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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS
focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

August 2015



Welcome

Dear New School Developers,

The decision to start a charter school is a monumental one and indicates a commitment to taking the time necessary to research, build support, assemble a team and ultimately design a school that meets a need in your community. When asked what the most critical element is in developing a successful school, we have noticed that it always comes back to TIME! It typically takes 18 months to three years to bring a school from theory to reality. The first phase alone, if done well, is very time consuming as you research charter school law and best practice, visit other schools, learn about the state accountability system, garner support in the community and build a team with a diverse set of skills. To learn more about the many steps involved in charter school development, please visit the [Start a Charter Colorado Flowchart](#) and gain quick access to many of the resources necessary to start a school.

Whether you are in the preliminary exploration stage, actively working on your application or have been approved and are in either year-0 or year-1, 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 with a high likelihood of success.

If you haven't come in for a face to face meeting yet, please schedule that with us at your convenience!

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Onboarding Your Charter School

Approved (or Nearly Approved) Schools - Mark Your Calendar for Onboarding Your Charter School

If your school is approved to open in 2016 (or you are a 2016 "new school hopeful" with an application being submitted this fall) you won't want to miss this training created specifically for you! Plan on bringing anyone who will be working through year-0 to open your school. Special group discounts apply for schools with three or more attendees and you may be eligible for planning grants (check with [Lori Ventimiglia](#)).

This two-day training will assist newly (and nearly) approved schools to navigate through the complexities of year-0; presenting a clear path forward as your school moves from theory to reality. In order to effectively transition your charter application from the theoretical proposal that it currently is into a viable organization, schools need to identify next steps and understand how to implement them across the following critical areas of school start-up:

- Qualified and Competent Leadership
- Sound Operational Practices
- Functional Governing Boards
- Effective Academics and Instruction
- Robust Performance Management Plan
- Clear, Mission-Driven School Culture

League staff and experienced school founders, board members and school leaders will facilitate this training with team work-sessions planned throughout so participants can leave with tangible pieces and plans in place.

With a networking lunch, opportunities to meet with trusted vendors and a special "Meet the League" session where you will hear from everyone on the League's staff and learn how your school will be supported by the League moving forward, you won't want to miss this training! See below for details:

Onboarding Your Charter School

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools

Dates: Thursday, November 5 - Friday, November 6

Time: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM each day

Cost: Special new school pricing! \$150 per person. Groups of 3 or more use promo code GROUP40 at checkout for \$40 off each ticket. You may be eligible for a planning grant to cover this cost, contact [Lori Ventimiglia](#) right away for details.

Note: Includes light breakfast and lunch both days.

Location: Colorado School Districts Self Insurance Pool, 6857 South Spruce Street, Centennial

Audience: 2016 cohort of new schools (schools that are approved to open in 2016 or have applications under consideration for a 2016 opening). Board members, Head of School (if hired) and Business Manager (if hired) are all strongly encouraged to attend.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: October 30.
Space is Limited.

Planning Grants Update

Planning grants for groups in the Denver/Metro area have been depleted. These grants have been made possible each year since 2010 from the Anschutz Foundation. We have submitted a new grant proposal to the Anschutz Foundation and hope to hear of a new award in September. If you are developing a school in Boulder, Douglas, Jefferson, Denver or any of the Adams counties please [check our website](#) or email [Lori Ventimiglia](#) before writing a grant application.

Planning grant funds are still available for groups developing schools outside of the counties listed above through the generous support of the Daniels Fund.

Welcome Newly Approved Schools

We would like to congratulate and formally welcome the newest round of approved schools to the charter community -- approved for a 2016 opening! Schools that applied to their authorizer this spring and recently became one step closer to opening their doors are:

- [Laurus Collegiate Charter School](#) (Aurora Public Schools)
- [University Prep 2](#) (Denver Public Schools)

Resource of the Month

Colorado League of Charter Schools

As the state's only Charter Support Organization, the Colorado League of Charter Schools is, and should be, your biggest resource! Our website has an abundance of information for every stage of charter school development and operations. If you haven't already, visit our website soon and often for tips, resources, events and more: www.coloradoleague.org.

