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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS
focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

August 2014



Welcome

New School News is now divided into two sections:

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 either entering the 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.

Please feel free to contact Lori Ventimiglia and Kathy Zlomke in the Colorado League of Charter Schools' New Schools Development office for answers to questions, 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 that with us at your convenience!

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Kathy Zlomke, Program Manager, New School Development
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Table of Contents

[Welcome](#)

[Developing Schools](#)

[Post Approval](#)

[Information from CDE
Schools of Choice](#)

[In Every Issue](#)

Contact Us

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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, or will be submitting, a charter school application to an authorizer this fall please contact the Colorado League of Charter Schools to schedule a Mock Interview.

The New School Development office at the League offers these *free* Mock Interviews in order to better prepare developing groups for their district meetings and interviews. The Mock Interviews provides a charter school applicant the opportunity to practice communicating the support and defense of their new school application.

While we can't anticipate the questions an authorizer will ask an applicant, we hope that running through sample questions will help developing groups prepare effectively for the authorizer process. Groups interested in setting up an interview should plan to have at least three team members (including a Governing Board member) present at the interview and allow for a 60 to 75 minute interview.

Please contact [Kathy](#) or [Lori](#) at your earliest convenience if you are interested in setting up an interview.

Here is what one group who went through the Mock Interview (and was later approved by their district) had to say:

*"We addressed the school board and answered questions for 90 minutes last night. I believe the presentation went well. The board will take a formal vote to approve or deny the charter application on October 28. **I believe every question the two of you asked us was asked by the board! Your Mock Interview was very helpful.** Thank you for all of the support you have provided throughout this process!" -School Developer in Greeley*

Helpful Tip!

If your group was considering applying for the Tier II CSP grant please know that there **may not be a Tier II competition** as it is subject to funds remaining following Tier I, and there are a lot of potential applicants. The grant application process will be very competitive this year! With that in mind, and in order to apply for Tier I (RECOMMENDED) please keep in mind the deadline for CDE to receive both the Intent to Submit Form and the Eligibility Form is TODAY, August 27th.

Any questions regarding the CSP grant should be directed to [Gina Schlieman](#) at the CDE Schools of Choice unit at (303) 866-6790.

Resource of the Month

The [Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools](#) have been developed for founding groups that are in the process of designing a charter school and writing a charter application. The League has created these standards in order to provide clear guidance for developing groups on what it means to be a high-quality, successful applicant. By understanding and meeting these standards, and following through with well-developed processes, new

schools are more likely to be met with success through the application and startup process. Please use this document in conjunction with any guidance your authorizer recommends, with over 70 links to resources and critical information the Quality Standards is an invaluable companion when writing your application!

Board Fundamentals

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Friday, September 12

Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Location: Buck Community Recreation Center 2004 W Powers Ave, Littleton, CO 80120

Cost: \$20 per person. Please bring a personal check, business check, or money order made out to CDE with your name and school in the Memo. Lunch will be provided.

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: Wednesday, September 10 at 8:00 AM.

Annual Finance Seminar

Date: Friday, September 19

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Location: Summit Conference and Event Center 411 Sable Blvd., Aurora, CO 80011

Cost: \$20 per person. Please bring a check or money order made out to The Colorado League of Charter Schools with your name and school in the Memo. Coffee and lunch will be provided.

Description: Held in the fall of each year, this training is designed to give business managers, school leaders and board members an opportunity to get up to date with changes in policy or innovations in the field of operations and finance management (required for all CCSP Grant recipients).

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: September 17 at 8:00 AM.

Post Approval

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.

2014 New Schools

Congratulations to the 13 new Colorado charter schools that have opened or will soon open for the 2014-15 school year.

- The Children's Kiva Montessori Charter School, Cortez
- Colorado Early Colleges Douglas County, Parker
- DSST: Cole High School, Denver
- DSST: Conservatory Green Middle School, Denver
- Fort Collins Montessori School, Fort Collins
- GALS High School, Denver

- Highline Academy Northeast Charter School, Denver
- Mesa Valley Community School, Grand Junction
- Montessori del Mundo, Aurora
- Salida del Sol Academy, Greeley
- STRIVE Prep Ruby Hill, Denver
- Two Rivers Community School, Glenwood Springs
- Vanguard Classical School - East Campus, Aurora

We wish you the best of luck and would love to come visit each of your schools!

