

CHARTER SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

June 2012

HB 7127 – Effect on Charter Schools



House Bill 7127, which passed this legislative session, addresses school improvement and accountability, with some significant impacts on charter schools. The bill has been signed by the governor and will go into effect on July 1, 2012. Following is a summary of areas affecting charters. The full text and analysis may be found at: <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2012/7127>

The bill aligns the school improvement interventions in the charter school statute with the Department's system of Differentiated Accountability. Similar to current law, the bill requires a charter school that earns a grade of "D" or "F" to develop a school improvement plan, which must be implemented upon approval by the sponsor.

The bill requires corrective actions for charter schools earning three consecutive grades of "D," two consecutive grades of "D" followed by a grade of "F," or two nonconsecutive grades of "F" within a three-year period. Such a charter school must choose one of the following options:

- Contract for educational services to be provided directly to students, instructional personnel, and school administrators;
- Contract with an outside entity with a track record of effectiveness to operate the school;
- Hire a new headmaster who has authority to hire new staff; or
- Voluntarily close the school.

A charter school must implement the corrective action for two years. Corrective actions are no longer required if the charter school improves by at least one letter grade; however, the school must continue to implement the school improvement plan. If a charter school does not improve by at least one letter grade after two full school years of implementing a corrective action, the school must choose another action. The sponsor may waive corrective actions if it determines that the charter school is likely to improve its grade if additional time is given to implement the school improvement plan. The sponsor may also extend the implementation period for a corrective action based upon a similar standard. Waivers or extensions may not be granted to a charter school that earns a second consecutive grade of

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Call for USED Charter Schools Program peer reviewers

The **Charter Schools Program (CSP)** at the **U.S. Department of Education** is seeking peer reviewers (field readers) to read and evaluate discretionary grant applications submitted for a new discretionary grant competition. Serving as a peer reviewer is an excellent opportunity to contribute to our country's education reform efforts by ensuring that federal grant funds are allocated to the most promising grant projects.

Qualifications: The CSP is seeking peer reviewers with expertise in at least one of the following areas:

- Public charter school and public non-chartered school collaborations
- Public charter schools and public non-chartered LEA collaborations
- Charter school information dissemination activities and strategies
- State Educational Agency (SEA) charter school program grant administration
- High-quality charter school start-up and expansion
- Charter school assessment and evaluation
- Charter school policy and research
- Charter school authorizing
- Charter school technical assistance and resources
- Charter school leadership and professional development
- Charter school administration and operation

Requirements: In addition to the expertise highlighted above, peer reviewers will independently read, score, and provide written comments for grant applications submitted to the U.S. Department of Education under the CSP programs. Expectations for peer reviewers selected are:

- The application review will be conducted electronically from the reviewer's location.
- The reviewer must have access to the internet, a phone, and a printer, and have the ability to interact

within a web-based environment.

- The reviewer must be available to participate in an orientation session by conference call prior to evaluating the applications and participate in daily conference calls during the application review (typically a three week period).
- The reviewer must provide detailed, objective, constructive, and timely written reviews for each criterion for each assigned application. These written reviews are made public, though the reviewer's identity is not revealed.
- The reviews will be used to recommend applications for funding.

Participation in panel calls, application review, and writing and editing comments is typically a significant time commitment during the three week period.

How to Apply: If you would like to be considered as a peer reviewer for the CSP, please email a copy of your current resume or vitae to Charter-Schools@ed.gov by July 13. Your resume should clearly address your charter school background or expertise.

Resumes will be kept on file and panel reviewers will be notified on an as-needed basis. We do not yet have dates for competition reviews. We anticipate an August to early September review period, although dates are not yet finalized. Reviewers will receive an honorarium for their services.

Conflict of Interest: Please remember that if your organization intends to apply for a grant under any CSP competitions, you may not be eligible to serve as a reviewer.

More Information: For more information on serving as a peer reviewer contact Charter-Schools@ed.gov. For more information on the Charter Schools Program, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/index.html>.

Funding Opportunities

- **The George Lucas Educational Foundation Grant Information List**
- **The Baseball Tomorrow Fund:** Grants are awarded quarterly. Major League Baseball promotes their sport by funding schools who are interested in starting a new program, expanding or improving an existing program, undertaking a new collaborative effort, or obtaining facilities or equipment. The average grant award is approximately \$50,000.
- **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Education Grants:** Letters of inquiry are accepted year-round. The foundation has two education grant programs: Deeper Learning helps support programs that prepare students for a changing world; Open Educational Resources supports the production of high-quality open-access educational materials.
- **The Fulbright Classroom Teacher Exchange Program:** Provides opportunities for teachers to participate in direct exchanges of positions with colleagues from other countries for a semester or academic year. By living and working in the cultures of their host countries, Fulbright teachers gain an understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences in national cultures and education systems. Fulbright teachers enrich their schools and communities with a new awareness of other cultures and of events occurring in different parts of the world, providing students and citizens with new perspectives about the world in which they live. Deadline: 10-15-12. <http://www.grantsalert.com/grants/Foundations/256>

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“F” while in corrective action. Such a charter school must be terminated by the sponsor.

