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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS
focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

June 2017



Welcome

The decision to start a charter public 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 3 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.

No matter what phase of development you are in; this monthly newsletter will offer you *critical resources*, *helpful tips* and information about 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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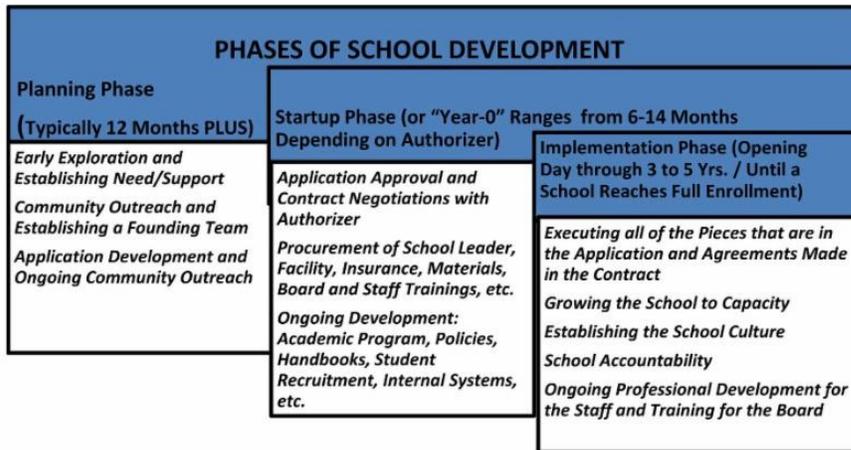
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Phases of School Development



Tips for Schools in the Planning Phase

Application Review

If you are planning to submit a charter application to your district this fall, now is the time to schedule an application review! Our extensive two-part application review process should begin eight weeks prior to your district/authorizer application deadline. [Stage 5 Planning Grants](#) are available to cover the costs of the application review. These grants are available for groups that have most of the essential pieces of their charter application in place, including a sound budget, thoughtful academic and performance management plans, and a mission-aligned organizational structure. For questions about the application review process, please reach out to [Kathy Zlomke](#) at your earliest convenience.

Reflections from a Charter Application Reviewer

In thinking about what I wish charter application writers knew about the application review process, there are several key areas to understand for optimum feedback when submitting a draft application. They include the following:

- The rush at the beginning of the season puts a strain on reviewers and applicants alike, as it is a busy time for many professions, and most reviewers work other jobs as well.
- Independent review consultants depend on the schedule for their work and only get paid when a review is completed. Slips or last minute schedule drops can be difficult to recover from as work may have been turned down to reserve time for an application review.
- Reviewers often have many proposals that overlap between different review teams during the heavy review season. These take an average of 12 hours each to review.
- Limited time is available for reviews and poorly written/organized applications can take up to 18 hours in order to find content so

valuable feedback can be provided.

- Different experiences in reviewers, from education experts to outsiders (who often find things others miss), help ensure that information is explained so both a layperson and expert can understand implementation of the entire program (the board members that vote are not always experts in education; if a reviewer doesn't get it, they may not either).
- Sharing their knowledge/understanding in proposal areas is most effective if reviewers can refer to the specific page number of the item being identified providing details that will help the developer fine-tune specifically to the targeted feedback.
- Discussion of a proposal's merits and weak points can only be provided if enough information is presented, i.e., reviewers have a difficult time providing detailed feedback if there is minimal information to go on when they review for:
 - Application cohesiveness & alignment to requirements and standards (at times there is so little to go on that the only response possible, in the allotted time frame, can be to ask the writer to answer the questions)
 - Adequate research and proposal detail
 - Implementation plan(s) - Is there clarity or does it need detail? If so, what?
 - Innovative ideas - Are they well-developed to include component research, implementation planning and indicators of why they will be effective?
 - Evaluation plan for program effectiveness and improvement planning
 - An adequate budget and operational and board oversight planning
 - Proposal readiness
- Independent reviewers do not all have access to Google accounts, nor can they always download or see details like page numbers with links to "cloud" documents, which are also not secure. Therefore all submissions should be in the form of email attachments.
- All materials need to be able to be searched for missing items and compatible with more universal computer programs, as each reviewer provides their own technology system(s) including protocol to use Excel and not Numbers (Apple) or Sheets (Google).

Adapted from:

Everett, L., Grissom, S., & Millard, D. (2010). NSF proposal review process: Mock review webinar. Retrieved May 24, 2017 from <http://slideplayer.com/slide/4567237/>.

Anecdotal feedback and SurveyMonkey: Charter Application Review Process Consultant Survey 2017 Spring.

