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COLORADO LEAGUE of  
CHARTER SCHOOLS  
*focus on achievement*

## NEW SCHOOL NEWS

### March 2014



#### Welcome

New school developers at every stage of development will find news and resources in this newsletter to better ensure that they develop a quality charter school. Never hesitate to contact Lori Ventimiglia and Kathy Zlomke in the New School Development office at the Colorado League of Charter Schools for questions, sample documents or other resources that you are looking for as you develop your school.

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#### Planning Grant Updates

##### Apply Now for a Planning Grant

Whether you are in the very earliest stages of developing a charter school, have been approved and are working on opening your doors or are somewhere in between, we have planning grants to address your new school development needs at every stage! Thanks to generous contributions from the the Anschutz Foundation and the Daniels Fund, planning grant funds are available for developing groups across the state.

Keep in mind, if you are submitting a charter school application to your district/authorizer in the fall you will need to apply for a **Stage 5 Planning Grant** soon to get your review scheduled. Application reviews need to be

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#### Contact Us

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scheduled at least 8 weeks prior to submission to the district/authorizer. If you are a newly opened school don't forget that you can qualify for a **Stage 6 Planning Grant** to cover the cost of Governance Training and help ensure a smooth transition from founding team to governing board. Please visit our [website](#) to access the guidelines and applications. **NOTE: Planning Grants for the Denver/Metro area have run out. We will update our website at: <http://www.coloradoleague.org/membership-and-services/developer-grant-opportunities.php> as soon as these funds have been replenished.**

**If you are in the Metro area and would like to schedule an application review we still ask that you fill out a Stage 5 grant application. As always, we recommend that you contact Lori Ventimiglia at [lventimiglia@coloradoleague.org](mailto:lventimiglia@coloradoleague.org) before applying for any grant to understand requirements and eligibility.**

## Mock Interviews

### Mock Interviews

Congratulations to the developing schools who submitted their applications in the spring cycle! We know how hard you worked on your application and understand that you are now gearing up for the interview process with your district/authorizer.

To better prepare developing groups for their district interview, the New School Development office at the League offers Mock Interviews to new school developer groups. These interviews provide a charter school applicant the opportunity to practice communicating the support and defense of their new school application. Feedback is provided, from the authorizer lens, following the interview.

Please contact [Kathy](#) or [Lori](#) in the League's New School Development department to set up your interview!

## Upcoming Events

### Charter School Boot Camp

If you are working on a charter application, or just thinking about starting a charter school, you should attend the following two-day Boot Camp and pre-Boot Camp workshops. Both events are designed to help charter school developing groups, at all stages of planning, get a clear picture of the realities of opening and operating a school.

#### **FREE Pre-Boot Camp Workshop**

*Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Unit*

**Date:** Tuesday, April 1

**Time:** 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

**Location:** Adams 12 Conference Center, 1500 E. 128th Avenue, Thornton

**Cost:** Free

**Description:** A free pre-Boot Camp workshop intended to help school planning teams, leaders, and governing boards identify and design to the unique needs of your student population and community.

**About Design Thinking:** Design Thinking is a human-centered approach to problem solving that gets people creating rough prototypes early in the process so that ideas turn into tangible action quickly. Educators have used

this process to completely overhaul education programs, school schedules, and even instruction in effective and tested ways. Prototype. Feedback. Iterate. Repeat. We hope this will serve as an important support as you embark on designing your school!

**Registration:** Register by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 31 at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZBVTKFX>

Space is limited to 40 participants, so be sure to register early.

For more information regarding this event, please contact: Laura Noonan, [noonan\\_l@cde.state.co.us](mailto:noonan_l@cde.state.co.us)

### **Two-Day Charter School Boot Camp**

*Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Unit*

**Date:** Wednesday, April 2 and Thursday, April 3

**Time:** 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

**Location:** Adams 12 Conference Center, 1500 E. 128th Avenue, Thornton

**Cost:** \$20 per person, per day. Includes coffee and lunch.

**Description:** If you are working on a charter application, or just thinking about starting a charter school, you should attend this two-day training designed to help planning teams, in both early and late stage planning, get a clear picture of the realities of opening and operating a school.

As we continue to raise the bar in terms of school accountability in Colorado, we have a growing need to help charter planning teams ensure they are truly prepared to open and operate a school before getting a charter or applying for the CCSP grant. The Boot Camp is designed to support new school developers in finding the gaps in their plan, expertise and personnel so that they can fill these gaps before they open -- giving you the best chance for success.