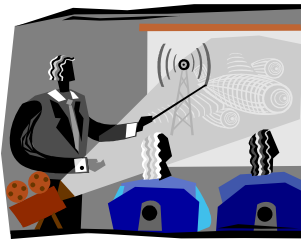
The bill requires the sponsor to terminate a charter school that earns two consecutive grades of “F,” unless:

- The charter school was established to turnaround the performance of a traditional public school under differentiated accountability. If such a charter school continues to earn grades of “F,” the school district must implement a different turnaround option.
- The charter school is in its first three years of operation and serves a student population in the same school zone as a failing public school. Such a charter school must earn at least a grade of “D” by year three. In year four and thereafter, the exception no longer applies to the charter school.
- The state board grants the charter school a waiver of termination. To obtain a waiver, the charter school must demonstrate that the learning gains of its students on statewide assessments are comparable or better than the learning gains of similarly situated students enrolled in nearby district public schools. The waiver is valid for one year and may only be granted once. Charter schools that have been in operation for more than five years are not eligible for a waiver.

The director and a representative of a charter school that is required to implement a school improvement plan or corrective action must annually appear before the sponsor to report the progress of the corrective strategies being implemented by the school. Thus, the sponsor must monitor the progress of interventions.

Governing Board Training

Charter school governing boards are reminded that each new governing board and each new governing board member must complete a minimum of four hours of Department approved instruction, per rule [6A-6.0784](#), FAC.



The training must occur within 90 days of appointment to the board and must focus on:

- government in the sunshine
- conflicts of interest
- ethics, and
- financial responsibility.

After the initial four hour training as specified in Section 1002.33(9)(k), F.S, each member is required to complete a two hour refresher training at least every three years in order to retain his or her position on the charter school board. Any member who fails to obtain the two hour refresher training must take the four hours of instruction again in order to remain eligible as a charter school board member.

More information about Governing Board Training and to view a list of training providers whose training plans have been approved to meet requirements of Section 1002.33(9)(k), F.S., please visit the [Governance Training page](#) of the Department's Charter Schools website.



Department Notes

CALL FOR PROPOSALS: 24th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference

The Florida Department of Education, in conjunction with the National Dropout Prevention Center, will hold the 24th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference. The theme for this year is **Ignite the Potential Within: Connect, Inspire, Graduate!** The conference will be held October 14–17, 2012, at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando, FL. For more information, please visit <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/home>. Please note that the deadline for submission of proposals is June 29, 2012. If you have further questions, please contact Gria Davison by phone at (850) 245-7837 via e-mail at gria.davison@fldoe.org.

2012-2013 Request for Application for Title II, Part A Teacher and Principal Recruiting Fund <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6409/dps-2012-86.pdf>

Upcoming Protocol Reviewer Training <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6407/dps-2012-93.pdf>

Commissioner's Leadership Academy <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6410/dps-2012-97.pdf>

Is your contact information up to date?

To make sure you receive all Program Office communications, update your contact information through your charter school login at:

https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/login/login_charter_school.asp

or e-mail

Charterschools@fldoe.org.

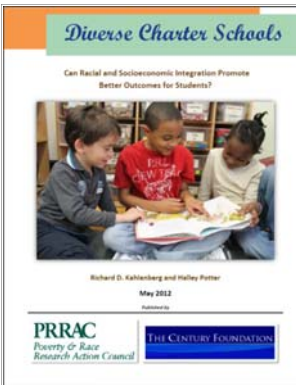


Charters in the News

A round-up of local and national charter stories

Report Says Charter Schools Should Diversify For The Sake Of The Students

By Gina Jordan from StateImpact.org June 4, 2012



Charter schools tend to be less diverse than traditional public schools, according to a new report, and federal and state officials should consider rules that give charter schools more flexibility in choosing students.