Mark Your Calendar

Safety in Secondary School Science Labs

Supported by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Presented by The Laboratory Safety Institute

Date: Tuesday, August 4

Time: 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Location: STRIVE Prep - Sunnyside, 4735 Pecos Street, Denver

Cost: One person: \$495, 2-4 people: \$420 (Groups of 5 or more contact LSI for special pricing).

Description: Safety in Secondary School Science Labs is an intensive one-day seminar covering the fundamentals of lab safety and effective lab safety programs. Topics include: scope of the problem, accidents, legal aspects, emergency planning, chemical handling, chemical storage, biological and animal hazards, eye and face protection, hazardous waste management, electrical safety and safety program planning. Attendees will 1) LEARN how to avoid accidents and injuries with simple, practical low-cost solutions; 2) DISCOVER how easy it is to avoid costly and time consuming litigation associated with negligence suits; and 3) receive the

RESOURCES needed to understand the fundamentals of lab safety, to develop or improve your lab safety program, and to comply with the OSHA Lab standard.

Registration: [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

Lunch and Learn: Understanding Pensions and Retirement

Hosted by Appreciation Financial and Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Friday, August 7

Time: 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

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

Cost: League Members and New School Developers - Free
Non-Members: \$25 per person. Lunch will be provided.

Description: Trying to provide more value to your staff? Please attend this informational lunch and learn on how to help your teachers, faculty, and staff be better prepared for retirement. Learn how to interpret PERA pensions, how it impacts social security, and how basic retirement vehicles (401(k), 403(b), and 457) will help everyone fill in the income gap in the PERA Pension. During this event you will learn: 1) How to calculate PERA Pensions; 2) How to purchase service credits and unused time; and 3) About 403(b) options that have minimal costs to charter schools.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: August 5.

Anti-Discrimination Training

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Friday, August 21

Time: 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: TBD, Denver Metro area

Cost: New School Developers: \$25 per person (enter promo code NSD at checkout)

League Members - \$45 per person | Non-Members - \$55 per person

Audience: School Leaders, Administrators, HR and Business Managers

Description: Whether your school's administrators need a refresher or a first-time training course, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training is an essential element of any effective claim prevention strategy. The U.S. Supreme Court has said that employers should provide this training to their employees on an annual basis.

Because providing such training can be costly, the Colorado League of Charter Schools has teamed up with the attorneys at [Ireland Stapleton Pryor & Pascoe, PC](#) to provide a cost-effective training for you and your employees. This training will provide:

- An overview of discrimination and harassment laws.
- An in-depth discussion of the types of conduct that gives rise to discrimination and harassment complaints, including issues involving off-duty conduct, social media and emails.
- A discussion of appropriate reporting procedures and your school's responsibility when it becomes aware of inappropriate conduct or receives a complaint.

Registration: [Click here for more information and to register.](#) Deadline: August 18. Space is limited.

Federal Programs: Summer Training Offers Opportunity to Improve Grant Writing Skills

Attendees at a grant writing training this summer will learn about CDE's competitive grant processes, hear helpful tips for writing fundable proposals, and complete hands-on exercises to put grant writing skills to use. All representatives from schools and districts are welcome to attend.

Register for this free one-day training in your region by clicking on the event registration links below:

Wednesday, August 19

Southeast Region (Limon)

[Click here to register.](#)

Friday, August 28

West Central Region (Grand Junction)

[Click here to register.](#)

Additional information and resources will be sent via email one week prior to these events.

