

Florida Department of Education

Florida's Charter Schools News

High-Performing Charter Schools and Systems

New legislation ([SB 1546](#)) recently created sections 1002.331 and 1002.332, F.S., related to high-performing charter schools and high-performing charter school systems.

A high-performing charter school is defined as a school that has met each of the following criteria:

1. Received at least two school grades of "A" and no school grade below "B" for the last three years.
2. Received an unqualified opinion on each annual audit in the most recent three years for which such audits are available.
3. Received a financial audit that revealed no financial emergency conditions as set forth in s. 218.503, F.S., in the three most recent fiscal years for which audits are available. (Exception: A charter school-in-the-workplace can meet this criteria if the audit determines that the school has the monetary resources available to cover any deficiency, or that the deficiency does not result in a deteriorating financial condition.)

A high-performing charter school system is defined as a municipality, other public entity, private non-profit corporation with tax-exempt status under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or a private for-profit education management corporation that meets each of the following criteria:

1. Operates at least three high-performing charter schools in the state.
2. Operates a system of charter schools in which at least 50% of the charter schools are high-performing, with no schools that received a grade of "D" or "F" (See 2011 Legislative Summary for exceptions).
3. Has not received a financial audit that revealed one or more of the financial emergency conditions set forth in s. 218.503, F.S. for any charter school within their system.

Additional information such as the benefits of high-performing status can be found in the attached 2011 Legislative Summary related to Senate Bill 1546.

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Over 40% of Clark Advanced Learning Center High School Seniors Graduate with Associate Degree

With a head start on college, expertise in the latest technology and real-world experience gained in business internships, 76 high school seniors recently graduated from the Clark Advanced Learning Center at the Chastain Campus of Indian River State College (IRSC) in Stuart, Florida. Over 40% of the senior class graduated with an Associate Degree from IRSC enabling them to continue their college studies as juniors. This marks the largest percentage of the graduating class that has completed an Associate Degree since the national model school opened in 2004.

A public charter high school, the Clark Advanced Learning Center, affords students with the opportunity to earn high school and college credits tuition free through dual enrollment. As a result, students graduate with their high school diploma and a year or more of college completed.



Submitted by Michelle Abaldo
 Director of Institutional Advancement
 Indian River State College
 Phone: 772-462-7265 Fax: 772-462-4428
 3209 Virginia Avenue, Fort Pierce, FL 34981-5596
 E-mail: mabaldo@irsc.edu



Doral Academy Student Isidora Armijo Named Winner of the 2011 Ketchup Creativity Contest



From the more than 26,000 art entries from students across the country, just 12 were selected winners of the Heinz Ketchup Creativity Contest. Among them, was **Isidora Armijo** from **Doral Academy** whose adorable panda bear design won top prize in the fourth grade category.

As one of the winners, Isidora will receive a \$1,000 cash prize and her artwork will be featured nationwide on Heinz ketchup packages. In addition, Doral Academy Charter School -- located at 2450 NW 97 Avenue -- will receive \$1,000 in art supplies and \$1,000 worth of Heinz Ketchup.

Isidora's Artwork will be appearing on millions of Heinz Ketchup packets.

A panel of Heinz ketchup judges narrowed the field to 36 finalists from tens of thousands of entries. America determined the 12 winners – one for each grade level from K-12th grade - in an

online vote. The 12 winners' designs will be seen on millions of Heinz Ketchup packets in the 2011-2012 school year.

Visit www.KetchupCreativity.com for a list of the 2011 winners' designs.

*Submitted by Lynn Norman-Teck
Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools
305-216-6208
www.floridacharterschools.org*



Isidora

Legislative Update

There were several bills passed during the 2011 Legislative Session that will affect charter schools. The Department has prepared a legislative summary in the form of a Question and Answer document related to Senate Bill 1546 and House Bill 7197. The document is available on the School Choice web site at: http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/information/Charter_schools/files/2011_Legislative_Summary.pdf.

We strongly recommend charter school administrators and stakeholders review the new legislation and summary document and contact us if you have any questions.

Charter School New Applicant Update

Legislation was recently passed that now requires charter school applicants to participate in training **after** approval of an application ([Senate Bill 1546](#)). Charter school applicants are no longer required to participate in training before submitting an application, and all scheduled new applicant trainings this summer have been **cancelled**.

On July 7, 2011, the Department hosted a New Applicant Orientation webinar to review the resources available on our web site for charter school developers. A recording of the webinar has been posted on the School Choice web site at: http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/information/Charter_schools/Applicant_Training.asp.

The Department will reschedule post-approval trainings after the application deadline and provide ample notice to approved applicants.

Charter Schools



Florida's Charters among America's Best High Schools

According to NEWSWEEK's prestigious 2011 list, four Florida charters are among America's top high schools. Florida placed third among all states with 43 high schools (New York - 63 and California - 53) on this important list.



The entire list can be accessed at: <http://www.newsweek.com/feature/2011/americas-best-high-schools.html>.

Florida's Charter High Schools Rankings by NEWSWEEK appear below:

NATIONAL RANKING	SCHOOL	CITY
374	Doctors Charter	Miami Shores
404	Mater Academy Charter	Hialeah Gardens
427	Mater Lakes Academy	Miami
456	Doral Academy Charter	Doral

NEWSWEEK reached out to administrators, principals, guidance counselors, and Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate coordinators at more than 10,000 public high schools across the country. In order to be considered for this prestigious list, each high school had to complete a survey requesting specific data from the 2009-2010 academic year.

