **Clear, Mission-Driven School Culture:** A strong, mission-driven culture has been established and can be easily observed throughout most aspects of the school.

The visits are typically a half or full day (depending on size of school) and there will be 2-3 League staff at the visit. We will follow up with both verbal and written feedback as well as additional supports as needed.

Tip! Human Resources and Employment Practices

Human Resources and Employment matters can be complex. Thus, charter schools should utilize available resources, including the Colorado League of Charter Schools, to understand their obligations as an employer. The Colorado League of Charter Schools is available to help with HR and Employment issues by reviewing employment manuals, offering sample policies and general guidance on state and federal regulations and laws. We can also refer schools to attorneys and others that can provide more specific guidance. For more information, contact [Jessica Johnson](#), Director of Policy & Legal Initiatives at the Colorado League of Charter Schools at 303-989-5356, ext. 121.

Resource of the Month

Charter schools face unique and challenging needs related to facilities. The National Charter School Resource Center provides the charter school community with easy access to high-quality resources about the facilities planning process and financing options.

Visit www.charterschoolcenter.org to access a wide variety of charter school resources available to you online.

Upcoming Events

Administrator Mentoring Cohort

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Tuesday, April 14

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Location: University Prep, 2409 Arapahoe Street, Denver

Cost: \$20 per person

Description: A mentoring program that meets five times a year, geared toward new administrators or experienced administrators that are new to the charter school environment (though administrators outside these categories are welcome). Administrators will work as a cohort team, work one-on-one with a mentor, and participate in site observations as they build leadership capacity among new charter school administrators.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on April 12.

Webinar: Optional Delivery Model for Special Education Services with Telepractice

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools and MySkybridge

Date: Tuesday, April 14

Time: 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Location: Online/Webinar

Cost: Free

Description: Join this webinar to learn what Telepractice is and how it can help provide cost-efficient speech therapy services for your charter school. The presenter will discuss how this service delivery model will save your school time and money. MySkybridge will also be discussed. It is a free platform for your school that will allow you to service all of your speech students.

Registration: [Click here to register](#)

PowerSchool: PowerScheduler-Preparing Your Master Schedule

Date: Friday, April 17

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools Training Center; 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver

Cost: League Members: \$75 for one person or \$100 for two attendees; \$25 per additional person.

Non-Members: \$100 for one person or \$125 for two attendees.

Description: This training will give you the opportunity to get an in-depth look at the Load Only process in PowerScheduler. You will learn how to build your master schedule (already prepared, but needs to be entered into PS), prepare Student and Teacher Information, and collect/enter Student Request. We will also discuss available constraint options and how they affect your ability to load students. Finally, we will talk about the actual Load process, various reports available, and follow up steps needed to finalize your scheduling. This will be a hands on workshop that will allow you to follow each step in your own system and leave with the skills and tools needed to complete your scheduling process.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: April 10.

Event contingent on a minimum of 10 registrants.

Board Continuing Development Meeting and Webinar

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Friday, April 24

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue Denver

Cost: Free

Description: A training provided four times a year (two hosted in the

Denver Metro area and two via webinar) to support board members' knowledge of best practice and evolving policy changes.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on Wednesday, April 22.

Regional Luncheon

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Wednesday, April 29

Time: 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM, with an optional school tour 1:15 - 1:45

Cost: Participants will purchase their own lunch, \$10-12 per person

Location: Casa Caliente 8800 S Colorado Blvd, Unit G,, Highlands Ranch

Tour: Platte River Academy 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Highlands Ranch

Description: Six luncheons will be offered throughout the school year. Charter schools will host the luncheon at a restaurant near their school, followed by an optional tour of the school. These luncheons are an opportunity for school leaders, administrators, employees, and board members to network and broaden their knowledge, skills and resources.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on April 27.

Lunch and Learn: Three Reasons Why You Need a Media Literacy Program Now

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools and Labragirl Film Project

Date: Wednesday, April 29

Time: 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools' Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver

Cost: League Members: Free | Non Members: \$25 per person. Lunch will be provided.

Audience: Principals and Curriculum Leaders

Description: How do you compare to other schools when it comes to media literacy and 21st century critical thinking skills? Do you want to help your students move from being apathetic to engaged in their education? Do you want to help your faculty and students move from being frustrated with common core testing to succeeding with a common core curricula? Do you want to help your students move from unconsciously consuming images to thinking critically about the way the media shapes the way they see the world? If you answered yes to any of the above, come talk film and media literacy with Labragirl Film Project.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: April 24.