As schools of choice, charters could use diversity to improve student education, according to a report from the Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) and The Century Foundation. But federal law requires charter schools give every applicant the same chance at enrolling — typically through a lottery..... [Read more at http://stateimpact.npr.org/florida/2012/06/04/report-says-charter-schools-should-diversify-for-the-sake-of-the-students/](http://stateimpact.npr.org/florida/2012/06/04/report-says-charter-schools-should-diversify-for-the-sake-of-the-students/)

The Challenges of Supporting New Teachers

A Conversation with Linda Darling-Hammond

By Marge Scherer From ASCD.org

Fifty years ago, Dan Lortie said the new teacher was like Robinson Crusoe, marooned on an island and facing challenges of survival. Modern Survivor images aside, is it still like that for beginning teachers?

It's still like that for some teachers, but less so than it once was. It's true that a number of beginners leave the teaching profession early because they don't feel effective. Sometimes they feel that they're crashing and burning, and sometimes, they really are.... It's really important for beginners to have systematic, intense mentoring in the first year. Having weekly support and in-classroom coaching in the first year for fine-tuning skills, for planning lessons, and for problem solving about things that come up in the classroom ensures that someone experienced is there during the critical moments of the beginning

teacher's first year....[Read more at www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may12/](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may12/)

NAPCS releases newest [issue brief](#), *A Mission to Serve: How Public Charter Schools Are Designed to Meet the Diverse Demands of Our Communities*.

The public charter school movement has grown rapidly in the 20 years, with over 5,600 schools now serving more than two million students. One of the most exceptional developments within the first two decades of the movement has been the rise of high performing public charter schools with missions intentionally focused on educating students from traditionally underserved communities. Given that the demographics of these communities are often homogeneous, it is no surprise the demographics of these schools are that way as well. In fact, the student populations at these public charter schools usually mirror the populations in nearby district schools..... [Read more at http://publiccharters.org/publication/?id=755](http://publiccharters.org/publication/?id=755)

Charter Sector Starts to Grow Its Own Leaders

But the demand may still outpace supply

By Christina A. Samuels From EdWeek.org

According to *Education Week*, the growing charter sector is developing its own leadership training programs, but demand continues to outstrip supply. Public charter school leaders require both a grasp of the education- and personnel-management skills and background in nonprofit management, budgeting, and strategic planning. Some large networks, like KIPP, run their own leadership training programs. Other programs, such as New Leaders for New Schools and Building Excellent Schools, ... prepare leaders to work various settings. Existing programs are turning out only a total of about 400 or 500 leaders a year, barely enough to keep up with new school growth and leadership turnover.[Read more at http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/09](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/09)

Perspectives

CPALMS Charter – One-stop resource for charter school teachers

Wonderful Educators,

As you may have heard, there is a new educational website called CPALMS Charter. This is an extension of CPALMS, but designed for charter school teachers and leaders. We want this site to be a one-stop location for all of your teaching needs. At

www.cpalmscharter.org a large variety of resources, webinars, and videos will be available for you to use and share. As part of the resource section, we want to include lesson plans, lesson units, and lesson studies that cover all subject matter at all grade levels.



Since this site is for you, we would love for you to take part in submitting resources of any kind (lesson plans/units, lesson studies, or resources you have found on the web that are great for teachers). You can share these ideas with other charter school teachers by downloading (or creating) and submitting a resource on www.cpalmscharter.org. If you go to this site, there are instructions on how to submit resources, including the **need to choose CPALMS CHARTER** as the **CPALMS INITIATIVE AND PROJECT**. Please note that all resources are reviewed by a committee of reviewers that includes veteran teachers, content specialists and formatters. As all resources are reviewed, you can rest assured that anything you use from www.cpalms.org or www.cpalmscharter.org has been held to the highest level of content and relevance. These resources are linked with standards and can be searched by resource name, subject matter, or standard. Mathematics, Science, and Language Arts resources will be reviewed and included in both sites; however, all other subject areas will be reviewed later in the summer and will be available beginning in August.

When you sign on to your free account at www.cpalmscharter.org you will automatically be enrolled in www.cpalms.org. If you already have a CPALMS account, please email me at the below address and I will have you dual enrolled into the CPALMS Charter site. As a member of both sites, you will have full access to all content on both sites.

As we begin building our resource library, we will begin working on various webinar series and video series that focus on teacher best practices, classroom topics, and effective teaching lessons. Please stay tuned for great information coming your way soon!

I look forward to seeing all of the wonderful resources that you choose to make public to all teachers in the state of Florida. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon.

