

DECEMBER



Charter Connection

December 2018

YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE FOR ALL THINGS CHARTER

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Director's Message

The State Charter School Board adopted five values. One value is Autonomy and Accountability:

“We understand that autonomy is an essential requirement for innovation, experimentation, and diverse approaches to educating students. We encourage and support charter school autonomy with accountability and work with schools to ensure that they stay true to their charters. We hold schools accountable for the education of their students and their stewardship of public funds.”

Good authorizing balances both autonomy and accountability. We want to encourage innovation and cut out the “red tape;” however, this innovation should lead to improved results. This balance between autonomy and accountability is one reason why we support the new Charter Agreement with the “Exhibit A.” In “Exhibit A,” we work with schools to identify the goals and key elements to which we hold them accountable. Then, through the Charter School Accountability Framework (CSAF), we hold charters accountable to the goals and key elements schools set in their Charter Agreement.

The SCSB is also considering different ways we can better support charter school autonomy. Last month, I sent an email requesting your thoughts on charter autonomy. I received great feedback that I will share with you in a future Charter Directors meeting. —*Jennifer*

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School Spotlight:

The State Charter School Board recognizes Mana Academy in West Valley City, Utah for their outstanding Medium Growth Percentile (MGP) score of 74 MGP in English/Language Arts (ELA) for the 2017-2018 school year. Mana Academy rose from a 54 MGP in the 2016-2017 school year to an impressive 74 MGP for the 2017-2018 school year. This excellent MGP growth performance is due to Mana Academy focusing on student performance data and setting smart goals. Some of these practices include:

- 🔑 Strong teacher development in data driven instructional practices
- 🔑 Strong RTI program
- 🔑 Education school community on how the school and teachers utilize SAGE data
- 🔑 Implementing SAGE interim and benchmark testing

Dear Dr. Ed,

Midterm elections just ended, with a surprising number of educators on ballots throughout the nation and a voter high turn-out. But local politics has a greater impact on our personal lives and with the Utah Legislative Session gearing up, I am wondering how and in what ways local schools and individual educators can have an impact on education policy.

Sincerely,
Does My Voice Count?

Dear Does My Voice Count,

Recently I attended a meeting with a local elected official who stated at least three times that he gives weight to an individual teacher's voice more than almost any other of his constituents. When asked why that was, he answered, "because they are not asking for themselves." He shared that teachers make up the largest single voting-block in the state. I'd say educators have tremendous individual and

collective power in their voices, when they chose to use them.

A recent education conference panel found the same, educators can and should be advocates, because the stories they tell are valued by policy makers. In many cases, the process of advocating—talking in front of a group of important people in fancy suits, wondering if anyone is listening—can be intimidating and jarring. Too often, educators are "waiting for somebody else to come save us," NAEYC Governing Board President Amy O'Leary said.

Experienced advocates noted that keeping things personal, describing the experiences of families with which worked, instead of talking about numbers and budgets, works best.

So how do you get involved? Use social media to connect with people who share your same goals, as well as with your representative. Tell your story! Public meetings are recorded so you can go back and listen to topics which are of interest to get a feel for how the legislature sees the topic. Send an email to your representative telling him or her how you wish them to vote and why. Here is a link to find your own elected officials.

<https://www.utah.gov/government/contactgov.html>

If that is too intimidating still, start with your local board. Attend their meetings. Then work toward sharing your thoughts, questions, and goals with a charter advocacy group. They can also help to provide context for some of the issues surrounding certain issues.

At the end of the day, policymakers represent the people. "We forget those policymakers work for us," O'Leary said. "Reminding ourselves of that is so important."

Best Wishes & Much Success,
Dr. Ed U. Cation

Themes of the Month

As educators, we often use metaphors as a teaching tool. One purpose of using metaphors is to encourage self-reflection. One metaphor commonly used compares growth to the development of a group of individuals. For example, historians may talk about a country at an infantile or adolescent stage. At the National Association of Charter School Authorizers one presenter, Marci Cornell-Feist, suggested a similar metaphor for governing boards.

Cornell-Feist identifies several stages of growth. At the youth stage, a governing board is reactive to events. This governing board struggles to understand what their roles are and the best way to proceed. The next stage the governing board uses data in their decision-making process. This board works toward stabilizing sustainable processes. The last, or mature, stage of a governing board is when the board focuses on optimizing processes and outcomes.

At which stage is your governing board? Are board members headed in the same direction? What are your next steps?

Opportunities for Schools

- You can review proposed changes to the Health Education Core Standards at: <https://schools.utah.gov/curr/health> and leave comments in the online survey linked on the web page. Please click on the "Health Education Standards Revision" tab. If you would like to view the current standards to compare changes, please go to the "Utah Core Standards" tab.
- 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.**
- [Apply your endorsement to a Master of Education at Utah Valley University!](#) Information Meeting at 4:30 PM on December 4th at Freedom Prep Academy Vineyard Elementary Campus 426 North 100 West, Vineyard, UT. john.allan@uvu.edu for questions.
- [Grant available for attending the Utah Science Teachers Association Conference in February, 2019.](#)
- The Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice and the Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee invites you to attend a presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Cauffman on "Arrested Development: Adolescent Development & Juvenile Justice." The event is free to the public and is scheduled for Thursday December 13, 2018 from 4:00pm - 5:30pm at the Draper Park Middle School, 13133 South 1300 East., Draper Utah.
- 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

- USBE appointed the following students to serve on their newly formed Student Advisory Council: Rachel Dikwa-Nkrumah Yeobah (Intech), Sanjana Kargi (Beehive), Allie Cordero (Summit Academy), Aspen Meldrum (Walden), and Brendan Murphy (Karl G Maeser).
- Rockwell Charter High School's Samantha Lofgren, a 12th grade student, won the Larry Lott Award at the Shakespeare Festival in late September, and Rockwell's baseball team won the 2A Fall Region Title. Very cool!
- Winter Sports School's seniors Maxine Dalton and Samantha Macuga are National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists. Maxine Dalton has also represented Utah as one of two Senators from the state to Girls Nation in Washington DC this summer.
- Governor Gary Herbert taught a class on Utah's annual harvest at Guadalupe School on November 20th.

December 2018

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

January 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	New Years Day 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	USBE Steering Committee Meeting 9	10 USBE Meeting	11	12	13
14 Charter Directors Meeting	15	16 SCSB Meeting	17 SCSB Meeting	18	19	20
Martin Luther King Jr. Day 21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			