For More Information, Contact:

Anna Young

Federal Programs

Phone: 303-866-6250

Email: young_a@cde.state.co.us

Charter Communicators Network Meeting

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Thursday, September 10

Time: 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM

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

Cost: League Members and New School Developers: \$25 per person; Non-Members: \$75 per person. Includes coffee and lunch.

Description: Charter Communicators Network Meetings take place three times per year. 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.

The September meeting will focus on creating communications policies and procedures, internal communications, and messaging charter schools.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: September 4

4th Annual Colorado NWEA MAP Users Conference

Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Friday, October 23

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:00 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: [Click here to register](#). Early bird rates end September 9. Groups of 3 or more use the discount code NWEAGROUP for \$20 off per person.

6th Annual Colorado PowerSchool Users Conference

Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Thursday, January 21 - Friday, January 22

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

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

Cost: Early Bird Rate - One day: \$150 per person, Two days: \$175 person Rate increases December 14th. *Groups of 3 or more enter the discount code PSGROUP at checkout for \$25 off per person.

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: [Click here to register](#).

2016 Colorado Charter Schools Conference

Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Thursday, February 25 - Saturday, February 27

Location: Omni Interlocken Resort, 500 Interlocken Blvd., Broomfield

Description: The Colorado Charter Schools Conference is the largest annual professional development and networking opportunity for Colorado charter schools. Each year, the Conference features over 60 breakout sessions on a variety of charter school topics. Whether you are a new or veteran charter school leader, business manager, board member, teacher or just someone wanting to know more about the charter school community, the Colorado Charter Schools Conference has something for you.

Registration: Registration will open in fall 2015.

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.

2015-16 CCSP Grant Updates: Expected RFP Release & Mandatory Grant Training

CDE's Schools of Choice Office anticipates announcing a Request for Proposal for the 2015-16 Charter Schools Program (CCSP) Grant in August, with **CCSP Grant Boot Camp mandatory grant training planned for Wednesday, August 19, 2015, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Adams 12 Conference Center in Thornton.**

There will just be one application round this fall for the 2015-16 CCSP Grant. You can register for the CCSP Grant Boot Camp at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/chartregstart>

This grant program provides up to \$645,000 over a 2-3 year period for planning, design, and implementation of a new charter school or a significant expansion of an existing high-performing charter school. CDE has approximately \$3,918,242 for approximately 5-6 new 2015-16 awards from remaining funds from our federal 2010-2015 federal Charter Schools Program SEA grant. CDE has also recently applied for additional funds for a new 2015-2018 federal award, which if approved may fund an additional 16-20 awards.

Full eligibility rules will be outlined in the RFP, when released, but here is a summary:

- A new charter school planning for a 2015-16 or 2016-17 start, that will have already submitted a charter application by October 28, 2015 (though approval can still be pending)
- An existing, high-performing charter school (Performance on 3-year SPF) that is expanding 2 or more grade levels, or increasing their student population by 50% or more
- Application requires a District/Authorizer/LEA to serve as fiscal agent.

Important CCSP Grant Deadlines:

- CCSP Grant Intent to Submit & Eligibility Forms - Wednesday, August 26 at 11:00 AM.
- CCSP Grant Application due date - Wednesday, October 28.

For more information, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/cchgrn00> or contact Gina Schlieman, Manger Schools of Choice, at Schlieman_g@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6790.

UPDATE: Revised Charter School Sample Application Guidebook and Rubric

The CDE Schools of Choice Office has been working over the past year with the Colorado League of Charter Schools, in consultation with attendees at quarterly meetings for charter authorizers, to update and revise the Colorado Charter School Sample Application Guidebook and Rubric, last published in 2011, to reflect changes in statute and best practice. Public comment was recently invited for this revised document and a corresponding rubric tool, available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/distauthinfo>, however no feedback was received. A finalized version of the document will be posted in the upcoming weeks.

The Schools of Choice Office continues to welcome public comment, which can be submitted to soc@cde.state.co.us, and will revisit the document in 6-12 months should comments be received.

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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