



Georgia Charter Schools Association

Weekly Newsletter

April 8, 2008

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Dear Jeniffer,

Please see below current News on the Georgia Charter Schools movement.

From the Staff at GCSA

CURRENT NEWS

Four Separate Charter School Bills Pass the GA General Assembly - Await Governor Purdue's Signature to Become Law

Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) has worked diligently to create a more open climate legislatively for creating new charter schools in Georgia and to support existing charter schools. We are seeking to ensure the growth in numbers of quality charter schools through additional authorizers and to foster greater student achievement in those schools by giving charter schools a more level playing field with other public schools.

GCSA supported the passage of four bills which are summarized below. Now that all four of these bills have passed both the House and Senate, the bills await Governor Purdue's signature into law. Since each bill passed overwhelmingly in the House and Senate, we are hopeful this will be additional leverage to encourage the Governor's approval and signature to each. We will continue our advocating efforts to that end.

- [HB 881](#)-Establish Georgia Charter Schools Commission. This bill would create a State Commission to authorize and oversee new charter schools with a provision of full state funding, including an amount equal to local school district funding.

[April 4th House Vote](#)

[April 4th Senate Vote](#)

- [HB 831](#)-Enact a Public Charter School Capital Financing Act. This bill would provide for a matching grant program under the State Board of Education with respect to qualified donations for the purchase of real property or capital outlay for charter schools.

[March 6th House Vote](#)[April 1st Senate Vote](#)

- [HB 1277](#)-Provide Public Charter School Employees with State Health Insurance Benefits. This bill would recognize that teachers and other staff of public charter schools are eligible to participate in the State Health Insurance Plan along with other State employees.

[March 11th House Vote](#)[April 1st Senate Vote](#)

- [HB 1065](#)-Authorizes Local Sales Tax to Be Used for Local Public Charter Schools' Capital Outlay Projects. This bill would clarify that Public Charter Schools are eligible to receive and utilize the proceeds of SPLOST (σπεχιαλ-πυρποσε λοχαλ-οπιτιον σαλεσ ταξ) just as do other public schools.

[February 26th House Vote](#)[April 1st Senate Vote](#)

CHARTER NEWS

[Management shuffles at Imagine Schools](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

April 2, 2008

Samuel Howard, who has overseen Imagine Schools in the Northeast and in Missouri, will supervise growth, development and operations in Georgia and South Carolina effective July 1, company officials said. He replaces Steve Hase, Imagine executive vice president, who will focus on the start up of nine new ImagineSchools in Florida and South Carolina in the coming year.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[School Choice - Now More Than Ever](#)

Wall Street Journal - Editorial

April 5, 2008

This week's revelation that 17 of the nation's 50 largest cities have high school graduation rates below 50% surely saddened many. But it surprised few people attuned to the state of U.S. public education. Proponents of education choice have long believed that dropout rates fall when families can pick the schools best suited for their children.

National Charter Schools Week to Be Held May 5-9

Georgia Charter Schools Association plans activities for members

National Charter Schools Week will be celebrated May 5-9, 2008. The theme for this year's celebration is Charter Schools: Growing Excellence. A primary purpose of this annual event is to connect charter school students, parents, teachers, and leaders to policymakers so they can experience the schools and the enthusiasm of the people supporting them.

This year, we suggest using the power of the Internet to amplify the presence of charters. Each charter school is encouraged to create a short video demonstrating what makes their school great. Schools can post these videos on YouTube and email the videos to their federal, state, and local policymakers during National Charter Schools Week through The National Alliance's Legislative & Advocacy <http://www.publiccharters.org/content/publication/detail/1866/>.

Georgia Charter Schools Association encourages all charter schools to invite policy makers and business leaders to their school during National Charter Schools Week to learn more about their school. More information is to follow soon.

2008 NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS CONFERENCE JUNE 22-25, 2008 - NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

REGISTER BEFORE APRIL 27 TO GET LOWEST REGISTRATION RATES

WHY ATTEND

Hosted by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, this conference is the ONLY national gathering of the entire charter school community. This year's conference is June 22-25 in New Orleans, LA. Participants will not find a better opportunity to learn and grow in an atmosphere of camaraderie and fun.

"Still We Rise: Achieving Academic Excellence at Scale" is the conference theme, reflecting the growth of quality public charter schools across America. The theme has special resonance in New Orleans, which boasts the nation's largest percentage of public charter school enrollment.

PROGRAMMING

Geoffrey Canada, President and Chief Executive Officer for the Harlem Children's Zone, will offer the keynote speech on Monday June 23. Throughout the rest of the conference, attendees will learn and share best practices, discuss national and state policy issues, network with colleagues and attend over 120 breakout sessions.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Attendees will have the opportunity to volunteer at local charter schools, and enjoy special evening events featuring New Orleans traditions, food and music! Questions? Call 206-463-3344 or e-mail nationalconference@publiccharters.org

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Over 3,000 people are expected to attend: charter school leaders, teachers, school board members, finance and facilities managers, policy makers, authorizers, state leaders, funders, advocates and researchers.

Save the Date!

2009 Georgia Charter Schools Association 7th Annual Conference

Wednesday, February 25th - Friday, February 27th

The Marietta Resort & Conference Center

Jeniffer Collins
Georgia Charter Schools Association

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