



Florida's Charter Schools

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice Welcomes Dr. Carlo Rodriguez

The Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice would like to introduce Dr. Carlo Rodriguez who recently assumed the position of Executive Director. Dr. Rodriguez migrated to this country in 1987 as a political refugee from Cuba. Formerly the Administrative Director of School Choice and Parental Options in Miami-Dade County, he provided leadership and direction to Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Choice Programs. Previously, he implemented various choice initiatives including: satellite learning centers; the Opportunity Scholarship Program; and One Community One Goal. He served as Director of WLRN Public Radio/TV and as a District Supervisor. During his first year of teaching, Carlo was the recipient of the National Sallie Mae Teacher of the Year Award.



As an advocate for educational reform, he is committed to his vision that School Choice will be the vehicle for equal access to quality educational opportunities.

Welcome Dr. Rodriguez!



FLORIDA'S
CHARTER SCHOOLS
A Decade of Progress

Tenth Annual Florida Charter School Conference

The Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice hosted the 2006 Florida Public Charter School Conference, November 29 - December 1, 2006, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort in Orlando, Florida. The conference recognized the tenth anniversary of charter schools in Florida. The event brought together over 500 participants to build better educational opportunities for all students while celebrating ten years of a successful charter school program in Florida.

The 2006 Florida Charter School Conference focused on issues specific to the following areas: (1) prospective applicants and authorizers; (2) new schools and authorizers; and (3) veteran schools and authorizers. It also highlighted Florida's Charter Schools as they successfully celebrated a decade of progress. We would like to thank our many sponsors and conference participants for a wonderful conference!

To learn more about Florida's Charter School's: A Decade of Progress please visit: www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter_Schools/.

KEEPING US INFORMED

Please remember that if you have changes to your contact information, change in positions, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, and email addresses, please contact Karen Hines-Henry at 850/245-0502 or email karen.hines@fldoe.org. This updated information will certainly help keep us informed as we continue to keep you informed!

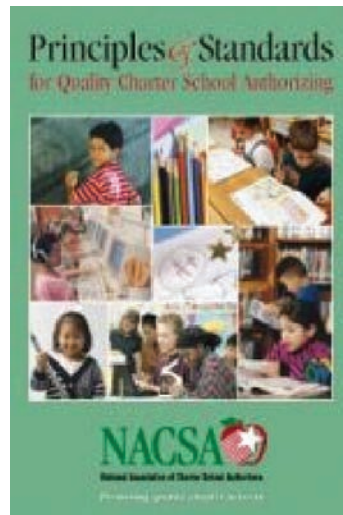
Quality Authorizing

The role of the charter school authorizer is relatively new to public education. In the first decade of charter schools, authorizers have accumulated important experience and understanding of what makes for quality authorizing. To share this expertise, the National Association for Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) has adopted *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*.

As the professional membership organization representing leading authorizers across the country, NACSA is committed to increasing the number of quality charter schools. A quality charter school is characterized by high student achievement, financial stewardship, and responsible governance. Students deserve outstanding public schools. Nationally, the demand for charter schools far exceeds supply. As more charter schools are created, these *Principles and Standards* will guide authorizer practices to ensure that the autonomy of charter schools is honored and that charter schools are held accountable for high student achievement.

The *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing* reflects the lessons learned by experienced authorizers. The Principles articulate a set of beliefs about quality charter school authorizing. The Standards identify core authorizer responsibilities and describe how the principles are upheld within each core responsibility. Together, the *Principles and Standards* create a framework for authorizer practice and highlight the importance of effective authorizing for the overall quality of the charter school initiative. This effort builds on NACSA's prior work under the *Critical Design Issues, Illustrations and Case Studies for Charter School Authorizers*, which identified a set of activities and practical choices associated with a comprehensive approach to charter school authorizing.

It is important to qualify the purpose of this document by stating not only what it is but also what it *is not*. The *Principles and Standards* **do not** prescribe an exclusive approach to charter school authorizing. They are



intended to focus on the ends that authorizers should be aiming to attain, recognizing that there are many *means* of getting there. Moreover, NACSA recognizes that authorizers operate under various legal, financial and other constraints that may limit how they operate and what they do. Nevertheless, the *Principles and Standards* assert the authorizer's role in creating and upholding high expectations for the schools they charter.

The *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing* publication is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For more information on NASCA or the Principles and Standards please visit <http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Quality.pdf> or visit the Florida Department of Education's School Choice website http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter_Schools/files/NACSA_registration_form.pdf to find out more information on Chartering for Excellence in Florida.

Florida State Board of Education to Honor High-Performing Principals

TAMPA — The Florida State Board of Education honored middle school principals who improved their school's grade by two or more letter grades this past school year. Since 1999, when the A+ Plan for Education was implemented, schools have improved from only 515 schools earning an "A" or "B" to 2,077 schools in 2006 — four times the number of high-performing schools seven years ago and 234 more than last year (up from 1,843). Three of every four Florida schools were considered high performing in 2006.

"The leadership and dedicated efforts of these principals are worthy of our recognition and praise," said Education Commissioner John L. Winn. "The key component in education reform is leadership, and these principals clearly exemplify that trait."

PRINCIPALS TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

■ Denotes Charter Schools

District	Principal	School	Grade 2005	Grade 2006
Broward	Kim Flynn	Olsen Middle School	C	A
Broward	David Olafson	Plantation Middle School	C	A
Broward	David Hall	Parkway Middle School	C	A
Broward	James Neer	Crystal Lake Community Middle	C	A
Broward	Luwando Wright-Hines	Arthur Robert Ashe, Junior Middle School	F	C
Broward	Dwight Bernard	Smart School Charter Middle	D	A
Broward	Jim Di Sebastian	Downtown Academy of Technology and Arts	F	A
Collier	Mary Murray	Golden Gate Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Juliet King	Coral Reef Montessori Academy	C	A
Miami-Dade	Francisco Jimenez	Somerset Academy Charter Middle School	D	A
Miami-Dade	Iliana Pena	Aspira Youth Leadership School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Thomas Ennis	Cutler Ridge Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Barbara A. Mendizabal	Ruben Dario Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Luis E. Diaz	Henry H. Filer Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Martha H. Montiel	Hialeah Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Jose Bueno	Jose Marti Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Gail Senita	Miami Springs Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Caridad J. Figueredo	Nautilus Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Joanne D. Gans	Ponce de Leon Middle School	C	A
Miami-Dade	Valerie Carrier	Riviera Middle School	C	A
Hillsborough	James Elliot	McLane Middle School	C	A
Hillsborough	Dwight Raines	Buchanan Middle School	C	A
Lee	Joe Roles	Gateway Charter School	C	A
Lee	Joe Roles	Cape Coral Charter School	D	B
Okeechobee	Brian Greseth	Yearling Middle School	C	A
Palm Beach	Renatta Adan-Espinoza	Academy for Positive Learning	D	B
Palm Beach	Marie Turchiaro	Palm Beach Maritime Academy	C	A
Sarasota	Vickie Marble	Student Leadership Academy	C	A
Sarasota	Karen Rose	Brookside Middle School	C	A
Sarasota	Scott Wilson	Heron Creek Middle School	C	A
Sarasota	Steve Cantees	Phoenix Academy	F	C

“These principals are role models for their peers,” said Florida State Board of Education Chairman Philip Handy. “The State Board of Education is proud of their work and intends to honor other such principals during future board meetings.”

The State Board of Education recognized other high-performing principals during its meeting in December, when they honored additional, exemplary middle school principals.

Solid leadership is a key component to the success of Florida’s education system. In June 2006, Former Governor Jeb Bush signed into law the A++ Plan for Education to increase the rigor and relevance of Florida’s middle and high schools and better prepare students for

postsecondary education and the workforce. Included in the A++ Plan for Education is the William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program for School Leaders to provide professional development and support for principals. This collaborative network of state and national leadership organizations will support the human-resource development needs of principals, principal leadership teams and candidates for principal leadership positions.

To learn more about the A++ Plan for Education visit www.fldoe.org.

ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments

On December 5, 2006, the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice issued the first installment of a new technical assistance document designed to assist state and local officials to improve compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in their programs, services, activities, and facilities. The new technical assistance document, which will be released in several installments over the next ten months, is entitled “The ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments.”

