

Happy Holidays

Arizona State Board For Charter Schools Newsletter



1999-2000 PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Our office released the Annual Parental Satisfaction Survey for charter schools on Monday, October 30, 2000. This survey encompassed all Arizona charter schools regardless of their sponsor.

Lewis C. Solmon, President of the Human Resources Policy Corporation, conducted the survey in the Spring of 2000. The survey provides the results from approximately 11,000 families whose children attended 178 charter school sites throughout the state.

The primary purpose of the survey was to determine parental satisfaction with the charter school that their children were attending. The survey asked parents to grade the school ranging from A+ to F in a number of different areas.

The survey showed that 61% of parents gave their children's charter school an A+ or A, while 38% of parents in all Arizona schools gave their schools those grades. A mere 27% percent of parents gave the previous school that their children attended an A or A+ grade.

An overwhelming majority of parents surveyed said they plan to re-enroll their child in the same charter school next year. Parents specified that two of the most important characteristics of charter schools were the overall education [their] child was receiving, and the amount [their] child had learned in the school.

You may access additional information about the survey on the Internet at www.cmbe.org.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, or FERPA, is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of student education records. FERPA applies to any school receiving federal funding and covers both current and former students.

According to FERPA, an "education record" is almost any record kept by the school about a student or former student. This includes information in writing, print, e-mail, on video or audiotape, microfilm, or in any other form.

FERPA protects three fundamental rights of parents regarding their children's education records:

1. The right to have information contained in a child's education records kept confidential and disclosed only if parents consent in writing to its disclosure in advance.
2. The right to inspect and review a child's education records.
3. The right to seek amendment of records that parents believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of a child's privacy rights.

At age 18, these rights transfer to the student. Each year, every school must notify students of their rights under FERPA. If parents believe that their rights under FERPA have been violated, they may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education and/or take legal action in the form of a federal civil rights lawsuit.



Middle School Solo & Ensemble Festival

We are pleased to announce a Solo & Ensemble Festival for all Charter School Students, Grades 6-8. The event will take place at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 1500 W. Maryland Ave, Phoenix, on Saturday, March 3, 2001. The event will be hosted by Arizona School for the Arts and is open to all music students in Arizona charter schools. A small fee will be charged to participate. All students, whether beginning or advanced are encouraged to participate. Adjudication from professional musicians will be provided for students in either a solo voice or instrument performance, or an ensemble performance. For further information and an entry packet, please contact Laura Apperson at Arizona School for the Arts@ 602-257-1444.



KEEP US INFORMED!

Is all the information that is in our office and on the Department of Education Website current? Our office has had a number of instances where changes have been made and schools have not notified us. It is imperative that regardless of how insignificant you may think a change is, that you notify us to see if a Notification request form is required. Please take the time to read over your Charter contract and be aware of what your obligations are in this area.



Did you know?

▶ Your '99-'00 annual audit will be due March 30, 2001. All audits must be sent to:

Miller Wagner & Company PLLC
P.O. Box 16205
Phoenix, AZ 85011-6205

▶ If you receive any federal money you are required to conduct an enrollment lottery.



Sharing Educational Perspectives Genesis Academy Students' World View

One of Genesis Academy's goals is to introduce world cultures to our students. On November 7, 2000, two distinguished Chinese entrepreneurs visited our campus; Winston Wang and Rebecca Wong who are currently developing the East West Cultural Exchange Village in Beijing. This impressive project includes a private school, a vocational training center, and a student exchange program. To learn more about our model of educational service delivery, Mr. Wang and Ms. Wong visited our campus. During their visit, they expressed interest in learning more about our means of serving at-risk youth. We hope they will be able to use some of our strategies in China with their at-risk students.

Although the original intent of their visit was to exchange educational strategies, it became a candid exchange of human experience. During an interview with a panel of Genesis students, Mr. Wang and Ms. Wong showed that even the most successful people from other countries must overcome barriers to education. Our students learned that there are no government programs in China to provide services to students with special needs.

Clearly impressed by the Academy's comprehensive model of social and health services, as they are woven into the educational setting, our visitors discussed the potential for an exchange program involving Genesis Academy and the East West Cultural Exchange Village in Beijing. We are delighted to report that we have had three teleconferences with Mr. Wang and Ms. Wong since their return to China. As a result of their memorable visit and our continuing conversations, we hope our plans for a cross-cultural venture come to fruition.

Civics/Government Workshops For New Civics/Government Standards

The Constitutional Commemoration Committee passed a motion to sponsor civic/government workshops for the education community. The two different workshops that the Constitutional Commemoration Committee endorses are the following:

We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution

Teachers receive free training and on-going technical support. High school and middle school teachers may attend a free week-long institute each summer. A free classroom set of textbooks is available upon completion of a one-day training. For more information contact Debbie Shayo, State Coordinator at 602-340-7362.

The second workshop has been put together by the Constitutional Commemoration Committee.

The workshop will include teaching Civics and Arizona State Law, State Standards, etc.

Please contact Lisa Fink at 602-938-7989 for further information:

Employment Opportunities

Goodwill Industries of Central Arizona partners with the City of Phoenix Workforce Information Network One Stop System. We provide services to youth ages 14-21 living in the city of Phoenix who are seeking employment. Youth must be low income, and have at least one significant barrier to employment. This program takes the place of the former JTPA or Summer Youth Employment Program. It is now a more intensive, year round program, focusing on education and training. Please help us to encourage youth interested in summer employment to become involved.

For more information on how to enroll in the program, please contact our intake/outreach coordinator: Derrick Donnell at Goodwill Industries of Central Arizona at (602) 254-2222.