

Oregon Department of Education

Fall Dates to Remember:

September 16: Incentive grant writing workshop – ODE

September 30 –**ALL Charter Schools** - Annual Reports and Municipal Audit for 2008-09 – due to ODE.

October 1-2: COSA Special Education Conference

October 22-23: CHANGED State Board
Four Rivers CS Presentation

October 16: Tentative Mandatory Furlough Day – ODE Closed

October 19-21: NACSA Conference, Salt Lake City

October 23: Charter School Director Meeting

November 6: Incentive Grants Due

TBD: Charter School Sponsor Meeting

December 3-4: State Board

December 4: Tentative Charter School Director Meeting



Oregon Approaching 100

Can you believe it?!?

Just ten years after the Oregon Law was passed, we have nearly 100 charter schools in operation this fall! This is a huge compliment to the outstanding work of all of us pulling together to find ways to create innovative, independent learning environments for all kids.

It has truly taken the village in this effort to operate high quality charter school programs. We applaud our

Legislative and State Board partners for their work in moving laws and policy forward; The ODE staff that has come before us and that continues on; the charter school support organizations for the hands on technical assistance and lobbying; school district leaders and personnel for their efforts to allow innovation and discomfort while charter school efforts emerge; but most importantly we congratulate the charter school founders and



developers that have taken their vision and dreams to the point of fruition; the teachers that go out on a limb to try something different; the families that have trusted in this process and of course the nearly 15,000 students for being the backbone of a successful school program.

Congratulations to all of us for the part we have played in moving the presence of charter schools in Oregon to the century mark.

Legislative News: SB 767

On July 14, 2009 Governor Kulongoski signed SB767 into law. The key question that is being asked is *“How does – or does not – this effect my charter school??”*

A copy of the enrolled bill can be found at: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/09reg/measpdf/sb0700.dir/sb0767.en.pdf>

Initial analysis of the bill has begun. It is important to note that the bill contains provisions that impact all charter schools and it also has specific provisions that apply only to “virtual” online charter schools.

One important point is that the bill does not prohibit the creation of any new virtual or non-virtual public charter school.

Cindy Hunt presented a general overview of the bill with the State Board at their recent retreat. The document shared at that meeting can be found at: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/09reg/measpdf/sb0700.dir/sb0767.en.pdf>.

A task force has been established by the legislature that will be looking at the topic of online learning and according to the bill, that

group will prepare a report by December 15, 2009.

Staff at ODE has the responsibility to draft Administrative Rules for the State Board of Education to adopt. The process includes initial analysis, convening a stakeholders input meeting and posting information on the website for public review.

Because of the high interest and impact of the bill, we are working to get input from a broad perspective. Please stay tuned for updates.



"We view the new handbook as a work in progress this year..."

Charter School Handbook Update

As many of you know, the Oregon Public Charter School Handbook has been taken out of circulation for some updates and revisions. We are happy to announce that we are just putting the finishing touches on a new version of the handbook.

We view the new handbook as a work in progress this year and will post it as a "pilot" for the 2009-10 school year.

During the coming year, we will be inviting users to comment and assist us in refining the handbook to be more valuable to users

While we may not have our "dream" book complete in September, our plans are to actually develop two handbooks – one in the voice of the developer and the other in the voice of the sponsor. Our desire is to provide much more information for both groups.

Our target is to have the handbook ready for the Charter School Leadership Meeting on October 23. We will be bringing the book to the group for a first look and opportunity to provide input.

The pilot handbook will be posted to the ODE Charter School website in the next few weeks.

Three Dissemination Grants Awarded

This fall three dissemination grants will be awarded. The recipients are Ridgeline Montessori Charter School, Cascade Heights Charter School and The Emerson School.

Ridgeline, located in Eugene will be working on two projects: one is studying the long term impact of the Montessori Method on student achievement; the second will assist interested educators in exploring the method itself. As a side

project they are also formalizing a crosswalk between Montessori, Oregon standards, lessons and materials.

Cascade Heights, in Milwaukie, will be identifying cohort groups to learn to use data to write and implement effective school improvement planning. They would like to target low achieving diverse schools.

The Emerson School, located in Portland is working on two projects. As a project based

school program, they have developed some strategies for student led conferences that they plan to share. Additionally, they are planning a PE course in collaboration with PSU that will assist regular classroom educators with developing PE activities that are aligned with the Oregon PE standards.

Congratulations to these awardees! We look forward to seeing the outcome of these projects.

Get Involved: Rule Making

The State Board of Education is expected to adopt, amend and repeat many administrative rules in the next couple of months based on new legislation enacted by the 2009 legislature. These rules relate to virtual charter schools, the diploma

timeline, modified and extended diplomas, harassment and bullying, human sexuality, special education and other topics. Many of these rules will impact public charter schools. Persons who have comments about these rules may submit written

and oral testimony to the Department. For information about submitting testimony or to see copies of proposed all rules see:

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=47>

You Make The Call: How do you keep folks engaged?

