

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Newsletter

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July 2002



Since everyone knows few charter operators get much of a summer vacation, it hardly seems appropriate to say “welcome back”, so how about, “Hooray for the start of a new school year!” As you get your test scores back and students continue to enroll, we hope it is a time of celebration of success and excitement about the challenges a new year brings.

This newsletter is intended to provide you with important information to assist in a smooth beginning of your year. Please read through it carefully. You are encouraged to provide a copy of this to the appropriate school personnel and use your copy as a reference. Be sure to visit the website links and bookmark those that will be useful.

Checking the Charter Board’s Website www.asbcs.state.az.us

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools website is updated regularly to include Board agendas, training dates, testing information, and other useful information. Please mark it in your favorites and check it regularly.

To get on our list serve and get up-to-date notices, please send an email to Tom at Windeknecht_Tom@pop.state.az.us.

Charter Board Meetings

The Board typically meets the second Monday of each month. Agendas and minutes are posted on our website. All charter operators are invited and encouraged to attend or send a representative to attend each meeting. Your input at these meetings is welcomed.

Test Dates, Due Dates, and Reports...

Every time you turn around it’s time to submit something else. Be sure you have the most up-to-date information available. Here are some sites that provide calendars for various reports that are included as an attachment to this newsletter.

School Finance: www.ade.az.gov/schoolfinance/DueDates/Charters

Testing: www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/Administering/AllGrades.pdf

Grants Management: www.ade.az.gov/gme/ProjectSummary/ProjectSelect.asp

Employment Board

A great source for finding available teachers and posting openings for your school
<http://www.arizonaeducationjobs.com/>

Fingerprints

Statutorily, each non-certificated employee of your school must be fingerprint checked. Contractually, every member of your governing body must also be fingerprinted. The information you receive from DPS after processing those fingerprint cards should be kept in your files.

If you have not received an ORI number for processing prints so that reports come back to you, or if you have assigned someone new to be responsible for processing your fingerprint cards, contact Zee at DPS to schedule training (602) 223-2223.

The statutory requirements for fingerprinting teachers at charter schools may be the topic of a Special Legislative Session this summer or the upcoming legislative session in January. To keep informed of bills that are being discussed, log on to <http://www.azhousetv.org/> and <http://www.arizonasenate.org/>.

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools has adopted a DRAFT Fingerprint Policy. This new policy is available on our website at www.asbcs.state.az.us. All charter schools should follow A.R.S. §15-512 in its entirety and check our web page for updates.

Certification Search

The certificate status of all Arizona certified teachers is available through the Common Logon of the ADE website www.ade.az.gov. This will enable you to verify if a certificate is valid and/or any action is pending on a particular certificate. If you do not have an assigned username and password for this function, contact the Investigative Unit at (602) 542-2972.

A broken record

That's what it sounds like in this office at the start of each school year as staff relays the following statements to parents calling in:

1. No, a charter school may not charge tuition, require donations, or require a deposit for enrollment.
2. If there isn't enough room to accommodate all students who want to enroll, the school must select students through an equitable selection process. Returning students and siblings of students are given preference. Each school should be able to provide you with their enrollment process.
3. Yes, a school may require a uniform. However, the uniform requirement may not be used to exclude a student who cannot afford a particular uniform requirement.

Avoid the Rush and the Risk

Why wait? Get your audit completed now. Schools that fail to submit their FY 2002 audit by March 30, 2003 will have 10% of their equalization withheld each month until the audit is submitted.

Are you being reimbursed for your audit?

If you paid for an audit during FY 2000-01, you will be reimbursed for the cost of the audit if you included the expense on your FY 1999-00 AFR and on your Budget Worksheet C for FY 2002-03. The amount is added into your Base Support Level and becomes part of the formula. Be sure to revise your budget worksheets and upload them to School Finance if you missed this opportunity.

Hours of Instruction

Two sections of Arizona Revised Statutes have been amended and may impact the instructional hours of your school.