Charter Communicators Network Meeting

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Thursday, April 30

Time: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools' Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver

Cost: League members - \$25 per person. Non-members - \$75 per person. Light breakfast, coffee and lunch will be provided.

Audience: Charter school communications professionals or other charter staff interested in increasing communications and marketing skills, networking and sharing communications best practices

Description: Join us for the inaugural Charter Communicators Network Meeting. This is a chance for charter school communications staff, or any staff interested in building school communications and marketing efforts, to come together. During these meetings, attendees will network and share best practices, as well as hear from experts in the field. [Click here to view](#)

[the April meeting agenda.](#)

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: April 27.

PowerSchool: Preparing for End of Year (EOY) Process

Date: Friday, May 1

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools Training Center; 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver

Cost: League Members: \$75 for one person or \$100 for two attendees; \$25 per additional person. | Non-Members: \$100 for one person or \$125 for two attendees.

Description: The End of Year (EOY) process is used to close out the current school year and roll your students over to the grade level and school that each will be attending during the upcoming school year. This should take place after the school year is finished, and all final grades have been permanently stored. This session will cover the steps necessary to prepare for EOY, the reports to be printed before running EOY, and how to check settings for the new year after running the process. Participants will receive checklists to help them in the process.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: April 25.

Event is contingent of a minimum of 10 attendees.

SAVE THE DATE!

4th Annual Colorado NWEA MAP User Conference

Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Friday, October 23

Time: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Location: Cherry Creek School District School Achievement Resource Center, 14188 E. Briarwood Avenue, Centennial

Cost: Early Bird Rate - \$175 per person | Regular rate - \$225 per person - Early bird ends September 26

Audience: Principals, teachers, counselors

Description: Join MAP users from all over the state for this one-of-a-kind user event. The conference will feature multiple breakout sessions in a variety of topics designed for advanced, intermediate and beginner users.

Registration: Coming soon.

*A group discount is available for schools that have 3+ participants.

SAVE THE DATE!

6th Annual Colorado PowerSchool Users Conference

Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Thursday, January 21 - Friday, January 22, 2016

Time: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Location: Denver Metro Area (exact location TBD)

Cost: Early Bird Rate - One day - \$175 | Two days - \$200 Early bird ends November 30

Description: The Colorado PowerSchool User's Conference is presented in collaboration with multiple districts and schools. The Conference will feature multiple breakout sessions on a variety of topics designed for beginner, intermediate, and advanced PowerSchool users.

Registration: Coming soon.

*A group discount is available for schools that have 3+ participants.

Information from CDE Schools of Choice Office

Each month, this section will provide updates and resources from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE)'s Schools of Choice Office.

CDE's Schools of Choice Office provides a variety of Technical Assistance events for developing, new, and continuing charter schools. You can learn more about these offerings, see their schedule of events, and register for their trainings at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/chartregstart>.

CDE's Schools of Choice Office puts out a twice-monthly "SOC Update" email and other important announcements through its Charter School ListServ. To sign up visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/joinlistserv>

The Colorado Department of Education administers the **Colorado Charter Schools Program** grant, which provides federal funding in Start-up and Implementation phases over a 3-year grant to new and significantly-expanding charter schools. Two application rounds (Tier I & Tier II) are offered each year, with the [RFP, information and documents for this Start-up Grant available online](#). See RFP for eligibility rules and application instructions.

In Every Issue

The following links are included in each month's newsletter as they are valuable resources to keep on your radar.

Educating your Community

Even 20+ years into the life of charter schools in Colorado, it is amazing how many people don't really understand what charter schools or that they are public schools. New and developing schools will find this video to be a great introduction at community meetings and other outreach efforts.



What is a Charter School?

Additionally, the following links will be useful for you to remain focused on the facts in your community:

[Charter School Facts](#)

[Charter School Infographics](#)

New School Development Resources

The "Start a School" section of the League's website offers a variety of resources, sample model documents, upcoming events, information about grants and much more. Visit www.coloradoleague.org and go to "Start a School."

League Professional Development Trainings

If you are a new school opening this year, don't forget that the League offers important trainings to support you as you move into your implementation phase. [Click here for more information.](#) [Click here for a calendar of upcoming trainings and events.](#)

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