



Florida's Charter Schools

Upcoming Events to Remember...

Data Reporting for Indicator 11 – Indicator 11 is one of the compliance indicators for the State Performance Plan and specifies a 60-day timeline for evaluations for initial eligibility for special education services. Attached is the data chart districts should use to report data to the Bureau. The data districts collect and report covers the period July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007, and should be submitted to Karen Denbroeder at karen.denbroeder@fldoe.org no later than October 19, 2007, and not prior to August 1, 2007. The directions are self-explanatory.

- Filename: Timeline for Evals
- Contact: Bettye Hyle at bhyle@tempest.coedu.usf.edu or (850) 922-3727; or Karen Denbroeder at Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org or (850) 245-0475

2007 K-12 Conference and Innovation Fair – Please share the flyer at the link below with district and school staff which provides information regarding this year's conference, to be held October 2-5, 2007, in Orlando.

- Link: <http://www.fldoe.org/k12/conference/files/flyer3.pdf>
- Contact: Holly Radcliffe at holly.radcliffe@fldoe.org or (850) 245-0659

Florida Symposium on Early Childhood Hearing

Loss – In an effort to assist school districts in serving young children with hearing loss, we are pleased to provide you with information regarding the Seventh Annual Florida Symposium on Early Childhood Hearing Loss. The Symposium will be September 28-29, 2007, in St. Augustine, Florida, beginning with a four-hour skill building session on Thursday, September 27, 2007, from 12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, is participating as one of the co-sponsors of this meeting which will offer an excellent training opportunity for district staff. Our participation as a co-sponsor will enable each school district to receive **a waiver of the conference registration fee for two district staff members.**

- Please submit the conference registration form and the registration fee waiver directly to the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) Outreach Program Symposium office. These forms should be returned no later than **September 14, 2007**. Conference information can be found at www.fsdb.k12.fl.us/outreach or by contacting the Outreach Services office by telephone at (800) 356-6729 or (904) 827-2259.
- Please note: participants are responsible for making their own travel and hotel arrangements. The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services will not reimburse any other travel-related costs associated with this symposium.
- Filename: Flyer on Symposium
- Filename: Fee Waiver 07
- Contact: Dawn Saunders at dawn.saunders@fldoe.org or (850) 245-0478

Hearing Specialist Training and Recruitment – In an effort to improve the quality and quantity of services available to young children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and their families in Florida, a workshop has been developed by a small group of stakeholders, including a representative from the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services. This workshop targets Speech-Language Pathologists, Audiologists, and Early Interventionists who are working or are interested in working with children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and their families. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) continuing education units will be available. Please share the link below with school district personnel who are currently working with or are interested in working with this population, and encourage them to attend.

- Filename: DHH EC save the date
- Contact: Dawn Saunders at Dawn.Saunders@fldoe.org or (850) 245-0478

Save the Date: FASSA Conference – The Florida Association on Student Services (FASSA) Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, September 18, at the Vinoy

Hotel in St. Petersburg. This Conference is being held in conjunction with AMM.

- Contact: Ken Gaughan at (813) 273-7090

Assessment and Accountability for Recently Arrived and Former Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students” Non-Regulatory Guidance Now Available

– The U.S. Department of Education has provided this new non-regulatory guidance to be shared with the state’s charter schools as well as other appropriate district staff.

- Link: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/lepguidance.doc>
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U.S. Department of Education Announces Cities for Fourth Annual Best Practices Summer Workshops

CONTACT: Jane Glickman or Stephanie Babyak (202) 401-1576

The U.S. Department of Education has named 22 cities as sites for its annual summer regional workshops for teachers to learn best practices from fellow educators successful in raising student achievement, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced today.

