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COLORADO LEAGUE of  
CHARTER SCHOOLS  
*focus on achievement*

## NEW SCHOOL NEWS

### April 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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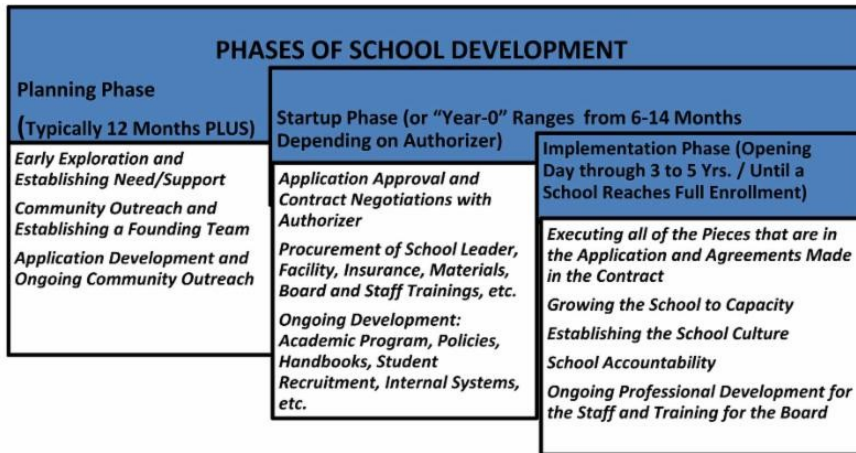
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[New School Resources and Links](#)  
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[Information and Links](#)

## Phases of School Development



## NEW: School Founder Mentor Program

Are you a part of a charter school founding team in Colorado? Would you like to have a personal mentor who has successfully navigated the process? The League can match you with a mentor who has been involved in the development, startup and continued operations of a successful charter school! Our mentors are happy to consult with you on an as-needed basis as you work toward the successful launch of your school. Contact [Lori Ventimiglia](#) for more information.

## New School Development Satisfaction Survey

We strive to meet the needs of all the school launchers we work with and to impact the development of quality schools right from the start. Please take the 10-15 minutes needed to complete this survey telling us what we are getting right, could be doing more of, less of or differently. **Bonus - Enter to win a \$25.00 Visa prepaid card if you fill out the entire survey by Friday, May 19!** [Click here to access the survey.](#)

## Tips for Planning Phase

### Understanding Charter Public 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](#). Also, don't forget to contact the League for a list of consultants with experience assisting developing charter schools with their budget and finances.

## Startup Phase: 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](#)).

## Tips for Startup Phase

### Human Resources

Human Resources and employment matters can be complex. Thus, charter public 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, General Counsel/Director of Policy at the Colorado League of Charter Schools at 303-989-5356, ext. 121 or [jmjohnson@coloradoleague.org](mailto:jmjohnson@coloradoleague.org).

## 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>

## 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.**

### Webinar: Learn More about NWEA's Newest Tool - the OECD Test for Schools (Based on PISA)

*Hosted by NWEA*

**Date:** Wednesday, April 26

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

**Location:** Webinar

**Cost:** Free

**Description:** Administrators and educators need reliable, actionable insights on how well their schools are preparing students for the real world. Today more than ever, there is a need for new and different types of information that focus not only on academic performance, but also on the application of knowledge and 21st century skills including critical thinking and real-life problem solving. Based on the renowned Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and leveraging the scale and rigor of PISA, the OECD Test for Schools provides educators the actionable, school-level information they need to inform program and system level changes, and provides internationally comparable performance results, as well as best practices from top performing education systems around the world.

**Registration:** [Click here to join webinar.](#)

## Charter School Teacher Summit

*Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools*

**Date:** Friday, May 5

**Time:** 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

**Location:** Lowry Conference Center, 1061 Akron Way, Denver

**Cost:** League Members: \$175 | Non-Members: \$225

**Audience:** Teachers, Educators, Paraprofessionals, Teacher Assistants

**Description:** Actively engage in a variety of instructional and academic topics that are unique to all teachers including paraprofessionals, aides, and academic support staff. Select from a variety of topics that you'd like to explore during the event. Share your expertise, exchange ideas and learn new concepts/strategies. Network and build relationships with other educators while learning from educational experts in the field.

**Registration:** [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Friday, April 28.

## Western Slope Combined Seminar

*Hosted by the CDE Schools of Choice Office*

**Date:** Friday, May 5

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**Location:** Mountain Middle School, 108 West 31st Street, Durango

**Cost:** Free

**Description:** A training designed to address a variety of training needs of charter school instructors, leaders, business managers, and board members.

**Registration:** [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Wednesday, May 3 at 8:00 AM.

## Charter Communicators Network Meeting

*Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools*

**Date:** Monday, May 8

**Time:** 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM

**Location:** Banning Lewis Ranch Academy, 7094 Cottonwood Tree Drive, Colorado Springs

**Cost:** League Members: \$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.

**Registration:** [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Thursday, May 4.

## Topic-Based Webinar: Multi-Tiered System of Supports

*Hosted by the CDE Schools of Choice Office*

**Date:** Wednesday, May 17

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

**Location:** Online/Webinar

**Cost:** Free

**Registration:** [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** Wednesday, May 17 at 8:00 AM.

## Tech Talk Quarterly

*Hosted by the Colorado League of Charter Schools*

**Date:** Thursday, May 18

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

**Location:** TBD

**Cost:** \$25 per person

**Description:** These meetings enable charter school technology personnel to regularly network and share best practices with one another. The Colorado League of Charter Schools hosts, facilitates and coordinates these quarterly meetings in an effort to learn about and provide the resources and tools needed by schools to: 1) Develop effective technology plans for their organizations; 2) Develop efficient and cost-effective methods of implementation; and 3) Maximize the performance of their technology in growing student achievement levels.

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

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