Southwest Charter School – Portland, OR (est. 2007)

Summer vacation is almost over, but here, one way we keep momentum going all summer is by organizing summer bi-monthly get-togethers at parks or other sites. It was a way to keep SWCS on everyone's mind, acted as a sort of group support, and it helped new students and families mingle with our returning ones – making the adjustment a little easier for all. We also encourage our families to bring other friends and as a result we received 4 new students.

Corbett Charter School – Corbett, OR (est. 2009 - NEW)

Corbett Charter School just had a 'meet the teachers' gathering for parents. We also scheduled high school students all day with about an 80% turnout. Getting ready for Day 1 of a brand new school doesn't leave any time for drop in energy. Maybe our biggest challenge isn't maintaining enthusiasm so much as trying to keep calm!!

Oregon Connections Academy – Scio, OR (est. 2005)

At the Oregon Connections Academy, we not only make welcome telephone calls to parents/students when they finish the enrollment process, but in addition, the teachers make a telephone call to each student and parent assigned to their class and welcome them before the first day of school. This enables us to not only personalize our virtual school but also keep the momentum going in a positive direction before we even open.



CWA Staff Shares Its Success with Nation



In June, as part of its Charter Schools Dissemination Grant, Clackamas Web Academy staff traveled to Washington D.C. for the National Charter Schools Conference. CWA was selected from more than 400 applicants to conduct a panel presentation, "Two Standard Deviations, Meeting the Needs of All Students." In the presentation, CWA shared its methods for delivering individualized instruction to students of all levels and backgrounds. Presenters

highlighted CWA's use of home visits, advisors & teams, comprehensive counseling, and web-based learning to ensure each student can succeed. In the conference evaluation, 100 percent of attendees strongly agreed that the presentation was useful, that the presenters were knowledgeable and that they would recommend the session to colleagues. The conference itself had the theme of "Leading Change in Public Education," and included several prominent speakers including Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, and Chancellor of D.C. Schools, Michelle Rhea.

CWA's staff benefited greatly from sessions and discussion with charter schools from across Oregon and the nation. As Jennifer Seibel, a CWA secondary social studies teacher, noted, "After attending the conference, I am very excited to be on 'the cutting edge' of a movement that has so much support from our current president and US Department of Education. This was really inspiring and encouraging as we think about the future of charters in Oregon."

For more information, contact Whitney Grubbs, CWA Grant Coordinator at grubbsw@nclack.k12.or.us.

The Director's Corner... by Phyllis Guile

Where does the time go? As the start of the 2009-10 school year quickly approaches, I wanted to recognize the work that you as charter schools and district sponsors have done to provide quality education.

As charter schools open their doors this fall, whether for the first time, second time or more, work to meet the individual needs of students will be evident. From Montessori to project based learning, Oregon has much to celebrate.

Ten years and counting! Charter schools in Oregon have become a viable, sustainable and successful

option. I congratulate you all!

It is evident to me that charter schools can and do take the new Secretary of Education charge of producing high quality and accountability for learning to heart. It is through your program design and delivery of instruction that you strive to meet the unique needs of our students. In partnership with your sponsoring districts, you are providing an option that works for students.

The joy of providing quality instruction does have a price. I hope that you will continue to develop ways for yourselves to relax, enjoy and create a balance to your

world. I know that this is not always easy, but as you provide the nurturing support to your students, staffs and parents please remember to maintain that for yourself as well.

Finally, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to all of you. August 18 marked the completion of my first year at the ODE. It has been challenging, incredible and gratifying. This is in large part due to you. Thank you.

Have a great opening!

Phyllis Guile,
Director



Quote of the day...

"The commitment I seek is not to outworn views but to old values that will never wear out. Programs may sometimes become obsolete, but the ideal of fairness always endures. Circumstances may change, but the work of compassion must continue. It is surely correct that we cannot solve problems by throwing money at them, but it is also correct that we dare not throw out our national problems onto a scrap heap of inattention and indifference."

- Senator Edward M. Kennedy, August 1980.

Charter School Director Meeting

Charter Directors are encouraged to attend this first in a series of opportunities designed to enhance the quality of Charter School Leaders in the state. The workshop is presented through a Dissemination Grant awarded to Luckiamute Valley Charter School (administered by Dan Austin) in concert with the Oregon Department of Education.

The format will be a blend of interactive dialogue with peers and Department staff. Directors will work together in small and large groups to identify common areas of need and resource options. Directors

will generate and prioritize areas they need additional professional assistance with. This prioritized list may be used to inform upcoming topics for workshops and Regional meetings through the 2009-10 academic year.

After nearly a decade of operation we have many proven charter leaders who are more than capable of providing solid leadership for new directors. If you feel you would like to be part of this group, please come and participate.

Finally, the structure and elements of a Mentor program will also be discussed. You will have the

chance to give your thoughts on the attributes and qualities essential to mentors.

Don't miss this great opportunity to be part of building the future of public education in our state. Charter school leaders are at a crossroads and you have a unique opportunity to shape the future discourse.

When: Friday October 23

Where: Salem Oregon

Stay Tuned!! Details will be sent out in September!



"Eagle Ridge is most proud of its friendly culture and its business model."