- A.R.S. §15-797 has two new subsections, D and E. Charter schools operating on approved alternative calendars pursuant to Section 15-183 may count pupils as having attended full time in any week for which the pupil was enrolled in and physically attended at least twenty hours of instruction during that week. These schools must still comply with the annual hours of instruction requirement pursuant to Section 15-901.
- A.R.S. §15-901.A.2.(c) redefines “full-time instructional program”. A summary of the changes is provided in the table below:

Fiscal Year	Minimum Hours	Minimum Days	Includes
2002-2003	708	177	At least 4 subjects each meeting 122 hours a year, or the equivalent, or one or more subjects taught in amounts of time totaling at least 20 hours per week.
2003-2004	712	178	At least 4 subjects each meeting 123 hours a year, or the equivalent, or one or more subjects taught in amounts of time totaling at least 20 hours per week.
2004-2005	716	179	At least 4 subjects each meeting 123 hours a year, or the equivalent, or one or more subjects taught in amounts of time totaling at least 20 hours per week.
2005-2006 and each year after	720	180	At least 4 subjects each meeting 123 hours a year or the equivalent, or one or more subjects taught in amounts of time totaling at least 20 hours per week.

Watch for additional information in an upcoming USFRCS Memorandum.

For complete access to all Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) please log on to the Arizona Legislative website www.azleg.state.az.us.

Declarations of Curricular and Instructional Alignment

The Charter School Governing Board and Charter Administrator/Superintendent Declarations were mailed to all charter schools on July 22, 2002 and are also available on the ASBCS website at www.asbcs.state.az.us. Declarations must be submitted to the Arizona Department of Education and to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools by August 30, 2002. Because the third part of the Declaration requires teacher evaluation, it is not due until May 30, 2003.

This Declaration has also been adopted by the State Board of Education for all district schools.

Achievement Profiles - AZLEARNS School Classifications for 2002 Timeline

AKA: Underperforming schools, Failing Schools, NCLB, Title 1 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), Schools in school improvement, and Proposition 301.

Background – The Achievement Profiles are the school accountability component of AZLEARNS and will be published for the first time this fall. The Achievement Profiles will classify each school with one of four labels: Excelling, Improving, Maintaining, or Underperforming (there will be not “Failing” school classification this year). The Achievement Profiles will also fulfill the federal requirement of Title 1 for the identification of schools not making adequate yearly progress. Research & Policy has put together the following timeline:

- **July-September, 2002** – R&P is working with an advisory group to determine the school classification formula and presenting drafts of the formula to audiences across the state. The formula determines which of the four possible categories a school will receive. To schedule an appointment, call 602-542-5151. Priority will be given to presentations with the potential to reach the most people.
- **August 26, 2002** – Draft of the school classification formula will be presented to the State Board for review.
- **September 23, 2002** – State Board will review (to approve) the school classification formula.
- **Week of October 7-11, 2002** – All Achievement Profiles will be mailed to all district superintendents, charter school administrators and school principals. These mailings will include the Achievement Profile (classification and data that led to that classification) for each school under their purview.
- **October 15, 2002** – Achievement Profiles will be published. Each school will receive one of four classifications: Excelling, Improving, Maintaining, Underperforming (there will be no “Failing” school classification this year).

School Report Cards

The report card site will open August 12th and close September 13th. All schools will be sent their passwords and user IDs by letter on August 5th. The deadline is shorter this year due to the AZLEARNS Law requirement for Achievement Profiles to be on the report card by October 15th in its final version. If you do not have your letter by August 12th, please call La Donna Woodworth, Report Card Manager, at (602) 542-5022.

Special Education Consultants – As Close as a Fax Away

In addition to the free training that is offered to each new charter operator, Exceptional Student Services also has a consulting service called a “SUPPORT Cadre” that can address administrative, child or classroom specific issues or interests. This is a FREE service sponsored by Exceptional Student Services at the Arizona Department of Education.

This resource matches peer consultants with assistance requests from public schools serving special education students. Individuals are ready to conduct consultations to charter schools around the state. The SUPPORT Cadres services are provided on a limited basis at no cost to the recipient school. For a list of consultation topics available and the fax form for requesting services, contact June Torrance, SUPPORT Cadre Coordinator, at 480-570-9046 or jtorran@ade.az.gov.