



Charter Connection

April 2020

YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE FOR ALL THINGS CHARTER

Table of Contents

Director's Message

We are so proud of the way in which charter schools have responded to adapting education during this coronavirus pandemic. We saw Ascent Academies get a shout-out from [KUTV](#), and Tuacahn being recognized in the [St. George News](#) for their efforts—but as always, we know that there are many more of you who deserve the recognition as well. We love to hear of your achievements, education hacks, and suggestions. Feel free to email us anytime!

It was a pleasure meeting with many of you via Zoom the other day. After that meeting, Beehive Director Hanifi Oguz provided SCSB with tips for securing your Zoom meetings. Please check on the following link:

<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/27/best-practices-for-securing-your-virtual-classroom/> or you can watch this Youtube video: <https://youtu.be/p1IMmOujc9c>

-- Jennifer

[Director's Message](#)

[School Spotlight](#)

[Dr. Ed](#)

[Themes of the Month](#)

[Opportunities for Schools](#)



[Outstanding in Our Field](#)

[April \(2020\)](#)

[May \(2020\)](#)

School Spotlight: Providence Hall

The State Charter School Board would like to congratulate Providence Hall High School (PHHS) for being selected as the March spotlight. PHHS is consistently in the top 25% of schools. PHHS has a strong school culture that helps students feel loved, supported and part of a team. PHHS has high academic standards for their students and is an International Baccalaureate accredited program. Congratulations Providence Hall High School!

GROWTH

English Language Arts	49.8%	High
Mathematics	50.9%	High
Science	38.0%	Average
Growth of Lowest 25%	70.4%	Average

[View Details](#)

Dear Dr. Ed,

Virtual calming corners for students. Online staff hangouts instead of in-person team meetings. Student advisory groups on Zoom. Video morning greetings for students. This is what my job is looking like right now in the age of coronavirus. What else do I need to do? How can I make this better? Because there is no guidebook!

Sincerely,
Trying My Best

Dear Trying,

Being the Principal or Director AND an instructional leader is never easy. And at this moment it specifically means being calm. While you are spending time trying to make sure teachers are developing high-quality lessons, answering questions about content, and helping trouble-shoot along the way don't lose sight that being a calming and motivating presence is one of the most essential things you can do for your students and staff.

We need to be prepared. We don't need to panic. We have the resources in front of us. We have great educators. There will be bumps in the road; there will be glitches. Things happen.

In reflecting on the current state of education, Principal Paul Kelly (Illinois) stated, "You are only going to be able to help the kids if you are in the right emotional space. Take care of the stresses in your home, with your family, and we will work together to make the e-learning work for kids."

Being a principal (or leader) right now means inspiring hope.

"I think my role shifts completely into this symbolic keeper of hope," he said. "My role in this is to make sure that they (students and staff) know that we are trying to get them whatever they need, having staff members feeling like we care about them as humans and as families, and all of the details of their professional lives will get resolved. We are here. We are still going to be here. We're going to pick up the phone. We're going to answer the emails. School is such a critical cornerstone of a stable society, and... a leader needs to be a big part of that...."

And you can do it. They can do it. We will get through this together.

---Dr. Ed U. Tation (from blogs.edweekly.org)

Theme of the Month

Here are four points from Greg's "Just Say No" list that, if followed, will save your charter school and the SCSB from many unnecessary headaches and potential oversight actions:

1. Open and Public Meetings Act: Want to hold secret meetings about your school - **Just Say NO!**
 - a. Charter schools are public organizations subject to specific laws that govern public bodies. Boards should know and follow the rules outlined in the [Open and Public Meeting Act](#). Boards must train on these laws every year and assure to that in the SCSB annual Certifications. Ignorance is not acceptable for public servants.
2. Financial well-being: If you think "I don't understand these finances or this balance sheet" and "oh well, I'll just go with it and not ask questions" - **Just Say NO!**
 - a. Ask questions. It is your responsibility to protect the well-being of students by running a sound operation which includes meeting your financial responsibilities. [A 2011 study](#) (p. 8) by the Center for Education Reform found the biggest reason for charter schools failing is due to financial problems, not academics.
3. School Fees: If you want to charge extra fees to your students who attend a public charter school which guarantees free education by law- **Just Say NO!**
 - a. Charter Schools are public schools and subject to the same laws pertaining to school fees. Many charters have become "creative" in how they "fundraise." You need to follow the law for charging school fees. The state's auditing department is aware of the laws and are actively monitoring to ensure compliance. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for resources on understanding the laws on school fees and visit the [school fees webpage](#).
4. School Amendments: If you want to change your school but have not gone through the steps to amend your charter and you think "I'll just do this anyways"- **Just Say NO!**
 - a. A charter is a contract between an authorizer and the school, see Utah code 53G-5-3-303. The school is bound to the charter and any changes made without authorizer approval is a breach of that contract. If you want to change a part or all of your charter, [follow the process to seek amendment](#). [Marie Steffensen](#) (801-538-7990) will help you through the process of amendment.

Running a charter school is a busy job. Please do it right. If you find yourself seeking to be the exception, skirting the law or disregarding policies and procedure- **Just Say NO!** Only you can prevent charter school oversight problems.

Opportunities for Schools

- Has your charter school governing board done its annual training on the Open and Public Meetings Act yet? The [Office of the State Auditor has a training for you](#)
- The State Charter School Board has a School Calendar Guidance Form available [on our website](#)
- Work with an awesome charter school colleague at a SCSB authorized school? Nominate them for Employee of the Month at <https://forms.gle/dtEGG9EdnGkjrHP7A>
- Spring Charter Seminar on Wednesday April 15th! We're excited to offer a day of learning and connectivity as we all practice social distancing (online meeting). If you would like to attend, please click on this [link to RSVP](#)



Outstanding in Our Field

- Providence Hall High school was spotlighted at the March State Charter School Board meeting for their impressive performance on the SY18 State Accountability Achievement Report.
- Ms. Megan Hurser of Weilenmann School of Discovery was recognized as the Employee of the Month of SCSB Authorized Schools for "wearing all the hats in the most phenomenal way!"
- Tuacahn received a shout-out in the [St. George News](#) for their education!
- Ascent Academies' Director Wade Glather was on [KUTV](#) discussing their Schoolwide Enrichment Model after a reporter saw the school's Facebook post about a student's SEM project showing the phases of the moon using donuts he made with his mom
- At March's Charter Directors meeting, Jed Bichsel of Freedom Preparatory Academy was named the March Employee of the Month of SCSB Authorized Schools for leading a service-minded life that welcomes everyone and every problem! Nominate your colleagues at <https://forms.gle/dtEGG9EdnGkjrHP7A>

April 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	<u>USBE Meeting</u> 2	<u>USBE Committees</u> 3	4	5
6	7	8	<u>SCSB Meeting</u> 9	10	11	12
Charter Directors 13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
-27	28	29	30			

May 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	<u>USBE Meeting</u> 7	<u>USBE Committees</u> 8	9	10
<u>Charter Directors</u> 11	12	13	<u>SCSB Meeting</u> 14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31