Eagle Ridge Opens New Building

Eagle Ridge High in Klamath Falls is excited to open its brand new building September 14th! The community of Klamath Falls has stood behind EHS, bringing to the project over 18 local subcontractors and contractors who have worked tireless hours to complete our new school for the fall of 2009! Eagle Ridge is proud of its project-based curriculum

and high tech computer classes that enable students to collaborate and communicate effectively before entering college and the work force. Eagle Ridge High is proud of its community involvement! We graduate our first senior class this year, and each graduate will have 40 hours of civic service and 40 hours of internship service completed before graduation. Eagle Ridge is

most proud of its friendly culture and its business model that gives kids the room to grow while learning to deal with real-life pressures of the work place. EHS teaches its' students public speaking, interviewing and powerful methods for presentations that help ensure a positive transition to college and to the work force.

ELL Services and Charter Schools

Frequently we are asked about the requirements to provide ELD services to students enrolled in a charter school – and what flexibility is available to charter schools.

1. Charter schools, like other public schools must have identification practices in place.
2. Students identified as ELL must be provided specific

language development instruction that is in addition to all other core curriculum requirements.

3. The charter school must develop an ELL plan to serve the students identified and that should be attached to the district ELL plan.
4. The flexibility is in what English Language Development instruction is

used. The charter school may select its own curriculum and materials as long as the approach selected is research based.

There is much more to the services of ELL students. For further study please visit:

http://www.ode.state.or.us/opportunities/grants/nclb/title_iii/faqfinalservicestoells10807.pdf

Site Visits by ODE

Once again we will be on the road to visit some of our charter schools. When a site visit by ODE occurs, we will be looking at the charter school from a variety of perspectives.

The purpose of the visit will not only to look for general compliance issues – but also to offer technical assistance for both the charter school and sponsor.

Here is a listing of the things ODE may be looking for:

Required Items: Current Charter, Yearly Audit, Procurement Policy, Ethics Policy, Annual Report (by charter school), Evaluation (by sponsor), and an Inventory of ADM and grant purchases.

Other Items or Discussion Points May Include: Licensure, School Improvement Plans, Student Handbook, Title IA

Plan, Special Education Services, Governance, Admissions, Waiting List and marketing.

While onsite, ODE staff would like to get an idea of highlights and obstacles for each school and sponsor in order to inform broader policy decisions in the future.

Look on the back cover for the tentative visit schedule.

Tentative Site Visit Schedule

See Information on page 5.

Fossil	October 5	G-B Web Acad	December 10	Network	February 24
Cove	October 6	Lewis and Clark	December 10	Ridgeline	February 24
North Powder	October 7			Village	February 24
Imbler	October 8	Madrone Trail	January 25		
		Prospect	January 26	Forest Grove	March 2
Molalla River	November 19	Sage	January 27	City View	March 2
Estacada	November 19	Eagle River	January 28		
		RPA	January 29	Four Rivers	April 6
Corbett	December 2				
		Marcola All-Prep	February 23		
Community Roots	December 8	Marcola EC	February 23		
Bethany	December 8				

NACSA Grants Not Available

We spoke with many of you about offering supplemental grants to help send charter school sponsors to the NACSA conference in Salt Lake City.

Unfortunately, our contacts at the USDE denied our request to be able to offer this assistance. We wanted to let you know that while we were really excited about working on sponsor

professional development, we are unable to provide grant funding at this time. We would, however, encourage sponsors to attend if at all possible.

Incentive Grant Writing Workshop

It is once again time to submit applications for the Oregon Public Charter School Incentive Grant. The purpose of this grant is to assist with the planning and implementation of new charter school efforts across the state.

Developing a charter school is hard work! It is not just converting an existing school with the swipe of a pen or renting a building and letting kids in the door. Charter schools must provide an innovative educational option for students. By its very nature, a charter school must provide something different than what was available in the other public schools in the district. It is a lot of work, takes sometimes

several years to get off the ground, and as you can see from other articles – a very successful and rewarding enterprise.

There are two parts to this grant. The planning grant can be used for...planning. Some of the allowable costs for the planning grant would include: setting up a 501(c) 3, the governing board and policies, obtaining legal counsel advice, planning for curriculum and design of the school, professional development for staff, and designing effective assessment systems.

If the recipient is successful in getting their charter school sponsored by their local district, they may then

apply for a second phase of the grant called the implementation grant.

During the implementation phase, grant funds can be used for marketing, acquiring the necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies, developing and purchasing curriculum and basically getting the school up and running.

If you know someone that would be interested in learning more about the incentive grant please ask them to register for the grant writing workshop to be held September 16 at ODE. Requirements and timelines can be found at: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=124>.

Oregon Department of Education
255 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97310

Charter School Team

Phyllis Guile
Director
503.947.5685

Donna Brant
Ed Specialist
503.947.5622

Donna Newbeck
Greatest Support Staff
503.947.5814

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/>



Thank you to everyone for your contributions to this newsletter. There was such a great response I could not use everything.

If you know of someone who would enjoy a copy, pass it on!