METHODOLOGY

NEWSWEEK ranked all respondents based on the following self-reported statistics and listed with their corresponding weight in their final calculation:

Four-year, on-time graduation rate (25%): Based on the standards set forth by the National Governors Association, this is calculated by dividing the number of graduates in 2010 by the number of 9th graders in 2006 plus transfers in minus transfers out. Unlike other formulas, this does not count students who took longer than 4 years to complete high school.

Percent of 2010 graduates who enrolled immediately in college (25%): This metric excludes students who did not enroll due to lack of acceptance or gap year.

AP/IB/AICE tests per graduate (25%): This metric is designed to measure the degree to which each school is challenging its students with college-level examinations. It consists of the total number of AP, IB, and AICE tests given in 2010, divided by the number of graduating seniors in order to normalize by school size. AP exams taken by students who also took an IB exam in the same subject area were subtracted from the total.

Average SAT and/or ACT score (10%)

Average AP/IB/AICE exam score (10%)

AP/IB/AICE courses offered per graduate (5%): This metric assesses the depth of college-level curriculum offered. The number of courses was divided by the number of graduates in order to normalize by school size.

Data for each of these indicators were standardized using z-scores, in order to measure the relative performance of each school, and then weighted as indicated above to produce an overall NEWSWEEK score for each school.

The analysis excluded schools that had fewer than 10 graduates, as well as those that were newly founded and did not have a graduating senior class in 2010. All submissions were screened to ensure the data met several parameters of logic and consistency. Schools whose submissions did not meet these standards and/or appeared to have incorrect data were contacted directly for clarification. Those that did not respond with corrected data within the specified timeframe could not be considered in the ranking process.

Congratulations!!

Article adapted from the June 19, 2011 Issue of Newsweek

High-Performing Charter Schools and Systems - *continued*

Upon request of the charter school or entity, the Commissioner of Education is charged with verifying that a charter school or system meets the criteria for high-performing status. In order to request verification of high-performing status, please follow the instructions below.

High-Performing Charter Schools

The school principal or charter school board representative must submit the request and include:

- The school name, Master School Identification (MSID) number, and school district; and
- Copies of financial audits required by s. 218.39, F.S., for the most recent 3 fiscal years for which such audits are available.

High-Performing Charter School Systems

The entity must submit the request and include:

- The entity name and type (municipality, other public entity, non-profit corporation with 501(c) 3 status, or private, for-profit education management corporation);
- A list of all charter schools operated or assumed by the entity with each school's MSID, school district, and which schools are high-performing; and
- Copies of financial audits required by s. 218.39, F.S., for all charter schools assumed or operated by the entity for each year of operation for which audits are available.

Complete requests with all attachments may be submitted via e-mail to HPCharters@fldoe.org, or mailed to:

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice
Florida Department of Education
325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 522
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Please note that requests will not be reviewed until all required information is received by the Department. Once reviewed, the Commissioner will send a verification letter to the charter school and sponsor or entity notifying the school or system whether high-performing status has been verified.

Stars Middle School Receives "A" Grade

FCAT 2011 school grades were released in July. Stars Middle School received an "A" grade and increased its total score by 75 points over last year. Stars Middle School achieved **100% Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** and became one of only two Leon County Middle Schools that made AYP this year.

Congratulations to our students and teachers for a job well done. Go Cheetahs!



Great Job Cheetahs!

Article submitted by A Samet Kul
Principal, Stars Middle School
1500 Miccosukee Road
Tallahassee, FL 32308
Phone: (850) 681.7827 (x606)
Fax: (850) 325.6706
www.StarsMiddleSchool.org




Florida Department of Education
**Office of Independent
 Education and Parental
 Choice**

325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 522
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
 Phone: 850-245-0502
 Fax: 850-245-0875

School Choice Hotline:
 1-800-447-1636


www.floridaschoolchoice.org



**Set your compass for
 the Florida Charter
 School Conference!**

Head to Orlando, Florida, November 14-16, 2011, for the Florida Charter School Conference to network with more than 600 charter school stakeholders from across Florida.

Explore offerings from more than 100 exhibitors, and attend any of the 48 breakout sessions to discover what works for high-quality charter schools.



STRONGER COMMUNITIES THROUGH QUALITY SCHOOLS

Inlet Grove's Robotics Team



Inlet Grove Community High School Robotics Team members show their excitement after winning 2nd Place at the Florida Regionals.

The Children of the Swamp consisted of ten students who met once a week with retired engineer Chet Zientek and teacher/sponsor John Martinez.

For more information about Inlet Grove Community High School's winning Robotics Team, contact John Martinez at (561) 881-4601. Visit the school's website at www.inletgrovehs.com.

*Submitted by Georgia Jacoviello, Business/Community Manager,
Georgia.jacoviello@palmbeach.k12.fl.us
 Inlet Grove Community High School
 Phone: (561)881-4658*



Conferences/Workshops

Conference/Workshop	Dates	Location	Contact Information
Florida Distance Learning Association Annual Conference	Sept. 23 - 24, 2011	Nova Southeastern University Orlando Campus Orlando, FL	www.fdma.com or Program Coordinator Tara Kobel at tleconsultants@aol.com
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 2011 Annual Conference & Expo	Nov. 2-5, 2011	Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL	NAEYC 1313 L St. N.W. Suite 500 Washington, DC 20005 800-424-2460
Florida Charter School Conference	Nov. 14-16, 2011	Doubletree Hotel at the Entrance to Universal Studio	http://charterschoolconference.com/2011/general_info.php