

Florida Department of Education

Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice



CHARTER SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

August 2011

Welcome to Gerard Robinson— Florida's New Commissioner of Education

On August 4, 2011, Gerard Robinson began his duties as Florida's new Commissioner of Education. Mr. Robinson was unanimously elected by Florida's State Board of Education on June 21, following the resignation of Dr. Eric Smith. Since being chosen as Florida's new Commissioner of Education, Mr. Robinson has embarked on a "look, listen and learn" tour to become familiar with Florida's education stakeholders and the issues they currently face.

Mr. Robinson previously served as the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia and was chosen from among a pool of 26 candidates vying for Florida's top education position. He is the former President of the Black Alliance for Education Options where he also served as the Program Director and Principal Investigator. He taught fifth grade in Los Angeles, California, and



Governor Scott and Commissioner Robinson (right) share an interest in school choice.

was a graduate Instructor at the University of Virginia and Piedmont Virginia Community College. Robinson is a graduate of Howard University and earned his Master's degree from Harvard University.

In the Know: 2011 Charter School Legislation Webinar

The Charter Schools Office has scheduled a webinar to review some of the changes and new requirements resulting from bills passed by the 2011 Florida Legislature that affect charter schools. The webinar will take place on **August 18, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. EST** and last approximately 1 hour.

To participate, please register on the School Choice Webex Meeting Room website at:
<http://suncom.webex.com/meet/IEPC>.

1. Click **Show All Meetings**.
2. Register for **2011 Legislative Summary**.
3. A confirmation e-mail will be sent from messenger@webex.com with instructions on joining the webinar at the scheduled time.

Meanwhile, a published [Legislative Summary](#) is currently available and a recording of the webinar will be posted on our website next week.

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Charter School Updates

Did you notice the new look of the newsletter? The Charter School Office has recently implemented changes in the way we deliver information to our charter schools through our newsletter, website and list-serv.



Newsletter

Not only has the newsletter format changed, but we hope you will find additional valuable content. Each issue will include features such as a main story about state or national charter-related news, updates on activities in the Charter School Office, technical assistance articles, and information on research or researched-based resources available for charter schools. We will continue to provide reminders about program deadlines and upcoming conferences, as well as success stories submitted by our charter schools across the state.

Website

We have also added two new features to our website to aid in the distribution of information to our charter schools. The first is the [Charter School News Feed](#) where we will post information provided to us from other offices in the Department that may be of interest to charter schools or stakeholders, links to education related research and resources, and a copy of any message sent to the list-serve. The second new feature is a webpage dedicated to charter school [Success Stories](#). Submissions will be posted monthly, and each month a recent submission will be featured in the Charter School Newsletter. (See page 4 for more details.)

List-serv

Along with improvements to the newsletter and website, we also hope to improve the way we distribute information through our list-serve. In the future, only urgent, time-sensitive messages will be sent to list-serve members and these messages will often be repeated in the next published newsletter. Meanwhile, other informational items will be posted directly to the [Charter School News Feed](#).

We hope you take the time to check out the new features, and we always welcome your suggestions or feedback.

Is your contact information up to date?

Make sure you are receiving all Program Office communications. Update your contact information on through your charter school login at https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/login/login_charter_school.asp.

Program Reminders

- **Florida's CSP Grant Award from USDOE Webinar** - August 17, from 2:30-3:30pm EST. <http://suncom.webex.com/meet/IEPC>
- **2011 Legislation Webinar** - August 18, at 10:00 a.m. EST. <http://suncom.webex.com/meet/IEPC>
- **Capital Outlay Plans** will be available in early September. Plans are to be submitted online this year, and are due by October 15. Instructions will be issued via e-mail.
- **Merit Award Program (MAP)** - Funds must be distributed and Compliance Reports must be submitted on or before October 1, 2011.
- **Charter School Accountability Report**—Look for e-mail notification early in October. Schools will have 30 days to submit the Report. The District portion is due in our office by January 31.
- **Annual Florida Charter School Conference** - November 14-16, 2011, Doubletree Hotel at Entrance to Universal Studios. <http://www.charterschoolconference.com/>

Check out our News Feed!

In other technical assistance news, make sure you check out the recently created [Charter School News Feed](#).

