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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS
focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

March 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 of your school.

The **Developing Schools** section is intended for groups ranging from the earliest exploration all the way through the development and submission of their Charter School Application.

The **Post Approval** section is intended for groups that are either in 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 in the following six Quality Outcomes:

- Qualified and Competent School Leadership
- Sound Operational Practices
- Functional Governing Board
- Effective Academics & Instruction
- Robust Performance Management Plan
- Clear, Mission-Driven School Culture

Please feel free to contact Lori Ventimiglia and Kathy Zlomke in the New School Development office for questions, sample documents or other resources that you are looking for as you develop your school and if you haven't come in for a face to face meeting yet, please do schedule that with us at your convenience!

Lori Ventimiglia

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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.

Resource of the Month: Budget Template for Application Development

The Budget Template is a great tool that assists charter school developers in planning for and executing the creation of charter schools, including but not limited to detailed financial analysis. This tool was developed by Abstract Insights, LLC and is available to new school developers upon signing a license agreement. Please contact the [New School Development](#) department to request a license agreement and, upon having that signed and on file, we will send you the Budget Template.

TIP! Establishing Need

Establishing need and understanding the community in which you hope to start a school is a critical early step in charter school development. Additionally, it is incumbent upon a developing group to answer the question: "Why this school, in this community, with this model and these students at this time?" While outreach to potential families will be an ongoing pursuit throughout the development of the school, the following research and outreach practices will help you answer those questions and are important to conduct early in the process:

- The founding committee has adequately researched the community in which the charter school will exist; has knowledge of the demographics, cultural and academic needs; and has interviewed a variety of community members to verify that there is a need and desire for the charter school in the community.
- The founding committee has adequately researched the student population to be served to understand their educational needs and what services are currently in place to meet those needs.
- The founding committee proactively develops a relationship with the charter authorizer. This relationship is initiated by notifying the authorizer of the group's intent to apply for a charter and is maintained throughout the application process. The founding committee seeks guidance from the authorizer and actively works to understand the authorizer's expectations.
- The founding committee is made up, in part, of community members who reside in the district/community that the school will be proposing to locate.

Upcoming Events

Charter School Boot Camp

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Wednesday, April 8 and Thursday, April 9

Time: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

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

Cost: \$20 per person, per day (Coffee and Lunch included)

Description: A two-day training designed to help planning teams, in both early and late state planning, get a clear picture of the realities of opening and operating a school.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on Monday, April 6.

Board Continuing Development Meeting and Webinar

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Friday, April 24

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

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

Cost: Free

Description: A training provided four times a year (two hosted in the Denver Metro area and two via webinar) to support board members' knowledge of best practice and evolving policy changes.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on April 22.

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.

"I Don't Have Time for this Survey," Survey

If you are in Year-One and your Head of School, Business Manager and a Board Member have not completed the "I don't have time for this survey" survey please do so by [clicking here](#).

Tip! Conducting Sound Due Diligence

As you gear up to open your doors the spending begins! From curriculum materials, desks and art supplies; to playground equipment and the building itself, you will need to be a savvy consumer! Below is a list of all of the steps you will want to employ as you conduct your due diligence for purchases big and small:

- 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.
- Contact **Tiffany Kallevik** at the **Colorado League of Charter Schools** to explore 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.
- Request that the company in consideration provide **company information** regarding their experience with charter schools, their activities, accomplishments, products, performance and/or results.

- Get pricing and detailed product/service specifications *in writing*.
- **Review financial statements**, business plans and other related documents.
- Check references! **Talk to other charter schools** that have used the provider in consideration. The League can help you make these connections!
- Select random **samples of projects** and evaluate the selection for information, including performance, timeliness of completion, budget to actual, and any warranty service needed and performed.

Resource of the Month

[Colorado Charter School: A Resource for Developing Charter School Contracts](#) and its companion, [Colorado Charter School: Sample Contract Language and Attachments](#)

As you prepare for contract negotiations with your authorizer these resources will provide guidance for both you and your authorizer in writing effective charter school contracts. Because the charter contract is the foundational agreement that establishes a charter school's autonomy and accountability and the district's rights and obligations, it is essential that the contract meet legal requirements and adhere to best practices. The Sample Contract Language and Attachments has been recently updated and articulates rights and responsibilities of both parties.

Upcoming Events

Charter School Teacher Job Fair at Peak to Peak

Date: Saturday, March 14

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Peak to Peak Charter Schools, 800 Merlin Drive Lafayette, CO 80026

Description: The Peak to Peak job fair is the largest teacher job fair in Colorado exclusively for charter schools and presents an excellent opportunity for schools and teaching candidates to participate in face-to-face interviews and discuss career opportunities. Teachers, counselors, administrators, and schools from Colorado and surrounding states can attend. Approximately 40 charter schools and approximately 500 teacher candidates attend this annual event.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Regional Luncheon

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Wednesday, March 18

Time: 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM (optional tour 1:15 - 1:45)

Cost: Participants will purchase their own lunch, \$10-12 per person

Location: Casa Caliente 8800 S Colorado Blvd, Unit G, Highlands Ranch, CO 80126

Tour: Platte River Academy 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Littleton, CO 80126

Description: These luncheons are an opportunity for school leaders, administrators, employees, and board members to network and broaden their knowledge, skills and resources.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: 8:00 AM on March 16.

Business Managers Network Meeting

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Friday, March 20

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Cost: \$20 per person.

Location: Lowry Conference Center, 1061 Akron Way, Building 697, Denver, CO 80230

Description: These meetings are hosted jointly by the SOC Unit and the Colorado League of Charter Schools and occur bi-monthly on Fridays during the school year. Each meeting includes the Business manager 101 course for those with less than three years' experience, networking and troubleshooting for more experienced managers, and Responsive and Technical Expert presentations on key issues of relevance to all business managers.

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

Administrator Mentoring Cohort

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Tuesday, April 14

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Location: University Prep, 2409 Arapahoe Street, Denver, CO 80205

Cost: \$20 per person

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: 8:00 AM on April 12.

Board Continuing Development Meeting and Webinar

Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office

Date: Friday, April 24

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

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

Cost: Free

Description: A training provided four times a year (two hosted in the Denver Metro area and two via webinar) to support board members' knowledge of best practice and evolving policy changes.

Registration: [Click here to register](#). Deadline: 8:00 AM on Wednesday, April 22.

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 online](#). See RFP for eligibility rules and application instructions.

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.

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".

CDE Schools of Choice Events Page

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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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