Startup Phase Schools: Mark Your Calendar

Important Training for the Spring 2017 Cohort of Approved Charter Schools

Onboarding Your Charter School

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Tuesday, July 11

Time: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

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

Yale Avenue, Denver

Cost: \$75 per group. You may be eligible for planning grants to cover the cost of this training (check with [Lori Ventimiglia](#)).

Registration: [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Friday, July 7.

Naturally the first thing you will do when you learn that your charter school application has been approved will be to celebrate! The next thing you should do? [Sign-Up for Onboarding Your Charter School!](#) Recently approved charter public schools with a planned 2018 (or later) opening won't want to miss this training! Onboarding is for founding teams/governing boards of newly approved charter schools and will guide teams as they navigate through the complexities of the startup phase; presenting a clear path forward as your school moves from theory to reality. There are morning workshops and customized, afternoon "office hours" with League staff across essential areas of school startup. Onboarding is designed to help schools begin to unpack their application and gain critical information and resources encompassing the following:

- Qualified and Competent School Leadership- Recruiting, Onboarding and Retaining a Strong School Leader:
 - Avoid Common HR Pitfalls in Hiring
 - Recommended Screening and Interviewing Practices
 - Using a Head of School Evaluation to Guide the Hiring Process
 - Hiring and Beyond: Monitoring and Evaluating your Head of School

- Sound Operational Practices- Business Management Startup 101:
 - How to Negotiate, Enter and Monitor Contracts with Authorizer and Vendors
 - Critical Back Office Systems and Information
 - Navigate the Facilities Maze
 - Need to Know Insurance Information
 - Ready, Set, Shop- The Mass Purchasing Begins

- Effective Governing Boards- Transitioning from a Founding Committee to a Formal Governing Board:
 - Understanding Board vs. Head of School Roles
 - Cover Your Legal Bases
 - Avoid Common Pitfalls like "Founders Grip"
 - What to Look for in order to Monitor the Mission Driven Culture and Financial Health of the School

- Robust Performance Management Plan - Understanding the Boards Role in Ensuring Improved Student and School Success:
 - How to review Student Performance Data
 - Why Boards Need to Understand the State Accountability System
 - Establishing Systems to Provide Academic Performance Oversight and Monitoring

- Clear Mission-Driven School Culture- Don't let it be an afterthought!
 - Establishing a strong school culture before the doors open
 - Discipline, Climate Surveys, School Safety, Health and Wellness Resources

This training is recommended for planning teams (as many members involved in the startup phase of your school as possible) and special group discounts apply for schools with three or more attendees.

You may be eligible for planning grants to cover the cost of this training (check with [Lori Ventimiglia](#)).

Summer and Back-to-School Time Professional Development opportunities for School Leaders (for new schools that have hired their Academic and Instructional leader):

1. Facilitation of Quality Professional Development

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Wednesday, June 21

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Cost: League Members: \$175 for one person and \$100 each additional attendee; Non-Members: \$250 for one person and \$100 each additional attendee.

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

Description: During this workshop, attendees will explore an overview of successful professional development facilitation. This will allow attendees to build background knowledge about the components of quality PD that will lead to superior PD structures that can become systematized over time. Participants will also examine research-based strategies for teaching adult learners and analyze how these fit within PD structures. Time will be allotted to plan and create think partnerships about how to lead effective professional development sessions.

Professional Development Objectives:

- Building an overview of quality facilitation of professional development structures, descriptions, and strategies.
- Learning how to support all adult learners to successfully connect and implement new learning.

Audience: Teachers, Teacher Leaders, PD Coordinators, Administrators, or anyone without a teaching or facilitation background that needs to deliver information over time in a school setting.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Friday, June 16.

2. Principal Leadership: Where Do I Start? A Workshop for First Year Administrators

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Wednesday, June 28

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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

Cost: \$175 per person.

Description: This workshop will provide attendees with tools and processes to get organized and focused on creating a successful plan of action during year one as a charter school administrator. Tools will include a month-by-month calendar of essentials, shared vision and mission development, and the creation of major improvement strategies with action steps.

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

Deadline: Monday, June 26. Event is contingent on a minimum of 6 registrants.

3. Instructional Coaching Practices

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Friday, September 8

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 and \$125 per additional attendee; Non-members: \$250 for one person and \$125 per additional attendee.

Description: This workshop will focus on two instructional coaching practices: 1) Observation/Feedback Cycles, and 2) Data Review Meetings. Participants will:

- Learn and apply an observation/feedback protocol called the 6 Steps for Effective Feedback.
- Determine what to coach along with how to coach by digging into the management and rigor trajectories for new teachers.
- Master and apply a simple protocol for engaging in 1:1 data meetings that harness the standard-based teaching and learning cycle.
- Learn about tools and resources for ensuring accountability loops and tracking teacher growth.

