

November 2009

Florida's Charter Schools News

2009 Florida Charter School Conference

November 16-18, 2009

Doubletree Hotel at the Entrance to Universal Studio
Orlando, Florida

Come see why "Charters Are *Not Just Another Public School!*"

NACSA - Award for Excellence

Congratulations to the [Polk County Public Schools – Office of Magnet, Choice and Charter Schools](#) for receiving the Award for Excellence in Improving Practice presented by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). The Polk County Public Schools – Office of Magnet, Choice and Charter Schools oversees 26 charter schools, but their impact on Florida's authorizing environment has been much broader. In an effort to ensure continuous improvement in Polk County's chartering processes, the staff recognized the need to improve its renewal decision-making practices and documents. The challenges faced in developing a transparent and rigorous renewal process were echoed by many of the school districts in the Florida Association of Charter School Authorizers (FACSA). Since Carolyn Bridges, Senior Director of Magnet, Choice and Charter Schools at Polk County

Schools, also serves as President of FACSA, she decided to expand Polk County's project to benefit as many authorizers as possible. Consequently, Polk County wrote a Federal Voluntary Public School Choice (VPSC) grant which included nine Central Florida Coalition districts to work on this renewal document during the 08-09 school year. This VPSC project includes Polk, Osceola, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Manatee, Orange, Pasco, and Sumter Counties.

The Florida Department of Education's Office of School Choice, recognizing the quality of work completed through this process, is using the renewal template as the proposed language for State Board Rule 6A-6.0786 "Model Forms for Charter School Applicants and Sponsors."

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FLORIDA'S
CHARTER
Schools



Staff Spotlight

Dr. Chris Muire



The Charter Schools Office is happy to welcome Dr. Chris Muire to its staff. Dr. Muire, who joined the Office of Independent Education and

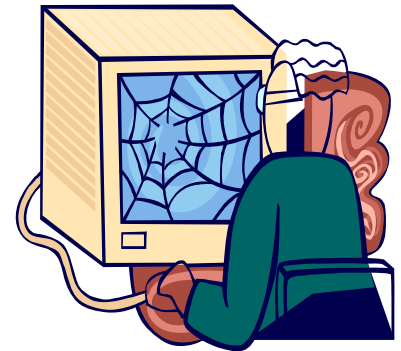
Parental Choice in November as Educational Policy Director for the Charter Schools Program, will work in the area of Differentiated Accountability. Muire's B.S. (Virginia Tech), M.S. and Ph.D. (Florida State) degrees are in Secondary Science Education. He served 10 years with Reynolds Aluminum, has five years of teaching experience in middle and high schools, four years with the Florida Department of Education/National Science Foundation Statewide Systemic Initiative, and ten years as a professor of teacher education at FSU, Berry College and Valdosta State University.

Muire's research has largely focused on the needs of K-12 public school teachers, recently publishing a monograph of formal educational studies entitled *Some Solid Ground in Our Shifting Schools (2009)*. Over his career, Muire has published numerous articles, presented at professional conferences, edited government reports/textbooks, and has directed, co-developed and evaluated many private, state and federal grant projects in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for pre- and in-service teachers.

Charter School Web site

The Charter School section of the School Choice Web site has been reorganized and charter operators should check for announcements on a regular basis. We will be adding a section dedicated to Authorizer resources in the near future.

We encourage users to explore the new layout at http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter_Schools/, and contact us via e-mail at charterschools@fldoe.org with questions.



Rules presented to State Board of Education



The following rules were presented to the State Board of Education for adoption on November 11, 2009: Capital Outlay and the amended Approval of Governance Training. You may review the draft language by clicking on the **Statutes and Rules** link of the Charter Schools web site at http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter_Schools/.

Charters in the News

Charters in the News is dedicated to charter schools in Florida doing great things for their students, staff and community. Links to articles found in different newspapers throughout the state will be featured in this section. Click on the links below to read about the following charter schools:

- Congratulations to Odyssey Charter School in Palm Bay.
<http://www.floridatoday.com/article/20091102/NEWS01/911020314/1006/news01/Palm+Bay+charter+school+wins+green+award>.
- The Athenian Academy in Pasco has teachers from Greece on staff.
<http://suncoastpinellas.tbo.com/content/2009/nov/03/040000/pn-its-american-to-me/news/>
- Congratulations to Mascotte Elementary Charter School.
http://blogs.orlandosentinel.com/news_education_edblog/2009/10/check-out-students-awardwinning-videos.html

Using Data to Support Instruction

A guide from the Department's Institute of Education Sciences suggests how student achievement data can be used to support instruction for students.

Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making recommends ways to use the data to do such things as: adapting lessons or assignments to students' needs, altering classroom goals or objectives, or modifying student-grouping arrangements.

This practice guide recommends five ways to use student data effectively: (1) make data part of an ongoing cycle to improve instruction; (2) teach students to examine their own data and set learning goals; (3) establish a clear vision for school-wide data use; (4) provide supports that foster a data-driven culture within the school; and (5) develop and maintain a district-wide data system. Each recommendation describes action steps for implementation, as well as suggestions for tackling obstacles that may impede progress.

To view the practice guide, visit:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dddm_pg_092909.pdf



Florida Department of Education

**Office of Independent
Education and Parental
Choice**

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1-800-447-1636

www.floridaschoolchoice.org

Technical Assistance is Available

Charter school staff is available to provide technical assistance or assist with any questions you may have. If you need assistance, please contact staff via telephone at 850-245-0502 or via e-mail at Charterschools@fldoe.org.