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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS
focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

June 2015



Welcome

While we encourage you to read through this 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 stages 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 or 2016.

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 with questions, requests for sample documents or other resources that you are looking for as you develop your school. If you haven't come in for a face-to-face meeting yet, please schedule one with us at your convenience!

Lori Ventimiglia
Director, New School Development
Colorado League of Charter Schools
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New School Spotlight

School Spotlight: Roots Elementary

The first school to be featured in our newsletter from the class of 2015 is Roots Elementary opening in the Park Hill neighborhood in Denver this fall.

At Roots we believe that a school is only as strong as its culture. Roots incorporates best practices from high performing schools across the country to intentionally build a culture of excellence to support the academic model. The heart of our culture is our GROW values, detailed below, which are explicitly taught to teammates, scholars and families at the start of the year and continuously modeled and reinforced. While articulating our values is an important first step in creating a positive school culture, it is the daily rituals and practices we will employ that will solidify the culture and ensure we all live up to our high standards.

Grit: Learning is fun but it can also be hard; educating kids is fun and is always hard. We look every challenge square in the face and say, "bring it on!" We are not afraid to fail. When we do, we pick ourselves up and learn from it. When others do, we extend a hand.

Relationships: Roots is a school family. We respect our teachers, our classmates, our community and ourselves. We see strengths in all people first. We use our words to solve problems and always assume the best. Our kindness is contagious.

Ownership: We take ownership over the words we say and the actions we take. We are open and honest. We freely admit mistakes and embrace difficult conversations. We deeply feel our shared responsibility for the success of all our scholars.

Wonder: Education done right begins and ends in wonder. We marvel at - and are humbled by - one another and the world around us. We are obsessed with questions - the questions we ask our scholars, ourselves, our teammates, and most importantly the questions we inspire our scholars to ask of us.



Roots Growth Plan: Following the established best practice of high performing schools around the country, Roots will open with only two grade levels and add a grade each year until it is a full K-5 school. This will enable us to build a strong culture among scholars,



families and team members
and incrementally fold new

people into the established culture.

Learn more about Roots Elementary by visiting www.rootselementary.org.

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.

There are Planning Grants for That!

Are you in the in early stages of developing your charter application?

Do you need funds to travel to conferences, visit schools that use the model you are exploring, launch a marketing and student outreach campaign or hire consultants to help you with the academic, legal or financial aspects of school start up? There are planning grants for that!

Are you in the later stages of charter application writing? Do you need funds to continue your outreach efforts, acquire the League's extensive [two-part application review](#), put the finishing touches on your application, and print the required hard copies of the application? There are planning grants for that too!

The League is able to offer developing groups [planning grants](#) thanks to two philanthropic organizations, the Anschutz Foundation and the Daniels Fund. The funding available to schools is limited to the amounts received by the League. There are no deadlines associated with these planning grants; grant proposals are accepted on a rolling basis. Questions can be directed to [Lori Ventimiglia](#), 303-989-5356 x113.

Note: Planning grants for groups in the metro area are going fast! If you are in the following counties and intend to submit a planning grant application we highly recommend you do so as soon as possible: All Adams Counties, Boulder, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson.

TIP! Read, Read, Read!

A founding group of a charter school should equip themselves with knowledge. Starting a school is an endeavor of massive proportions and high stakes. It is incumbent upon founding groups to understand Colorado charter school law, the state accountability system, financial management issues, and much more. [Click here](#) for a list of critical readings for groups at the early stages of school development.

Resource of the Month: Hire a Consultant!

We understand that founding groups don't always possess all of the skill sets and expertise necessary in charter school development. Charter school law and finance, for example, are areas where founding groups typically require the assistance from experienced professionals. Additionally, the development of the academic program is sometimes an area where founders seek the input and guidance from paid consultants. The New School Development office at the League has a list of consultants who have been working in the Colorado charter school space for many years. Please contact [Lori Ventimiglia](#) or [Kathy Zlomke](#) for any of

these lists. Please note; the League has not vetted these consultants beyond their relationships with current charter schools. Therefore, we always recommend to developing groups that they perform due diligence in contacting more than one of the consultants, in a given area, and asking for costs, expected deliverables, and references before determining a fit with your school, and entering into any contracts with unfamiliar vendors.