References:

Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Exceptional Schools*, 2012.

Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, *Get Better Faster: A 90 Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers*, 2016.

Doug Lemov, *Practice Perfect: 42 Rules for Getting Better and Getting Better*, 2012.

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

Deadline: Wednesday, September 6.

To learn more about the above trainings for school leaders, please contact Nicole Grzybowski, Director of School Quality and Support, at ngrzybowski@coloradoleague.org or 303-989-5356, ext. 107.

Tips for Startup Phase

Elements of Sound Purchasing Practices

- School districts and charter schools in Colorado set their own purchasing policies and procedures, as procurement within the Colorado educational community is decentralized.
- Check your authorizer's policies to see which ones apply to you.
- Review your school's purchasing policies. Draft a written purchasing policy. Within the policy, be sure to clarify who has purchasing authority.
- If you are spending federal funds, you must comply with "EDGAR" rules. You will need to conduct an RFP process.
- Implement internal controls.
- When to consider conducting an RFP process:
 - If you are considering using a friend, relative, volunteer or board relationship
 - If it's a purchase in a category that is outside of your expertise or that requires specialized expertise
 - If it is high-dollar expense category / high liability
 - It's your individual school's policy to do so
- Consider the nature of your school, staff organization and the

business opportunity under consideration to determine the parties involved in the due diligence process. Involve your team, including anyone with legal and financial expertise or expertise in the pertinent area (such as real estate or construction), where appropriate.

- Talk to other charter schools that have used the provider in consideration. The League can help you make connections.
- Set clear performance targets and timelines. Consider keeping a purchasing calendar so as not to miss order and renewal dates.
- Get pricing and detailed product/service specs in writing.
- Be sure to ask about "soft costs" (anything additional that is not quoted in the provider's retail price).
- Request that the company in consideration provide company information regarding their experience with charter schools, their activities, accomplishments, products, performance and/or results.
- Check references of the provider in consideration.
- Consider these typically KEY contract provisions:
 - Scope of Work
 - Deliverables
 - Change Orders
 - Payment Terms
 - Dispute Resolution
 - Dissolution Process
 - Arbitration or Mediation clauses
 - Multi-year contracts: need TABOR or non-appropriation clause included
- Have legal counsel review contracts before a school representative signs on the dotted line. When using volunteers or donated items, be especially careful to set clear expectations and procedures (e.g., computer donations)
- Use the Colorado League of Charter Schools as a resource for charter-experienced vendors and for information regarding typical benchmarks.
- Contact [Tiffany Kallevik](#) at the Colorado League of Charter Schools to verify if the provider in consideration has any involvement with the League's vendor programs: 1) Group Purchasing Partners, 2) Preferred Service Providers, or 3) Marketplace participants, as many of these providers have been vetted.

The League is presenting this guidance as an example of good practices and matters to consider for planning and implementation purposes. This guidance does not create any requirements beyond those included in applicable law and regulations, or create any additional rights for any person, entity or organization. Nothing in this document should be construed as legal advice.

The League recommends schools seek plan guidance and participation from their authorizer and legal counsel on a regular basis.

In Every Issue

The following information is included in each newsletter as they are valuable resources to keep on your radar.

New School Development Resources

Visit the League's [New School Development](#) page for sample model

documents, upcoming events, information about grants and much more. Check back frequently for updates!

Health and Wellness Resources:

<http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/resources/healthy-schools-best-practices-guides/>

<http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/resources/connecting-health-and-learning-health-is-vital-to-student-success-an-overview-of-relevant-research/>

<http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MakingtheCaseFF.pdf>

Community Presentation Resources

- Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJNqgDobfoI0Qf3t78oVMcQ>
- FACTS: <http://coloradoleague.org/?charterschoolfacts>
- Infographics: <http://coloradoleague.org/?infographics>
- Website: <http://www.charterpublic.org/>
(Great for messaging your charter school)!

Information from CDE Schools of Choice Office

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/chartregstart.asp> - This is the events page for the Schools of Choice unit at CDE. This site should also be checked frequently as there are always important and relevant workshops and seminars for developing schools that CDE Schools of Choice offers.

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/chartcalendar>

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>

New School Profile

Renaissance Secondary School - Castle Rock Opening August 2017

Renaissance Secondary School in Castle Rock is fully enrolled for the 2017-18 school year, initially serving grades 6-10. Learning at Renaissance Secondary will be fully integrated



across all core subjects, as well as visual and performing arts. The personalized, hands-on curriculum will emphasize critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration and creativity - skills that

colleges and employers alike agree are essential to success. Led by Principal Debbie Rabideau, Renaissance Secondary School will offer experiences for students to create meaningful, real-world connections that extend beyond classroom walls. "Renaissance Secondary School will be a fundamentally different school where students will be challenged to push themselves and reach beyond their current abilities," said Ms. Rabideau. "Understanding that each student is their own unique individual with their own way of learning, RSS takes a personalized approach to meet students where they are academically while accounting for their individual interests and passions."