Helpful Tip!

Upon becoming an approved school you should begin operating in compliance with Open Meetings laws immediately! Be sure to post your meetings, take minutes, and refrain from emails or other conversations around school decisions involving more than two board members outside of meetings. [Click here for more information.](#)

Resource of the Month

Unified Improvement Planning Guidance for New Schools

When opening a new school there is often confusion around the state requirement to create a Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). The following link will provide answers to the most commonly asked questions around the need to create an improvement plan for a school that hasn't even been in existence as well as offer guidance to ensure that new schools have all of the information necessary to plan for the UIP process- even with little to no data.

[Click here to access this resource.](#)

UIP Intro/Refresher Workshop

To learn more about Unified Improvement Planning, new school developers are encouraged to attend the League's UIP Intro/Refresher Workshop.

Date: Friday, September 12

Time: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

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

Cost: League Members and New School Developers: \$75 for one person. \$25 for each additional attendee.

Meals: Light breakfast will be provided. Lunch will NOT be provided. Please consider bringing a sack lunch and snacks. There will be a break for lunch.

Audience: School Leaders and Teachers

Description: Do you need a refresher or are you brand new to the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)? This workshop will provide attendees with an overview of the UIP. Participants will walk through the UIP timeline, template, and learn how to access the information you need to complete your school's UIP. Attendees will also dive into Colorado's Accountability System to gain a deeper understanding of the Colorado Growth Model, School Performance Frameworks and how those tie into the UIP.

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

Helpful Tip!

With the PARCC transition it will be more important than ever to have local assessment data, which aligns with the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), in order to assure your school can show demonstrated growth during the state assessment transition.

Lunch and Learn for New Schools: Know and Use the E-Rate Program

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools and GETFUNDED

Date: Thursday, September 11

Time: 11:00 AM - 1:30 PM

Audience: New Charter Schools and Newly Approved Charter Schools

Location: Colorado League of Charter Schools' Training Center, 4201 E. Yale Avenue, Denver, CO 80222

Cost: Free. Lunch will be provided.

Description: Attend this Lunch and Learn workshop to learn about the E-Rate program. During this workshop you will learn more about the E-Rate process and how your school could receive 20-90% reimbursement for technology connectivity expenditures. You will also learn how to "hire" experts to complete the E-Rate process for you, saving you time and getting you the technology funding to which your school may be entitled. The E-Rate program is an annual federal program that public schools qualify for to receive up to 90% reimbursement for technology connectivity expenditures.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: September 9.

Board Fundamentals

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

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Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Location: Buck Community Recreation Center 2004 W Powers Ave, Littleton, CO 80120

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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: Wednesday, September 10 at 8:00 AM.

Administrator Mentoring Cohort (AMC)

Date: Tuesday, September 16

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Location: Aspen View Academy, 2131 Low Meadow Boulevard, Castle Rock, CO 80109

Cost: \$20 per person - Please bring a personal check, business check, or money order made out to Colorado League of Charter Schools with your name and school in the Memo. Lunch will be provided.

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: September 14 at 8:00 AM

CCSP Grant Budget Workshop

Date: Thursday, September 18

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Colorado Department of Education, State Board of Education Room, 201 E Colfax Ave, Denver, 80203

Registration: [Click here to register](#). **Deadline:** September 16 at 8:00 AM.

Annual Finance Seminar

Date: Friday, September 19

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Location: Summit Conference and Event Center 411 Sable Blvd., Aurora, CO 80011

Cost: \$20 per person-Please bring a check or money order made out to The Colorado League of Charter Schools with your name and school in the Memo. Coffee and lunch will be provided.

Description: Held in the fall of each year, this training is designed to give business managers, school leaders and board members an opportunity to get up to date with changes in policy or innovations in the field of operations and finance management (required for all CCSP Grant recipients).

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: September 17 at 8:00 AM.

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/chartecalendar>.

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 [here](#). 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.

What is a Charter School?

Even 20 years into the life of charter schools in Colorado, it is amazing how many people don't really understand what charter schools are and 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.



Video: 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".

CDE Schools of Choice Events Page

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/chartregstart.asp> - This is the events page for the Schools of Choice Unit at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). This site should also be checked frequently as there are always important and relevant workshops and seminars for developing schools offered by the CDE Schools of Choice Unit.

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](#).

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