The Tool Kit is designed to teach state and local government officials how to identify and fix problems that prevent people with disabilities from gaining equal access to state and local government programs, services, and activities. It will also teach state and local officials how to conduct accessibility surveys of their buildings and facilities to identify and remove architectural barriers to access.

The first installment of the ADA Tool Kit can be found at www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/toolkitmain.htm, and includes:

- About This Tool Kit (HTML) | (PDF) 48KB
- Chapter 1, ADA Basics: Statutes and Regulations (HTML) | (PDF) 112KB
- Chapter 2, ADA Coordinator: Notice and Grievance Procedure (HTML) | (PDF) 352KB
- Chapter 2, Addendum: Title II Checklist (HTML) | (PDF) 64KB

While state and local governments are not required to use the ADA Best Practices Tool Kit, the Department encourages its use as one effective means of complying with the requirements of Title II of the ADA.

For more information please contact the U.S. Department of Justice at: U.S. Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20530-0001, 202-514-2000 or email: AskDOJ@usdoj.gov.

News From...CharterED

Highlighting The Latest In Charter School News and Opportunities

U.S. Department of Education • Office of Innovation and Improvement • U.S. Department of Education News

WORKSHOPS FOR CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS

The U.S. Department of Education is hosting summer workshops designed specifically for teachers in charter schools. One series of workshop will be held from June 21-22 in Phoenix and a second from July 23-24 in Miami.

The Department's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative, together with the Charter Schools Program, is planning the workshops. Charter school teachers and their principals are encouraged to attend. Areas of focus include: scientifically-based research strategies in reading, math, and science; using data effectively; meeting the needs of LEP students; and differentiating instruction. Registration will begin in April 2007. There is no registration fee; however, attendees are responsible for their own transportation and lodging.

Watch for further announcements in the coming months, including workshop agendas. For more information on the Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative, go to <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html>.

FREE MATERIALS FROM SUMMER TEACHER WORKSHOPS NOW ONLINE

The U.S. Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative has made materials from the workshops conducted in 14 cities across the country last summer available online. Materials cover subjects such as reading, math, history, art and foreign language as well as topics like differentiating instruction and teaching students with limited English proficiency. These free materials are within the public domain and may be used widely. Teachers are encouraged to share them with their colleagues.

PowerPoints and handouts from 107 workshop sessions are posted at: <http://www.t2tweb.us/Workshops/Sessions.asp>.

TOOL KIT FOR HISPANIC FAMILIES

To close the achievement gap for Hispanic children, the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans has recommended setting new and high expectations by: helping parents navigate the education system; creating partnerships to

provide expanded options for children; and implementing a public awareness campaign aimed at achieving higher education.

To help fulfill this purpose, the U.S. Department of Education, in collaboration with the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, is releasing an updated version of the *Tool Kit for Hispanic Families*. This colorful, illustrated resource was developed with guidance from over 1,800 Hispanic parents at Parent Information and Resource Centers across the country. It includes six topical brochures, each containing additional references:

- *You and Your Preschool Child* looks at factors such as diet, exercise and medical care that affect how well children perform in school.
- *You and Your Elementary School-Aged Child* suggests important questions to ask educators, such as how much time is spent teaching children English, reading and math.
- *Tips for Helping Children Learn to Read* offers literacy techniques for the early stages of learning how to read.
- *A Challenging High School Education for All* looks at how completing advanced course work can help students to succeed in college and perhaps graduate early.
- *School Success for Your Child* offers homework tips for parents and suggestions for helping students with disabilities.
- *No Child Left Behind: Help for Students and Their Families* provides an overview of the options and benefits of the law.

To order a free copy of the tool kit, call **1-877-4ED-PUBS**.

CharterED, is a resource provided by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement—Charter Schools Program. This resource provides charter developers with information about federal education news and policies, regulatory and non-regulatory guidance, as well as grant announcements and teaching resources useful in your efforts to improve and expand the number of high-quality charter schools. You may subscribe to the newsletter listserv message by visiting: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/charter/csplist.html>.

Public Charter Schools Program

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