

May 2008

Florida's Charter Schools News



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Dear Charter School Administrators and Staff:

As we celebrate National Charter Schools Week May 5-9, I want to thank you for your commitment to your community and ensuring the success of our students. Florida charter schools continue to play a key role in increasing parental options for public education. Your efforts in providing innovative

learning opportunities for more than 104,000 students each year is truly remarkable.

Charter schools supply parents with additional education options for their children and offer students the opportunity to gain high-quality services to further their success. By providing effective programs and choice to diverse groups of students, charter schools remain an integral

component toward educational achievements.

I appreciate the invigorating learning environments you provide to students, and I applaud your success in working with your community to provide an excellent venue for education.

Sincerely,
Dr. Eric J. Smith
Commissioner

New Charter Applicant Training and Charter School Sessions at the 2008 DOE Information Database Workshop

The annual Florida Department of Education MIS Database Workshop is scheduled for June 17 – 19, 2008, at the Florida Hotel & Conference Center, 1500 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, Florida. We encourage the charter school community and stakeholders to take part in this event. All registrations must be completed online at <http://data.fldoe.org/register/eias/>. There is **no** registration fee, but you are asked to complete the online registration.

Additional hotel and meeting information is also available online at <http://data.fldoe.org/register/eias/default.cfm?id=200801>. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact Arlene Roberts at arlene.roberts@fldoe.org, or Sheryl DuBose, sheryl.dubose@fldoe.org or call (850)245-0400 or SC 205-0400.

Charter school topics to be discussed at the workshop can be found at the following link: http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/PDF/charter_school_sessions_topic.pdf.



Merit Award Program

Charter schools with a Merit Award Program (MAP) plan in place for the 2007-08 school year may wish to utilize the exams available through the End-of-Course Exam (ECE) Clearinghouse. Even if your district does not have a MAP plan for this year, you may request access to available tests through your district ECE Clearinghouse contact.

There are currently 703 exams available. Sort and filter applications have been provided by Hillsborough County staff to help users locate appropriate exams. Charter school administrators may go to

<http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/> and select ECE Clearinghouse from Quick Links to search for exam titles.

Participation in the Merit Award Program requires schools to administer end-of-course examinations based on state academic standards for all grade groupings and subjects. To maintain the integrity of the exams contributed to the ECE Clearinghouse, access is regulated by detailed security procedures. We encourage you to request the exams your school needs to meet MAP requirements as soon as possible from your district ECE Clearinghouse Contact.

Contact Cathy Russell via telephone at 850-245-0502 or via email at Cathy.Russell@fldoe.org for information on the Merit Award Program.

MAP

8th National Charter Schools Conference

The 2008 National Charter Schools Conference will be held June 22-25, 2008, in New Orleans, Louisiana. **"Still We Rise: Achieving Academic Excellence at Scale"** is the conference theme, reflecting the growth of quality public charter schools across America. There will be something for everyone at this year's conference, with over 100 breakout sessions, 50 peer-to-peer roundtable discussions, and an exhibit floor with the latest in products and services for charter schools.

Geoffrey Canada, President and Chief Executive Officer for Harlem Children's Zone and named as one of "America's Best Leaders" by U.S. News & World Report, will offer the keynote speech Monday morning, June 23. Mr. Canada is nationally recognized for his pioneering work helping children and families in Harlem and as a passionate advocate for education reform.

You won't find a better opportunity to learn about charter schools and grow

in an atmosphere of camaraderie. Laissez les bon temps roulez! (Let the Good Times Roll!)

Additional information can be found at the following Web site: <http://www.nationalcharterconference.org>.



REMINDER:



Each charter school is encouraged to update its contact information on the charter school database as soon as changes occur. Paperless communication is our way of getting pertinent information to you in a timely fashion. Please help us to help you in keeping abreast of events and information vital to the success of each school. You can access the Web site at: https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/CharterSchool/AccountabilityReport/report_login.aspx.

The registration form for [The Great Florida Teach-In](http://www.thelakelandcenter.com), to be held at The Lakeland Center (www.thelakelandcenter.com), June 26-27, has been posted at <http://data.fldoe.org/register/teach-in/dist/default.cfm>.

A limited number of rooms have been reserved at The Hyatt Place at The Lakeland Center (888-492-8847) for \$119 per night. Additional rooms are available at The Holiday Inn South (888-465-4329) for \$109 per night. Reference The Great Florida Teach-In when you make your reservations to receive these rates.



Florida Virtual School Launches New and Improved AP Reviews

Students throughout Florida planning to take Advanced Placement (AP) Exams can prepare using an online AP Review. The Web-based tool features multiple choice assessments in a self-paced, interactive environment. The AP Reviews will arm students with resources and practice tests developed from previously released AP examinations and materials licensed by the College Board. The test reviews are offered free of charge to all students and are available for the following AP courses: Art History, Biology; Calculus AB; English Language (new tutorial); English Literature; Government and Politics;

Macroeconomics; Spanish (new tutorial); U.S. History; and European History. Students currently enrolled in Florida Virtual School (FLVS) AP courses are pre-registered for the AP Review that corresponds with their AP course; a link to the review is embedded in their course content. Students not currently enrolled in FLVS courses can register for the AP Reviews by going to <http://aptestreview.flvs.net>.



Sharing Charter School Success: G-STAR School of the Arts for Motion Pictures and Broadcasting



The *G-STAR School of the Arts for Motion Pictures and Broadcasting* is the largest Film, TV Production and Acting high school in the nation (including LA & NY).

The G-Star School of the Arts is a nationally-accredited high school awarded by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS-CASI). As a nationally-accredited high school in good standing, all colleges and universities accept their

students. G-Star offers a complete college preparatory education in all academics with honors classes, advanced placement classes and dual enrollment with Florida Atlantic University, Palm Beach Community College and Lynn University. The school also trains students in Writing, Directing, Producing, Acting and all aspects of film and TV production in front of the camera and behind the camera.

The G-STAR School of the Arts is the only high school in the world with a real Motion Picture Studio on its campus, the *G-Star Studios*, where over twenty feature films have been produced. Students assist on multi-million dollar feature films working side-by-side with the cast, crew, Producers and Directors as interns, thus receiving hands-on, real-world experience in the film industry. Among the famous persons who have produced or appeared in films at the G-Star Studios are Bobby Moresco, the Academy Award winning Producer and Writer of *CRASH* and *Million*

Dollar Baby; Jonathan Krane, Master Producer of the films *Face/Off*, *Swordfish*, *The General's Daughter*, and the *Look Who's Talking* trilogy; and the famous Director Susan Seidelman who directed *Desperately Seeking Susan* and many episodes of *Sex and the City*, including the pilot episode. Dylan and Cole Sprouse, from the Disney Channel's *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody*, starred in their first feature film entitled *The Prince and the Pauper* at the G-Star Studios; as well as the stars Dyan Cannon, Sally Kellerman, John Goodman, Margo Harshman (from Disney's *Even Stevens* movie and TV show); Joseph Balogna; Ed Lauter who starred in both *Longest Yard* films (1976 and 2005); Brenda Vaccaro; DeDee Pfeiffer; and Leo Rossi from *The Accused* and *Without A Trace*.

Charter Good News Stories

The Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice is highlighting Good News stories from charter schools on the School Choice Web site. Please share your school's Good News by sending your stories to Charterschools@fldoe.org.



7th Annual Just Read, Florida! K-12 Leadership Conference June 29-July 2, 2008, Orlando

The 7th Annual Just Read, Florida! K-12 Leadership Conference will take place Sunday, June 29, 2008, through Wednesday, July 2, 2008, at the Orlando World Center Marriott. The Just Read, Florida! Office hosts this conference annually for all Florida superintendents, principals and reading/literacy coaches. This year, we are inviting teacher leaders to attend as well. This summer promises to be the most exciting event ever with over 300 concurrent sessions.

Please access the following links for more information on this outstanding event!

- [Register Now for the 7th Annual Just Read, Florida! K-12 Leadership Conference](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Allotments for District Teams](#)
- [Schedule of Events](#)
- Educational Partnership Opportunities
 - [Partnership Invitation Letter \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Partnership Levels \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Partnership Benefit Details \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Partnership Commitment Form \(PDF\)](#)

For more information regarding the conference, please contact Jill.Jackson@fldoe.org.

2008 Florida Charter School Conference: Save the Date!

The Florida Charter School Conference (FCSC) will be held **November 20-21, 2008**, in Orlando, Florida, at the Doubletree Hotel at the entrance to Universal Orlando.

Conference information will be provided and posted online in the near future.

The event will be designed for members of the charter school community and other stakeholders to come together to celebrate successes, share best practices, clarify legislative intent (federal and state), and learn from national, state, and local leaders.

We are in the initial stage of planning the 2008 Florida Charter School Conference. Our goal is to make it **the** charter school event of the year, and with your help we can! Get involved today by:

- ✦ Submitting a [theme](#) and slogan for the conference.

- ✦ Submitting ideas for session and round table [topics](#).
- ✦ Submitting names of speakers for the general sessions.
- ✦ Volunteering to be on the Planning Committee.
- ✦ Volunteering to be an application reviewer.

If you are interested in being a part of the 2008 Florida Charter School Conference, please [contact](#) the conference planner, Noelle Bonard via e-mail at Noelle.Bonard@fldoe.org.

Don't miss out on conference news. Sign up today to be on the FCSC [mailing list](#), at: http://charterschoolconference.com/mailling_list_1.php.

We look forward to another great conference!



**Office of Independent Education
and Parental Choice**
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School Choice Hotline:
1-800-447-1636

www.floridaschoolchoice.org