Michelle W. Kendrick is Program Manager for CPALMS Charter at Florida State University Schools. Michelle may be reached by e-mailing: mkendrick@fsu.edu

Professional Development Resources

Free Professional Development for Florida's Charter School Teachers in Science, Technology and the Environment

In-Service Points Available

The Office of Environmental Education is offering a number of Educator Workshops this summer. The OEE seeks to cultivate and support environmental citizenship: the awareness, understanding and appreciation of Florida's environment; and the capacity to think critically and participate constructively in its protection.



Event Name	Date
Project WET, Lee County	Aug 3, 2012
Green Schools, Lee County	Aug 6, 2012
Healthy Waters Healthy People, Duval County	Aug 14, 2012
Green Schools, Duval County	Aug 14, 2012
Flying WILD Workshop in Palm Beach County	Aug 15, 2012
Growing Up WILD Workshop in Palm Beach County	Aug 15, 2012
Combined Schoolyard Wildlife and Project Learning Tree in Hillsborough	Aug 16, 2012

For more information, visit: <http://depcharterschoolsworkshops.eventbrite.com/>. These workshops are presented by the Office of Environmental Education in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in partnership with the Florida Department of Education.

Project Based Learning Resources

- Discover a PBL model that drives academic achievement and motivates students to pursue knowledge. Learn more about one project that used the best-selling book, *The Hunger Games*, as the inspiration. <http://www.edutopia.org/stw-project-based-learning-best-practices-guide>
- Go inside Manor New Technology High School, a public high school just outside of Austin in Manor, Texas. It is an entirely project-based learning school that has consistently achieved outstanding results since opening. See how they do it. <http://www.edutopia.org/stw-project-based-learning-best-practice>
- Blogger Andrew Miller writes about the specific work that PBL teachers do that make them effective educators. <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/affirmations-for-pbl-teachers-andrew-miller>

Design Squad Nation

PBS Kids and the WGBH Educational Foundation have created free activities and hands-on challenges that focus on the engineering design process. They use simple materials, allow for multiple solutions, and are ideal for ages 9-12. <http://pbskids.org/designsquad/parentseducators/index.html>

Conferences and Workshops

- **Constructing Modern Knowledge summer PBL institute** July 9 to July 12, 2012, Manchester, NH.
- **AP Annual Conference 2012** (CollegeBoard) July 18 to July 22, 2012, Lake Buena Vista, FL.
- **The 23rd Annual Summer Seminar for Language Teachers** (The California World Language Project) July 22 to July 27, 2012, Santa Barbara, CA.



Shining Stars

Clark students graduate with a head start — 61% earn Associate Degree

With a head start on college, expertise in the latest technology and real-world experience from business internships, 75 Clark Advanced Learning Center high school seniors graduated on May 26. Forty-six graduates, 61% of the graduating class, graduated with an Associate Degree. This marks the largest number of students graduating with an A.S. since the school's opening in 2004. Clark, ranked the seventh best high school in Florida, is a public charter high school for sophomores, juniors and seniors at the Indian River State College Chastain Campus in Stuart.

The national model school affords students the opportunity to earn high school and college credits, tuition free through dual enrollment, with the convenience and resources of a college campus. As a result, students graduate with their high school diploma and a year or more of college completed.

Three Clark students were honored as Valedictorians for their top achievement. Haider Ali will attend the University of Florida to major in computer science engineering and pre-medicine. Jazzlyn O'Reilly is planning to attend New College of Florida to study anthropology and the Chinese language. Riha Wadhwa will major in biology and biomedical science at the University of Central Florida.

Ariana Martinez, John Merritt, and Kara Russell were recognized as Salutatorians. Martinez is planning to attend the Brown University/Rhode Island School of Design dual degree program in cognitive science and illustration. Merritt will attend the Florida Institute of Technology in a Bachelor's/Master's Degree program in engineering, computer science and physics. Russell is planning to attend Rollins College Honor's Program and major in biochemistry and molecular biology with plans to become an oncologist.

For more information about Clark Advanced Learning Center, visit www.clarkadvancedlearningcenter.org.



Clark Advanced Learning Center valedictorians were Riha Wadhwa (second left), Haider Ali (center), and Jazzlyn O'Reilly (not pictured); and Clark salutatorians Ariana Martinez (left), Kara Russell (second right) and John Merritt (right). All graduated with an Associate Degree and their high school diploma,



*Improving K-12 Educational
Choice Options*

Charter Schools Office

Adam Miller—Charter Director
Helen Giraitis—Grants Manager

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

Michael Kooi, Esq.—Executive Director

325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1044
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Toll-free: 800-447-1636
Phone: 850-245-0502
Fax: 850-245-0875

E-mail: Charterschools@fldoe.org
On the Web: WWW.FLORIDASCHOOLCHOICE.ORG