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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Colorado League of Charter Schools. Don't forget to add [info@coloradoleague.org](mailto:info@coloradoleague.org) to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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COLORADO LEAGUE of  
CHARTER SCHOOLS  
*focus on achievement*

## NEW SCHOOL NEWS

### May 2015



#### Welcome

While we encourage you to read through the entire newsletter please be sure to visit the section that most closely pertains to the stage that your school is in.

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 in their first year of operations or are approved to open in 2015 or 2016.

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 Quality Outcomes:

1. Qualified and Competent School Leadership
2. Sound Operational Practices
3. Functional Governing Board
4. Effective Academics & Instruction
5. Robust Performance Management Plan
6. 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  
Director, New School Development  
Colorado League of Charter Schools  
303-989-5356 x113

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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.**

### **There are Planning Grants for That!**

#### **Are you in the in early stages of developing your charter application?**

Do you need funds to travel to conferences, visit schools that use the model you are exploring, launch a marketing and student outreach campaign or hire consultants to help you with the academic, legal or financial aspects of school start up? There are planning grants for that!

**Are you in the later stages of charter application writing?** Do you need funds to continue your outreach efforts, acquire the League's extensive [two-part application review](#), put the finishing touches on your application, and print the required hard copies of the application? There are planning grants for that too!

The League is able to offer developing groups [planning grants](#) thanks to two philanthropic organizations, the Anschutz Foundation and the Daniels Fund. The funding available to schools is limited to the amounts received by the League.

There are no deadlines associated with these planning grants; grant proposals are accepted on a rolling basis. Questions can be directed to [Lori Ventimiglia](#), 303-989-5356, ext. 113.

### **TIP! Marketing Your School**

The founding group must ensure the financial success of the school by gathering interest from the community and securing sufficient enrollment to maintain a viable program. The steering committee should begin by marketing the idea of the school program in the community. Groups may choose to hold informational meetings at libraries and community centers, pass out flyers, place advertisements in local newspapers, or invest in other marketing campaigns. Once the school is approved and the organizational structure of the institution begins to take shape, marketing is often delegated to a committee. See the sections titled "Share your Dream" and "Creating and Sustaining Interest in the Proposed Charter School" on page seven of the [Colorado Charter School Handbook](#) for additional information and ideas.

### **Resource of the Month: Start-a-Charter-Colorado!**

The [starta-charter-colorado.org](http://starta-charter-colorado.org) website has been updated and revised. This is a user friendly, flow-chart style web resource that begins at the Preliminary Exploration Stage and walks charter school developers through all of the steps necessary to move through all of the stages of

charter school development. The site is chalk full of critical information, links to resources and everything you need to know, at every stage of development, to start a charter school in Colorado! Please make use of this incredible resource!

## 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 or 2016.**

### There are Planning Grants for That!

Has your charter application been submitted and/or approved? Do you need funds to hire legal counsel to help you with contract negotiations, pay the application fee for your 501 (c)(3), recruit excellent school leadership and staff, bring in experienced [Governance Trainers](#) for your board or hire an architect for facilities planning? There are planning grants for that!

The League is able to offer developing groups [planning grants](#) thanks to two philanthropic organizations, the Anschutz Foundation and the Daniels Fund. The funding available to schools is limited to the amounts received by the League.

There are no deadlines associated with these planning grants; grant proposals are accepted on a rolling basis. Questions can be directed to [Lori Ventimiglia](#), 303-989-5356, ext. 113.

### Schedule Your Year-One Spring Visits

Time is running out! If your school opened in 2014 and you have not yet scheduled your League Spring Visit, please contact [Lori Ventimiglia](#) promptly. The visit is a mix of observing classes, speaking with a combination of leaders, teachers and students, and sharing observations. While our role is friendly and supportive, we do strive to look at everything through the lens of the authorizer. The Spring Visit is designed to provide you with an objective perspective across critical areas with an ultimate focus being to help your school solidify a firm foundation in the following six Quality Outcomes:

- **Qualified and Competent School Leadership:** Has instilled confidence from teachers, parents, board and students and has effectively begun to implement many components of school proposal.
- **Sound Operational Practices:** Foundations for strong fiscal management and effective business operations have been established and are being adhered to.
- **Functional Governing Board:** Obtained initial training, is committed to ongoing training, and adheres to state statutes and board policies with fidelity.
- **Effective Academics & Instruction:** Curriculum is being effectively implemented and instructional staff engages students for optimal learning.
- **Robust Performance Management Plan:** Data from Data Management system and Interim Assessments are being used effectively to guide instruction.
- **Clear, Mission-Driven School Culture:** A strong, mission-driven culture has been established and can be easily observed

throughout most aspects of the school.

The visits are typically a half or full day (depending on size of school) and there will be 2-3 League staff at the visit. We will follow up with both verbal and written feedback as well as additional supports as needed.

## Resources of the Month

### Start-a-Charter-Colorado!

The [starta chartercolorado.org](http://starta chartercolorado.org) website has been updated and revised. This is a user friendly, flow-chart style web resource that offers charter school developers a wealth of information and hyperlinks for groups who have submitted their application and are working through the complex world of contract negotiations. The site is chalk full of critical information, links to resources and everything you need to know, at every stage of development, to start a charter school in Colorado! Please make use of this incredible resource!

### Apply for a 21st Century Learning Commons Grant Valued at \$50,000

Charter schools approved to open in 2015 or 2016 may be eligible for a furnished 21st Century Learning Commons award from Hertz Furniture valued at up to \$50,000. Applications will be accepted from April 1 through May 16, 2015. The award will be announced in early June. [Click here to apply.](#)

## Upcoming Events

### Regional Luncheon

*Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office*

**Date:** Wednesday, May 6

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

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

**Location:** Rock Bottom Cafe 3316 Cinema Pt. Drive, Colorado Springs

**Tour:** Rocky Mountain Classical Academy 4620 Antelope Ridge Dr, Colorado

**Description:** Six luncheons will be offered throughout the school year. Charter schools will host the luncheon at a restaurant near their school, followed by an optional tour of the school. 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 Monday, May 4

### Business Managers Network Meeting

**Date:** Friday, May 15

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

**Location:** The Summit Conference and Event Center 411 N. Sable Blvd., Aurora

**Cost:** \$20 per person; please bring a check or money order made out to CDE with your name in the Memo.

**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. [Click here to view the meeting agenda.](#)

**Registration:** [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: 8:00 AM on Wednesday, May 13.

*Participants who do not register online cannot be guaranteed meals or space in the meeting.*

### **Administrator Mentoring Cohort**

*Hosted by CDE Schools of Choice Office*

**Date:** Tuesday, June 2

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

**Location:** TBD

**Cost:** \$20 per person

**Description:** A mentoring program that meets six 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. The AMC is also fully accredited as a charter school principal induction program where charter school leaders with their initial principal license can be recommended for professional licensure.

**Registration:** [Click here to register.](#) Deadline: 8:00 AM on Sunday, May 31

### **Board Fundamentals**

**Date:** Friday, June 5

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**Location:** Colorado School District Self Insurance Pool 6857 South Spruce Street, Centennial

**Cost:** \$20 per person; bring a check or money order made out to CDE with your name in the Memo.

**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: 8:00 AM on Wednesday, June 3.

*Participants who do not register online cannot be guaranteed meals or space in the meeting.*

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

#### **4th Annual Colorado NWEA MAP User Conference**

*Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools*

**Date:** Friday, October 23

**Time:** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Location:** Cherry Creek School District School Achievement Resource Center, 14188 E. Briarwood Avenue, Centennial

**Cost:** Early Bird Rate - \$175 per person | Regular rate - \$225 per person  
- Early bird ends September 26

**Audience:** Principals, teachers, counselors

**Description:** Join MAP users from all over the state for this one-of-a-kind user event. The conference will feature multiple breakout sessions in a variety of topics designed for advanced, intermediate and beginner users.  
**Registration:** Coming soon.

\*A group discount is available for schools that have 3+ participants.

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

#### **6th Annual Colorado PowerSchool Users Conference**

*Presented by the Colorado League of Charter Schools*

**Date:** Thursday, January 21 - Friday, January 22, 2016

**Time:** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Location:** Denver Metro Area (exact location TBD)

**Cost:** Early Bird Rate - One day - \$175 | Two days - \$200 Early bird ends November 30

**Description:** The Colorado PowerSchool User's Conference is presented in collaboration with multiple districts and schools. The Conference will feature multiple breakout sessions on a variety of topics designed for beginner, intermediate, and advanced PowerSchool users.

**Registration:** Coming soon.

\*A group discount is available for schools that have 3+ participants.

## **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/chartregstart>.

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.

## **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](http://www.coloradoleague.org) and go to "Start a School."

#### **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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