



Charter Connection

March 2020

YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE FOR ALL THINGS CHARTER

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Director’s Message

We had a tough year with some negative press. That is unfortunate because it fails to give the whole picture of what charter schools are and what they do. We try to emphasize that the vast majority of charters are good schools and offer options to students to meet their unique learning needs. Some of the highest performing schools in the state are charter schools. This is a story that needs to be told by every single one of us. To meet the unique learning needs of every student, school choice is ever so important.

One identified obstacle is the general public’s understanding of what charter schools are. Like Wallace Stegner’s Anthony Sudweeks said in his recent interview with ABC 4, “they (parents) don’t know that charter schools are free public schools, exactly like the school down the road from them.” This is something we can all address. Charter schools are free, just like their district counterparts, but their unique curriculum/model/environment might just be the difference between a student’s engagement or disengagement with their studies. SCSB staff has created a FAQ that explains charter schools in Utah. Feel free to distribute it as you see fit.

-- *Jennifer*

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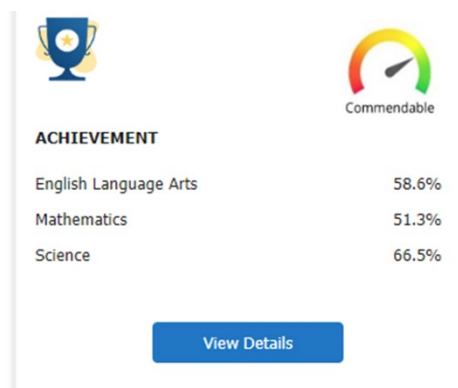
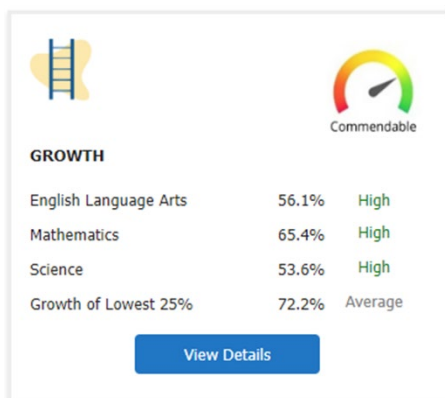
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School Spotlight: Wasatch Peak Academy

The State Charter School Board would like to congratulate Wasatch Peak Academy (WPA). WPA was selected to be the February spotlight for consistently being in the top 25% of schools. WPA consistently demonstrates strong proficiency and growth scores. WPA credits their success to their strong school culture, great teaching staff, great students, and their service-learning program and student support systems. Congratulations Wasatch Peak Academy!



Dear Dr. Ed,

Can you explain governance vs. management? I know I've heard it before, but I'm still unsure. Maybe an example would help?

Sincerely, A Leader Who is Still Confused

Dear Leader,

I am going to draw on some of the work from Brian Carpenter. He states, "if there is a textbook error...I'd say it is a board trying to co-manage a school rather than governing it." The reason is usually that boards don't understand the differences between governance and management. Several years ago, I began devising a model to explain the differences.

| <u>Dimension</u> | <u>Board</u> | <u>Executive</u> |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Purpose | Ensure | Execute |
| Type of Authority | Oversight | Operational |
| Primary Questions | How Well? | How Will? |

Beginning with different purposes, management's job is to make the school perform (i.e., to execute). The board's job, however, is to make sure the school is performing (i.e., to ensure). The board does not have the expertise to make the school perform (anymore than an airport board has the expertise to fly the planes or work in the control tower). But, the board's job can neither be delegated, nor, should it be arrogated by management.

Next, with respect to authority, most people conceive of the board's authority as simply parallel with

management's, except that the board has more. It is true that the board has ultimate accountability for the school, therefore it has ultimate authority in the school. Consider the following metaphor: A police officer has operational authority concerning the law. He or she can issue citations, investigate crimes, make arrests, etc., but cannot convict anyone. A judge, however, has oversight authority concerning the law, in that he or she ensures that the law was followed, one's rights were accorded, and that due process is observed. And a judge can convict. Neither a judge nor a police officer has the authority to do the other's job. It's not so much a question of which has more authority, but rather how their authority differs.

So, it is in any properly understood charter school board-management relationship. An oversight entity such as a board that is concerned with quality should ask, "how well?" questions. For example, how well are the students performing the outcomes in the charter? How well is the school staying within budget? How well are we complying with authorizer directives? and so on. Management, on the other hand, while being concerned with "how well?" issues, is really focused on efficient and effective execution, so it asks what I call "how will?" questions. It then uses its expertise to implement the best processes. Until a board recognizes these distinctions and adjusts its oversight of the school accordingly, it actually impedes a school's performance by attempting to co-manage rather than govern it. If your leadership team is able to honestly appraise its own performance, use the grid to evaluate how well it observes the distinctions.

---Dr. Ed U. Tation (from charterschoolboarddevelopment.com)

Theme of the Month

Charter schools are mainly funded through tax dollars; therefore, it is imperative that each school's financial reports and board meetings be timely, transparent, available, and easily accessible to the public. [Utah Code §53G-7-309 \(Monthly budget reports\)](#) requires business administrators to provide a budget-to-actual report on a monthly basis and make it available to the public. The Utah Transparency website located at <https://www.utah.gov/transparency/> requires schools to upload their revenue and expense reports quarterly in addition to their annual payroll information which should be uploaded annually. For more information on reporting due dates, please visit the Reporting Calendar located at <https://www.utahscsb.org/forms-and-reports>. It is important to be current with all financial reporting requirements because the State Auditor can withhold state funding for delinquent financial reporting.

To improve financial transparency, Sections 202 and 203(4)(g) of the [Open and Public Meetings Act §52-4](#) provide requirements for holding board meetings. It states that at least 24 hours of public notice should be provided for each board meeting and each notice should include the board meeting's agenda, date, time, and place. Each year, the annual board meeting schedule should be published. For each board meeting, audio recordings are required to be made available to the public for listening within three business days after holding the board meeting and written minutes should be made available to the public within three business days after approval by the board.

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
<http://training.auditor.utah.gov/courses/open-and-public-meetings-act-2019>
- The State Charter School Board has a School Calendar Guidance Form available on their website, found here:
<https://www.utahscsb.org/general>
- The State Charter School Board is excited to offer a free professional development seminar for Utah charter schoolteachers and leaders. See the attached flyer for more information.
<https://twitter.com/UtahSCSB/status/1207393088236347399?s=20>



Outstanding in Our Field

- Wasatch Peak Academy was spotlighted at the February 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!"
- Thomas Edison North's two Robotics teams took 1st and 2nd at the USU Robotics competition on Jan. 4th, qualifying them for state on Feb. 1st where the Robo Eagles took 2nd in the Robot Design & 13th overall, & the Apollo Bots got 1st place in Teamwork & 14th overall (50 teams)!!
- Congrats to all Sterling Scholar students and shouts to their charter schools: AMES, APA Draper, APA WVC, Beehive, Freedom, Mountain Heights, and Providence Hall!!

March 2020

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

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 | SCSB Meeting 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Charter Directors 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| -27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |