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COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS
focus on achievement

NEW SCHOOL NEWS

September 2014



Welcome

New School News now features two main 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 Schools*** 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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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.

Planning Grant Updates

We just received notice that Denver/Metro area planning grant funds have been replenished! **Metro area funds are available for new school developers in the following counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson.**

Unfortunately, our planning grants for developing schools outside of the Denver/Metro area are still depleted. We are in the process of seeking new grants to replenish this funding and will keep you updated as we have more information

[Click here](#) to access all of the new school planning grant documents online. Please read the guidelines thoroughly before applying. You may use the evaluation rubric to self-evaluate your planning grant application but do not need to submit that to us. Make sure to submit a signed Expectations and Commitments form with the application and provide all required attachments.

If a grant application doesn't receive an 80% by our review team, we will provide feedback and let groups submit again. IF that application still doesn't receive an 80% we will ask groups to wait six months before resubmitting for a planning grant. Planning grant applications may be submitted to Lori Ventimiglia via email at lventimiglia@coloradoleague.org.

Helpful Tip!

New School Developer Webinars

As a new school developer in the early stages of creating your school 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! [Click here](#) to access these pre-recorded webinars on the League's website.

Resource of the Month

If you are in the early stages of developing your school you might find it helpful to work on the [School Design Exercise](#) with your founding team. This exercise was developed by a new school developer as a way to

capture in writing a snapshot of the various aspects that will go into your unique school design.

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.

Book Your Governance Training

Are you considering governance training over the fall months? The Colorado League of Charter Schools offers customized, facilitated governance trainings and board retreats. The trainings are customized to meet your school's specific needs.

Facilitated board trainings cost \$700 for a half day and \$1,100 for a full day and take place on-site in your community or other choice of location.

For more information, contact Joni Malli at jmalli@coloradoleague.org or 303-989-5356, ext. 115.

Helpful Tip!

State Accountability and Assessments

All schools will be required to complete a [Unified Improvement Plan](#) within their first year of opening. You should receive a pre-populated template in the fall. Please let us know if you have any questions about the UIP, accessing data or the state assessments transition and impact to schools. Contact Tisha Bouwmeester; tbouwmeester@coloradoleague.org.

Resource of the Month

Once approved, it is critical to understand when to purchase all of the necessary materials, furniture and technology needed to run an effective charter school. This [School Purchasing Calendar](#) will help you plan so that everything arrives on time!

Upcoming Events

Rural Charter Schools Dinner and Forum

Date: Sunday, October 5

(Evening before Charter School Policy and Facility Summit)

Time: 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Location: Dave & Busters, 2000 S. Colorado Blvd, Denver, CO 80222

Cost: Free

Description: Rural charter schools have expressed a desire to share local concerns with the League, and a need to have a bigger voice in state level policy decisions. In response to this, the Colorado League of Charter Schools invites you to join us for a special dinner and forum focused on the unique needs and concerns of Colorado's rural charter schools.

Registration: [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

Colorado Charter Schools Policy and Facility Summit

Hosted by Colorado League of Charter Schools

Date: Monday, October 6

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Wellshire Event Center, 3333 S. Colorado Blvd., Denver, CO 80222

Cost: \$50 per person for schools that are members of the Colorado League of Charter Schools | \$75 per person for non-members. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Group Discount: There is a 20% discount when registering groups of three or more. Please enter discount code GROUP2014 at checkout when registering three or more attendees.

Description: The 2014 Charter School Policy and Facility Summit will provide charter school leaders with important information about policy issues being pursued by the Colorado League of Charter Schools, and potential legislation affecting Colorado charter schools. The event will also provide charter school leaders with best practices around making facilities decisions for their schools.

Registration: [Click here to register.](#) **Deadline:** September 30.

Webinar: Edlio - Custom School Websites

Date: Wednesday, October 15

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Location: Online/Webinar

Cost: No Cost to Attend

Description: Edlio creates custom designed websites with an intuitive content management system. Our system allows individuals with minimal computer backgrounds to be able to update the school website and pages. Our goal is to increase marketing, enrollment, and communication for your school. Edlio has worked with over 2,000 schools and school districts nationwide and have helped launch several charter schools web presence. Please join us, as our webinar will be discussing ways to launch your school to greater levels of success through social media marketing, SEO, advanced communication, and ways that you can increase enrollment all through your web presence along. Join this webinar to learn about:

- Social media marketing: have the overall community engage in the schools news and updates through social media
- SEO / Google Analytics: help increase the number of visitors to your website
- Communication: Content is key when viewing a website. The information on the website is just as important as design.
- Increase Enrollment: Enrollment is increased by information, beautiful website design, and a streamlined process. Find out how a streamlined process can increase your enrollment alone.

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

Administrator Mentoring Cohort (AMC)

Date: Tuesday, October 21

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Location: Stargate Charter School, 3951 Cottonwood Lakes Blvd, Thornton, CO 80241

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

Meals: Coffee and Lunch 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:** 8:00 AM, Sunday, October 19.

Colorado NWEA MAP Users Conference

Date: Friday, October 24

Time: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Cherry Creek School District School Achievement Resource Center, 14188 E. Briarwood Ave., Centennial, CO 80112

Cost: Early bird rate: \$175 per person. Prices increase October 6.

Description: Join colleagues and MAP users from over 50 schools and 20 districts from across the state for this one-of-a-kind event. Improve your use and understanding of this valuable assessment while networking and learning from users and experts in the field. The conference will feature multiple breakout sessions in a variety of topics designed for advanced, intermediate and beginner users. Previous attendees found presentations to be highly valuable, and 100% of those surveyed said they would return. During the state assessment transition, CDE encourages districts and schools to rely more heavily on locally administered interim assessments, such as the NWEA MAP assessment, for improvement planning and during the 2014-15 school year specifically for establishing performance targets. This may include establishing annual performance targets using locally administered assessment instruments (measures) and associated metrics for academic achievement for improvement plans submitted during both the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years.

Attending the Colorado NWEA Map Users Conference is a great first step towards increasing your focus on the use of MAP results!

Registration: [Click here to register](#)

New School Spotlight

New School Spotlight: Two Rivers Community School

Two Rivers Community School (TRCS) in Glenwood Springs is one of the 13 new charter schools that opened in Colorado this fall!

TRCS is a K-8 school featuring Place Based Learning and Language Immersion. The Mission of Two Rivers Community School is to cultivate in every student:

Passion for learning and high achievement through creating rigorous, interdisciplinary learning experiences on topics relevant to the students that culminate in original work aimed at engaging and positively impacting the community and the world. To learn more about TRCS, visit <http://www.tworiverscs.org/>



If your new school opened this year please send pictures to Lori Ventimiglia at lventimiglia@coloradoleague.org to be featured in an upcoming newsletter!

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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