“As we draw nearer to our *No Child Left Behind* goal of every child reading and doing math at grade level by 2014, it is ever more important that our hard-working teachers have the tools and the knowledge they need to raise student achievement. This year, 2007, will mark the fourth summer that the Department has given teachers across the country an opportunity to meet with their colleagues and learn new strategies that work in the classroom,” Spellings said. “We are pleased to have the support of several co-hosts this year, which enables us to increase the number of workshops by a third—from 14 held in 2006 to 22 this year. As a result, our workshops will expand their reach to 4,000 teachers nationwide who, in turn, can apply their newfound knowledge as classroom teachers to an expected 1.5 million students nationwide.”

This year’s co-hosts include two federal government agencies—the National Park Service (NPS); the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); a number of TechNet partners, including Microsoft, EMC, AMD, Symantec, the University of Nevada, and Motorola; as well as Target, General Motors Corp., Siemens Foundation and MATHCOUNTS.

The workshops are part of the Department’s Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative, which supports teachers in a variety of ways, including keeping them informed

about the latest strategies and research for closing the achievement gap and helping all students meet high standards.

Each workshop will include numerous breakout sessions featuring effective teachers and practitioners sharing strategies that have been successful in their classrooms, schools and districts.

Below are the workshop dates, locations, subjects covered, and co-host when applicable:

May 31-June 1; Houston, Texas; math, science; NASA

June 5-6; Albuquerque, N.M.; reading, art, history, languages

June 7-8; El Paso, Texas (Chamizal National Memorial); reading, history; NPS

June 12-13; Homestead, Fla. (Everglades National Park); science; NPS

June 19-20; Estes Park, Colo. (Rocky Mountain National Park); reading, science, history; NPS

June 21-22; Phoenix, Ariz.; reading, science, math for charter school teachers

June 25-26; Santa Clara, Calif; math, science; EMC

June 27-28; Orange County, Calif.; reading, math, art, early childhood; Target

July 9-10; Redmond, Wash.; math, science; Microsoft

July 9-10; Mountain View, Calif.; math, science; Symantec

July 12-13; Austin, Texas; math; AMD and Spansion

July 16-17; Schaumburg, Ill.; math, science; Motorola

July 19-20; Louisville, Ky.; reading, early childhood, languages, art; Target

July 23-24, Miami, Fla.; reading, math, science for charter school teachers

July 25-26; Waltham, Mass.; math, science; Microsoft

July 30-31; Porter, Ind. (Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore); science, history; NPS

July 31-Aug 1; Warren, Mich.; math, science (GM/MATHCOUNTS)

Aug 2-3; Herndon, Va.; foreign languages

Aug 2-3; Reno, Nev.; math, science; University of Nevada

Aug 6-7; Lowell, Mass. (Lowell National Historic Park); history, science, art; NPS

Aug 6-7; Chicago, Ill.; math, science; Siemens

Aug 9-10; Anchorage, Alaska (Alaska National Parks) reading, math, science, history, art; NPS

Agendas for each workshop will be posted at www.ed.gov/teacherinitiative during January. Registration for the free workshops will begin April 8.



School Spotlight

AFPL - A Positive Way of Teaching

In Lake Worth, the population of immigrants is continually growing. This is true for all of Florida. The migration of Haitians, South Americans and Cubans increases every year, as well as their dreams and hopes of a better life for their families. The children of these immigrants find it increasingly difficult to fit in with the prominent differences in language, clothing and customs segregating them from the rest of the class. We at the Academy for Positive Learning understand how difficult the transition to a new way of life, a new way of communication and a new lifestyle can inhibit a child's intellectual ability as well as stunt a child's social growth and promise. That is the reason why we promote the individuality of each student. We teach our students to respect and understand each other's different customs and traditions; to learn from each other; to respect each other's differences, physically, emotionally and spiritually. By providing our students with a positive learning environment and instilling in our students the ideals of positive thinking we expect them to grow into positive adults.

The Academy for Positive Learning is exactly that, a school where you can learn in a positive atmosphere

without being persecuted or judged. We implement cooperative learning where the children are taught to help each other achieve. This technique teaches the students to work together to encourage and support each other. They learn to assume responsibility for his or her own and each other's learning, employ group related social skills, and evaluate the group's progress.

