



Charter Connection

March 2019

YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE FOR ALL THINGS CHARTER

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Director's Message

The past couple of months, I have shared about one of the five values adopted by the State Charter School Board. So far, I have covered *Students First*, *Innovation*, and *Academic Excellence*. This month I want to talk about *Choice*:

“We provide choice for parents and students and leverage limited resources to provide the best possible education experience for school children.”

Not all children learn the same. That is one reason why choice is important. Utah has 134 operating charter schools, offering options to students in all 41 school districts. Each charter school is unique.

The State Charter School Board and both charter associations have worked this legislative session to help charters leverage limited resources. The State Charter School Board has sought continued funding for the Innovative Student Improvement Program (ISIP), which provides grants to charter schools. See <https://www.utahscsb.org/funding>. We thank Rep. Pulsipher for her work on this. The charter associations have also worked to close the funding gap with small districts in administrative cost funds and to improve the formula in calculating the Local Replacement Funds. All these efforts should improve funding to charter schools so we can focus on providing quality choices to parents and students.

—Jennifer

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School Spotlight:

The State Charter School Board recognized Lincoln Academy for its excellent financial metrics. Lincoln Academy has strong financial metrics with a large amount of unrestricted cash reserves. They have an excellent ratio, and their debt to asset ratio is below 1, and their current ratio is 4.5. Because of their strong financial position, Lincoln Academy was able to pay cash for their latest remodel to their building. Lincoln Academy has been methodical about its growth and have been able to maintain strong enrollment over the years. They hire highly qualified staff and focus on retaining those staff members. Lincoln Academy works hard to build relationships with all students and parents to create a sense of community at the school. Congratulations Lincoln Academy!!



Dear Dr. Ed,

I believe in teacher autonomy and letting the professional educators have the right to run their classrooms in a manner authentic to them; however, some classes are very loud, and even though they are “controlled chaos,” there is still some chaos. What does the research say on noisy classrooms? Should I intervene in those cases?

Sincerely,

Control the Chaos

Dear Control the Chaos,

There is some new research out in the [Journal of Neuroscience](#) that finds children may be hindered in learning to read by background noise. Generally, adults easily distinguish a voice from other background noises. We develop that ability over time, thus children may be hampered more by additional noise

than adults. Researchers measured the brain activity of adults and children as they listened to four recorded stories, each with different levels and kinds of background noise, either other people talking, or just general sounds.

Both children and adults showed brain activity in the auditory cortex; however, children were significantly worse at distinguishing syllables generally, and much more than adults, they struggled to follow the speaker as noise increased from other voices in the background.

These results seem to suggest that students may have a more difficult time distinguishing phonemes and following speech or instructions as classroom noise rises, highlighting the importance of quiet classrooms while children are learning to recognize language.

"The more teachers take time to do a correct pronunciation, the better the student understands," said Marc Vander Ghinst, the lead author and a researcher.

My advice would be: Have your teachers take the time to do a correct pronunciation and try to do it in a calm atmosphere.

Dr. Ed U. Cation

Themes of the Month

Does your charter school have an effective internal control program? Internal controls are systematic procedures or policies put in place by the LEA board to safeguard assets and resources; deter and detect errors, fraud, and theft; and ensure accuracy and completeness of financial data.

Utah Administrative Code states that an LEA board should ensure that it properly develops and adheres to a sound system of documented internal controls consistent with [R277-113-6](#).

There are five components of internal control: 1) Control environment - this refers to the attitude of management and their employees regarding internal controls. Do they take internal controls seriously, or do they ignore them? 2) Risk assessment - this is the process of reviewing your school to determine the most critical risks, and then designing controls to address these risks. This assessment should be conducted on a regular basis. 3) Control activities - this is the use of systems, technology, and other resources to ensure that appropriate controls are put in place and operating properly. 4) Information and communication - information about controls should be communicated to the LEA board in a timely manner, so that shortfalls can be addressed promptly. 5) Monitoring - this is the set of processes used by management to examine and assess whether its internal controls are functioning properly.

Opportunities for Schools

- The Esther Katz Rosen Precollege Psychology Grant Program provides financial support for efforts aimed at improving the quality of education in psychological science and its application in the secondary schools for high ability students. Proposals must focus on supplying education for gifted and talented high school students. [More information can be found here](#). **Deadline is March 1, 2019.**
- Utah Shakespeare Festival's Shakespeare in the Schools performance of MacBeth. is at Pleasant Grove HS on Wednesday, March 20th at 9:45 am. Seats are \$3.00 ea. Tickets are first come, first served--reserve now. Questions? julie@johnhancockcs.org
- Charter School Revolving Loan Application is available [here](#). Firm deadline is March 22, 2019 at 5:00 PM.
- Utah Charter Seminars are fastly approaching. See the details and dates [here](#).
- Save these dates for your [regional seminar regarding special education](#) topics!
~~South—October 27~~
~~West—November 17~~
~~North—January 26~~
East – March 9



Outstanding in Our Field

- Ernie Nix, of Bonneville Academy, was named as the February Employee of the Month of State Charter School Board Authorized Schools! Congratulations! Nominate your colleagues [here](#).
- Lincoln Academy was spotlighted at the February 14th State Charter School Board meeting for their stellar financial performance.
- Charter Day on the Hill was a blast. It great seeing all of you there. [We took some pictures](#).

March 2019

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

April 2019

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