The Charter School Boot Camp will play a key role in progress toward the following goals:

- Identify promising strategies to promote charter school growth in tough economic times.
- Improve knowledge of and ability to navigate the charter school development and application process.
- Improve charter school leader effectiveness.
- Improve authorizer feedback and review processes to impact charter quality (by including authorizers as a panel to speak to planning teams).

**Registration:** Register by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 31 at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DYH8LJH>

### **Lunch and Learn: Monitor Student Growth to Maximize Achievement**

*Hosted by Renaissance Learning*

**Date:** Thursday, April 10

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Location:** Colorado League of Charter Schools (NEW OFFICE LOCATION), 2696 S. Colorado Blvd, Suite 250, Denver

**Audience:** Charter school administrators and curriculum/assessment directors

**Cost:** Free for schools that are members of the Colorado League of Charter Schools and New School Developers. Lunch will be provided.

**Description:** STAR Early Learning is an approved Interim Assessment for the Colorado READ Act. Join your colleagues at this complimentary workshop to learn how to monitor student growth with our STAR Assessments to maximize achievement. You've always helped students grow to their maximum potential. In this session, you'll learn the latest methods for measuring, and getting credit, for that growth.

**Registration:** [Click here to register](#). Deadline: April 7.

## Tech Talk Quarterly Networking Meeting

*Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools*

**Date:** Friday, April 11

**Time:** 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

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

**Audience:** Administrators and IT Staff

**Cost:** \$20/person for League Members and developing schools

**Description:** This quarter's Tech Talk will include discussions about BYOD and how to implement a program with multiple devices, IT Policies from the legal perspective, IT Risk Management and Prevention, and Why, When and What to Look for in Outsourced IT partners. [Click here to view the meeting agenda](#).

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: April 8.

## School Health and Wellness

### Wellness Advisor Collaborative

#### Applications due Friday, April 25th

In the fall of 2013, the League's Building Healthy Charter Schools Initiative launched the statewide charter school [Wellness Advisor Collaborative](#).

As members of the Collaborative, six charter schools are receiving one on one individualized support from Rainey Wikstrom, our Lead Wellness Advisor. Each school has different needs and faces unique challenges related to school health due to their size, location, and/or school populations. *Since we do not currently have a new school in our collaborative, we will give priority to brand new schools opening in 2014-15 that would like to pursue this opportunity.*

The purpose of the Wellness Advisor Collaborative is to aide charter schools in the creation, enhancement and implementation of health and wellness practices to improve student and staff health and wellness and therefore, academic achievement. The collaborative provides guidance, technical assistance, and support to charter schools that are ready to improve in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, physical education and health services.

To date, the Wellness Advisor Collaborative has helped participating schools:

- Form a unifying school wellness vision that engages students, parents, staff and partners
- Build on current strengths and momentum and identify areas of greatest need that should be tackled first
- Create and use an individualized implementation plan that is right for each school community that garners the engagement of all
- Connect to community and statewide resources, partnerships, and

funding opportunities

We are now accepting applications from charter schools interested in joining the Collaborative. To access the application, please click [here](#), or contact Lindsey Friedman, [lfriedman@coloradoleague.org](mailto:lfriedman@coloradoleague.org).

## Resources

### State Standards

Visit this [link](#) for an excellent resource on Colorado Academic Standards, the Common Core and more! And visit CDE's website for even more information and resources at [http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas/ccss\\_in\\_the\\_colorado\\_standards](http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas/ccss_in_the_colorado_standards)

## New School Developer Webinars

If you are a new school developer, you and your team should watch the New School Developer Webinar series. These up-to-date 90 minute webinars are free, and are designed for people who are in the process of developing a charter school application; however, anyone is welcome to view them. Each webinar focuses on an area of critical importance to groups in the process of designing a school and writing a charter application, and include the newest legislative updates in the topic areas.

Webinar topics include:

- Developing a Performance Management Strategy
- Writing SMART Goals
- Overview of the State Accountability System
- Overview of Relevant Education Laws

Each webinar runs approximately an hour and half. All you need is a computer and internet access to participate! You can access these pre-recorded webinars on the League website:

<http://www.coloradoleague.org/membership-and-services/new-school-webinars.php>

## Information from CDE 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 three links are included in each newsletter as they are such 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 link will be useful for you to remain focused on the facts in your community: <http://www.coloradoleague.org/colorado-charter-schools/charter-schools-fact-sheet.php>

### New School Development Resources

<http://www.coloradoleague.org/audiences/developers.php> - This is the New School Development page of the League's website. There are sample model documents, upcoming events, information about grants and much more on this page. Check back frequently for updates!

### 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. See the link below for more information:

<http://www.coloradoleague.org/news-and-events/league-trainings.php>

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