Our school is three years young and is the first Multiple Intelligence, Multi-Age school in Palm Beach County. We are a K-8th grade charter school located in Lake Worth at 128 North C Street. It is a public school and a not-for-profit organization sponsored by the District of Palm Beach County. The school offers free of charge both the Kagan structured tools developed by Dr. Spencer Kagan, and the Lindamood-Bell Reading program. These are costly programs offered to our students at no cost because we believe that every child, despite his or her economic status, should be afforded the same opportunities to learn as others. We offer these exclusive and costly programs in order to achieve the highest possible educational limits for our students.

We are actively involved in our community because where we live reflects on who we are. Our program works and the proof is the Florida State Department of Education has recognized us as the #1 School in the state, with the highest improvement record and success in FCAT. This is a remarkable achievement for a school as young as ours is with a diverse population of students. Call our offices at (561) 585-6104 for more information and a brochure. You will be glad you did.

—Submitted by Norma Cruz-Rios

Reminder to Sign-up for Paperless Communication

In an effort to communicate with Florida's educational community in a timely and cost efficient manner, The Florida Department of Education (DOE) has developed the means of notifying interested parties when official correspondence is posted on the DOE website. By signing up and indicating your topics of interest, you will receive email notices containing links to messages, reports, legislative updates, technical assistance papers and official memorandums issued by the Florida Department of Education. All messages will link to PDF files which may be viewed, downloaded to your computer, or printed at your discretion. For more information on the Florida Department of Education's paperless communication system please visit the DOE website at: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/menu/communications.htm>.

A Vow from State to Strengthen Charter-School Accountability

CARLO RODRIGUEZ
POSTED APRIL 1, 2007

Since 1996, Florida charter schools have offered parents an additional, quality public education option and provided innovative learning opportunities for students. From schools specializing in the performing arts to focusing on technical training, Florida currently has more than 350 charter schools covering a spectrum of education needs. Parents are empowered to be education consumers; free to choose a charter school for their child based on the academic focus, standards and performance of the school.

For a charter school to open, it must first have a sponsor or authorizer, such as a local school district. The school and the sponsor enter into a contract, which must include measurable goals and objectives, as well as academic and financial accountability provisions. The sponsor is responsible for monitoring the school and providing oversight, and may close a charter school that is not meeting the accountability provisions of its contract or may prescribe corrective action.

The Legislature has granted increased authority to sponsors and to the Florida Department of Education to improve charter school accountability. Processes for working with charter schools in academic or financial difficulty have been put into place. As a result of ongoing dialogue with Florida's school district

authorizer association, the Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools, and other stakeholders, the department is developing uniform charter school application, contracting, and renewal procedures. When approved, these policies will ensure that charter-school authorizers hold charter schools accountable for their academic performance, ethical operation and financial management.

One of the department's top priorities is to provide quality information that enables parents to make the right education decisions for their children. Currently, we are developing a practical, reader-friendly booklet to help parents choose the right school option for their child. This booklet will be widely distributed to parents throughout the state in both English and Spanish.

To ensure Florida's parents are sophisticated school-choice consumers, we are establishing a statewide Parent School Choice Advisory Council. As one of its first responsibilities, the council will assist in planning Florida's first-ever School Choice Summit. The summit, to be held in Orlando in December, will provide practical information to help parents make decisions and become powerful advocates for their children's education.

The State Board of Education and commissioner of education take very seriously their commitment to quality school-choice options for Florida's parents and students. These initiatives not only empower parents through knowledge, but will foster relationships between home, school, and community that can only strengthen the accountability and quality of the wide array of school-choice options available to Florida's families.

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 login to the charter school data base and update the information or contact Karen Hines-Henry at 850-245-0502 or via email at karen.hines@fldoe.org. This updated information will certainly help keep us informed as we continue to keep you informed!