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 or 2016.

There are Planning Grants for That!

Has your charter application been submitted and/or approved? Do you need funds to hire legal counsel to help you with contract negotiations, pay the application fee for your 501 (c) (3), recruit excellent school leadership and staff, bring in experienced [Governance Trainers](#) for your board or hire an architect for facilities planning? There are planning grants for that!

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Post Approval and Year-One Schools Tip!

The League manages a trio of charter-focused vendor programs as a resource for charter schools. The programs include vetted and non-vetted providers, based on the needs of the schools. These programs facilitate an efficient starting point to select products and services across various industries. You can learn more about these programs on the League's website by [clicking here](#).

Resources of the Month - Leasing Facilities

Check out this power point, [Leasing Facilities for Today's Students](#), to learn about Occupancy Leases versus Finance Leases, Finance Lease Distinctions, Facilities Options with the District, and Facilities Opportunities for Charter Schools.

Deals and Discounts

Rosetta Stone

Save BIG on Rosetta Stone license purchases by ordering your language licenses between May 1 - 31.

Foundations Silver Program available at \$95/license. Advantage Program

available at \$105/license. Professional Development is included.
Schools NEW to the program, [use this order form](#). [Click here for more information](#).

Questions? Contact Nick Underwood at 480-243-2991. Deadline: May 31.

Hertz Furniture

Is your school purchasing furniture this year? Take advantage of discounts up to 70% off, free standard ground shipping and other charter-specific benefits from Hertz Furniture, a [League Endorsed Partner](#). When you purchase, you qualify for a Rewards Coupon for your next order.

****New Schools can use the coupon for their current order!***

Order Size	Rewards Coupon
\$25,000 - \$50,000	\$200
\$50,000 - \$100,000	\$400
\$100,000 - \$150,000	\$600
\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$800
\$200,000+	\$1,000

To start purchasing furniture today, contact Shane Ronay, Regional Sales Manager, Hertz Furniture at 888-286-3461 x1247 or shane@hertzfurniture.com.

[Click here for more summer deals and discounts.](#)

Upcoming Events

Colorado ASBO School District Accounting Classes

Hosted by Colorado Association of School Business Officers (CASBO)

Date: Multiple dates in June 2015

Locations: Multiple locations

Description: The School District Accounting Classes are developed for School Accounting Personnel of public, charter and private schools by Colorado ASBO, in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado League of Charter Schools, and offers updates on issues affecting the accounting/financial operations and reporting requirements of public schools in Colorado. These classes will help you develop a "Tool Kit" to be used in your present or future school district employment. This class series provides attendees with an introduction to fund accounting in school districts. Through a combination of lecture and classroom exercises, participants will learn the basics of General Fund transactions with an introduction to accounting for payroll, fund balance, and reserves. This course is appropriate for anyone interested in school district accounting or looking for a short accounting refresher. No previous accounting background is required. [Click here for more information](#).

Administrator Mentoring Cohort

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Tuesday, June 2

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

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

Cost: \$20 per person

Description: A mentoring program that meets six 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. The AMC is also fully accredited as a charter school principal induction program where charter school leaders with their initial principal license can be recommended for professional licensure.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on May 31.

8 Critical Strategies for Compliant Special Education Programming

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Wednesday, June 3

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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

Cost: League members - \$175 for one person | \$25 for each additional attendee

Non-Members: \$225 for one person | \$25 for each additional attendee

Audience: School Leaders, Teachers, Instructional Staff, SPED Coordinators, etc.