The Renaissance model utilizes best practices from research-based methods of Expeditionary Learning, Design Thinking, and Project Based Learning to achieve deeper levels of understanding of World Class Outcomes concepts and Colorado State Standards. Featuring deep studies of rich academic topics that cut across all disciplines - including the arts - students tackle complex, real-world issues with greater engagement and achievement. Student inquiry, critical thinking and craftsmanship are emphasized, and students present project results to their peers and the public.

Other aspects of its culture will set the school apart. Said Ms. Rabideau, "Our Adventure Education program challenges students physically and mentally to go outside of their comfort zones, which builds a culture of teamwork, perseverance and cooperation." She added that there will be a strong service learning component at RSS, differentiating it from many other secondary schools.

The Renaissance Secondary School facility has been designed to complement a unique culture and a commitment to sustainability. Plans include an interior climbing wall and exterior bouldering wall that will exemplify and support the Adventure Education program. A central, open courtyard will give students access to the emotional and cognitive benefits of a connection to nature. The small school's strong culture of active participation will be facilitated through flexible spaces that will promote collaboration within and among crews. The school is located at 3954 Trail Boss Lane, Castle Rock. Construction is well underway and the school will open in August of 2017 with grades 6-10 and will add a grade level each year until 2019, when it will be at full capacity with grades 7-12.

[Click here](#) to learn more about this unique and compelling school.

Mark Your Calendar

Whether you are in the planning phase, have been approved or are a Year-One school, there are critical professional development opportunities listed below. If you are unclear as to whether or not you should attend a training listed below, please contact the League's [New School Development department](#). Please continue to check the [League Calendar](#) for upcoming trainings.

Two-Day Workshop: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Monday, June 19 - Tuesday, June 20

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM each day

Location: Colorado School Districts Self Insurance Pool, 6857 S. Spruce

Street, Englewood

Cost: League Members and New School Developers: \$350 for one person and \$175 per additional attendee from the same school community.

Description: MTSS is a comprehensive, student-centered assessment, systems, and intervention framework used to identify and support individual student academic or social emotional gaps and 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:

- Identifying, collecting and analyzing student data with a robust body of evidence
- Selecting instructional and social emotional Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions aligned to appropriate skill gaps
- Monitoring student progress and setting appropriate goals
- Deepening your understanding of the principles of MTSS and best practices as shared through national researched-based practices and real
- time case scenarios
- Prioritizing an action plan that includes next steps for your team or individual toolbox and capacity

Some of the content is provided by The Leadership and Learning Center.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) **Deadline:** Thursday, June 15.

Facilitation of Quality Professional Development

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Wednesday, June 21

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Cost: League Members and New School Developers: \$175 for one person and \$100 each additional attendee.

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

Description: An overview will be presented on what successful PD facilitation is. This will allow us to build background knowledge about the components of quality PD that will lead to quality PD structures that can become systematized over time. We will then explore research-based strategies for teaching adult learners and analyze how these fit within PD structures. We will also have time to plan and create think partnerships about how to lead effective professional development sessions.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) **Deadline:** Friday, June 16.

8 Critical Strategies for Compliant Special Education Programming

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Monday, June 26

Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Cost: League Members and New School Developers: \$100 for one person and \$75 each additional attendee.

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

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 to ensure 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.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Wednesday, June 21.
Event contingent on a minimum of 8 attendees.

Principal Leadership: Where Do I Start? A Workshop for First Year Administrators

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Wednesday, June 28

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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

Cost: \$175 per person.

Description: This workshop will provide attendees with tools and processes to get organized and focused on creating a successful plan of action during year one as a charter school administrator. Tools will include a month-by-month calendar of essentials, shared vision and mission development, and the creation of major improvement strategies with action steps.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Monday, June 26. Event is contingent on a minimum of 6 registrants.

Secondary Mathematics Standards Review and Collaborative Curriculum Mapping

Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Wednesday, July 26 - Thursday, July 27

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM each day

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

Cost: League Members: \$350 for one person and \$175 per additional attendee from the same school community; Non-members: \$450 for one person and \$175 per additional attendee

Description: This workshop will provide a structured and collaborative setting for secondary math professional development where educators review and process the current Colorado Academic Standards for mathematics. Attendees will review resources that are available to implement the standards with fidelity while engaging in a curricular mapping process. Bring and share current curricular documents and resources from your school as a part of this learning process (if available).

Registration: [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Friday, July 21.
Event is contingent on a minimum of 8 registrants.

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