Available now is information on:

- **Revision of the Florida Principal Leadership Standards**
- **Florida Statewide Assessment Schedules**
- Research article on **Strategies to Engage High School Dropouts**
- The **2011 Florida Reading Association Conference**.

More resources are added all the time, so check back frequently!

Perspectives

Florida Wins Federal CSP Grant

Dear Charter School Colleagues,

The Florida Department of Education is proud to announce that we are one of only two states to win the recent Charter School Program (CSP) State Education Agency Competition. The CSP is administered by the U.S. Department of Education and provides grants to states' Departments of Education to assist in the planning, design, and implementation of new charter schools. Florida was selected for a five year, \$104 million grant.

The grant funds will allow Florida to continue providing sub-grants to new high-quality charter schools, as well as offering a variety of technical assistance and support to charter school operators, developers and authorizers across the state. To view the announcement from the U.S. Department of Education, go to <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-awards-49-million-charter-school-grants-florida-and-new->

If you have any questions or are interested in general information about Florida's grant objectives, expected outcomes, and proposed projects, please join us for a webinar on August 17, 2011, from 2:30-3:30pm EST. (Register at <http://suncom.webex.com/meet/IEPC>.

Select **Show All Meetings** and register for **Information Session: Florida's CSP Grant Award from USDOE.**)

Please contact our office for further information.

Sincerely,

Adam Miller
Charter Schools Director

Statewide Assessment Schedules

The Department of Education has issued the following communication regarding 2011-12 and 2012-13 Statewide Assessment Schedules. You may view the documents at:

<http://info.fl doe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6154/1113sas.pdf> (Memo)

<http://info.fl doe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-5851/dps-2010-147a.pdf>
(Attachment A)

<http://info.fl doe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6155/1113sasb.pdf>
(Attachment B)

For information regarding the content of this message, please contact Susie Lee at: Susan.Lee@fldoe.org.

NGA Center releases Strategies to Reengage High School Dropouts

At a time when educational attainment beyond high school is increasingly viewed as a necessary step toward employment, more than one million youth age 16 to 19 are not enrolled in school and do not have a high school diploma, according to a new issue brief released recently by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center).

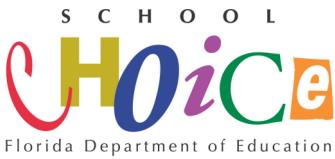
To aid state efforts in diminishing that number, NGA has issued an **Issues Brief** entitled: **State Policies to Reengage Dropouts** that provides recommendations for reengaging out-of-school youth. This research-based report can be accessed at: <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1107REENGAGEDROPOUTS.PDF>

State Policies to Reengage Dropouts identifies four policy recommendations to facilitate the reengagement of out-of-school youth:

- Set a goal to reduce the dropout rate;
- Use data to identify dropouts and target recovery strategies;
- Provide flexible, high-quality school options for recovered dropouts;
- Consider incentives to focus on dropout recovery if resources exist.

To learn more, please visit the NGA Center For Best Practices at:

www.nga.org/cms/center/edu.



Improving K-12 Educational Choice Options

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Shining Stars

JH Wilson students earn Minerva Achievement Award

Ten students at Janie Howard Wilson Elementary earned the Minerva Achievement Award from the Lakeland Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for their high achievement at school and great citizenship in the community.



Pictured are: (front l-r) second graders **Jordan Watts** and **E'Myah Oneal**; first graders **Reggie Sheppard** and **Tieranie Cannon**; third graders **Tanarris Cannon** and **A'mya Williams**; (back l-r) Principal **Beverly Lynne**, fourth graders **Meshach Barnes** and **Melkayla Irvis**; fifth graders **Jakari Hadley** and **Kaniya Kendrick**; and Assistant Principal **Steven Whitaker**.

We want to hear from you!

*Send us your stories sharing the accomplishments of your **Shining Stars!** Please send submissions via e-mail to our newsletter editor at charter-schools@fldoe.org.*

Guidelines:

- *Indicate “Charter School Shining Stars” in the subject line.*
 - *Limit the story to 3-4 paragraphs or no more than 500 words.*
 - *Proofread and ensure story is ready for publication.*
 - *Include a contact person or web link for more information.*
 - *Include up to 2 photos, with captions (Optional).*

Stories may appear in the newsletter, the website, or both.