Description: School leaders (principals, executive directors, etc.) are ultimately responsible for the operation and compliance of special education programming in their schools. Therefore, it is essential that school leaders, in addition to special education teachers/coordinators, understand the IDEA requirements for special education services and make sure their school is in compliance with these requirements. This workshop is designed to equip school leaders with 8 critical strategies for managing Special Education compliance, and is presented by education consultant Sabrina Hodges. Sabrina Hodges, a special education teacher and school social worker, has 14 years of experience in Denver charter schools including a highly successful 5 year tenure at STRIVE Preparatory Charter Schools. As the Central Director of Student Services at STRIVE Prep, Ms. Hodges led the network's highly successful continuum of Special Education, MTSS, and Social Emotional Learning services.

Outcomes:

- School Leaders will understand Special Education's relationship to a school's broader Multi-Tiered Levels of Support (MTSS)
- Principals will understand 8 critical components to ensuring compliance
- Offer the continuum of services set forth by your LEA.
- Protecting FAPE
- Safeguard Discipline
- Enable Data-Driven Decision Making
- Ensure Parental Rights and Involvement
- Compliance with Procedural Rules
- Safeguard Provisions for English Language Learners
- Document, Document, Document

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: May 29.

Board Fundamentals**Date:** Friday, June 5**Time:** 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**Location:** Colorado School District Self Insurance Pool 6857 South Spruce Street, Centennial**Cost:** \$20 per person; bring a check or money order made out to CDE with your name in the Memo.**Description:** A training offered twice a year in collaboration with the Colorado League of Charter Schools to support board members in providing a sound introduction to board practice and responsibilities, a refresher to continuing board members in board leadership roles, and to introduce school leaders to general charter school governing board practices and responsibilities.**Registration:** [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on June 3.**Data Driven Coaching Techniques, Supported by BloomBoard***Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools and BloomBoard***Date:** Wednesday, June 10**Time:** 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM**Location:** Colorado League of Charter Schools' Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver**Audience:** Principals, APs, Coaches, etc. who use BloomBoard**Cost:** League members - \$150 per person | Non-members - \$175 per person**Description:** Data driven coaching conversations require both the collection of effective data and the structuring of productive conversations. In this session, explore how to leverage the BloomBoard platform to drive effective inquiry cycles based on both on formal and informal data sources. Participants will:

- Use a variety of tools to gather quantitative and qualitative observational data
- Use the AE&R and the ratings page to drive coaching and feedback conversations
- Articulate how to use the cycle of continuous instructional improvement to drive adult learning
- Identify how goal posts and resources accommodate informal to formal learning conversations

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: June 5.**Powerful Strategies for Response to Intervention - Two-Day Workshop***Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools***Date:** Thursday, June 11 and Friday, June 12**Time:** 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM each day**Location:** Colorado League of Charter Schools' Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver**Cost:** League Members: \$325 for one person and \$150 per additional attendeeNon-Members: \$425 for one person and \$150 per additional attendee
*(Grant funds were used to subsidize the cost of this training, which would normally cost \$685/person.)***Audience:** School leaders and teachers

Description: Response to Intervention (RTI) is a comprehensive, student-centered assessment and intervention model used to identify and mitigate individual student academic difficulties or challenges. Attend this workshop to learn how to effectively select intervention strategies aligned with current evidence of student learning through a collaborative model that includes:

- Collecting and analyzing student data
- Setting appropriate goals
- Selecting instructional interventions
- Monitoring student progress
- Deepen your understanding of the principles of RTI and best practices as shared through actual case studies
- Learn to select appropriate instructional strategies and interventions and monitor the process with skill and confidence.

This two-day workshop on Powerful Strategies for Response to Intervention will be led by Rachael Gurian, who has facilitated numerous League-sponsored workshops, presented at the Colorado Charter Schools Conference, worked in several charter schools across the Denver area and continues to support charter schools in her current role with Denver Public Schools.

Content provided by The Leadership and Learning Center,
www.leadandlearn.com

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: June 1

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. Please contact [Tisha Bouwmeester](#) to receive discount once you register.

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. Please contact [Tisha Bouwmeester](#) to receive discount once you register.

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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