

CONNECTING WATERS CHARTER SCHOOL

~ SEPTEMBER 2005 ~



State Testing Results- How are we doing?

According to the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) we are right on target! The AMO is based on the percentage of students proficient or above in English Language Arts or Mathematics. Through No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the federal government has set a mission for all of us. The goal under NCLB is that 100% of our students will be proficient or above by 2013-2014. Rather than debate the merit of this goal, we will do our best to meet this objective!

Below are charts showing the federal governments minimum percentage proficient targets and our percentages over the past several years. We are doing well to meet this federal mandate. However, we are a little behind in the area of math for the 2004-2005 school year. Our commitment to you is to help your student become proficient in math and English language arts so that he/she can be productive members of society and reach their maximum potential.

Your ES will be discussing strategies to help your student meet this goal. Our focus is to improve student achievement. We want to work as a team, you, your student, your ES, and the administration toward the success of your student. One of the ways that we are helping your student this year is by having specific plans for increasing achievement in math and English language arts. We have CAHSEE workshop classes specifically designed to help your student pass this exam. Our specialists are also working on obtaining more tutors for your students. We have also identified and purchased curriculum that will help toward this goal.

Connecting Waters Charter School
Annual Measurable Objective (AMO's)
Based on CST grades 2-8 and 10th Grade CAHSEE scores

English Language Arts

School Year	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Minimum Percentage Proficient	12.0	12.0	23.0	23.0
School wide	28.3	34.6	36.4	

Mathematics

School Year	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Minimum Percentage Proficient	12.8	12.8	23.7	23.7
School wide	19.6	18.6	23.3	

Assessment News



Welcome back to an exciting new year!

Right off the bat we have our first assessment tests on **Sept. 13th & 14th from 10am – 2pm.** which is only for **11th and 12th grade students** that have not yet passed the *California High School Exit Exam(CAHSEE)*. Students needing this exam have been mailed a letter with specific test site information and their ES has been notified. If you have questions regarding this first **CAHSEE** assessment, please contact your ES right away.

Your student may need to have a language test administered to them by their ES called the *California English Language Development Test (CELDT)*, dependent upon how the language questions were answered on the CWCS application. You will be contacted if there is a need for this testing.

The *Assessment Calendar* is available on the **CWCS** website. Please note on your own calendar the assessment dates that pertain to your student. Also, please become familiar with the **Assessment** area on the **CWCS** website as this is our main tool in communicating specific information regarding our assessments. If you do not have access to the Internet, please ask your ES to print off the appropriate assessment information you need.

We will be using **Scantron** testing this year as a pre-test for your student so that each year we can use the **same** test to determine your child's specific strengths and weaknesses. This will aid you and your ES to target their precise needs. We recognize that the state mandated tests may often only give the parent a general idea how their child is performing. **Scantron** was developed to help select and create material that can be readily accessible pinpointing specifically what areas need to be addressed. There are **three 20 minute tests** in the areas of *math, reading* and *language arts*. Your **ES** will be assisting you early this fall with **Scantron** for the 2005/06 school year. You will want to make sure that your student takes this test with no prompting on your part so that we have a more accurate picture of your student's abilities.

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Greetings from the Guidance Department! We are here to help you determine your future academic and career goals. Contact information:

Mary Halter

1-800-808-9895 ext.4

mhalter@connectingwaters.org

“College Basics 101” Workshop

Monday September 19 10:30 am - Ceres Learning Center

Monday September 19 2:00 pm - Manteca Learning Center

Not sure where to start? Find out! This workshop will focus on getting prepared for college, how to research your options and what it takes to get in. What courses should you take? How do you begin finding a college? Where do you want to go? Learn all about it!

To reserve your space and to register for one of the workshops call the Waterford Office at (209) 874-9463 or 1-800-808-9895

PLAN (pre-ACT) test for 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th graders!!!!

Why take the PLAN? It's great preparation for the ACT – it covers the same subjects! It gives an estimated ACT score! It helps you know what high school courses you should be taking! It helps you identify careers that match your interests! (You can find more information about the PLAN test at www.act.org)

WHEN: Wednesday November 2, 2005 9:30am – 12:30pm

WHERE: Manteca Learning Center

FEE (from instructional funds) = \$10 GEA # 9743

Please call the CWCS Office at (209) 874-9463 or 1-800-808-9895 to register.

IT'S FREE!!!

What math course is your child ready for???

Not Sure?

Talk to your ES about the free math diagnostic testing for all levels of math from Pre-Algebra to Calculus!

Just say “MDTP”, short for Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project

Your child's results can help you identify specific areas where additional study or review is needed and/or as a tool for determining math placement.

For additional information, visit the MDTP website: <http://mdtp.ucsd.edu> .

Exciting News... CSF club and NHS club are coming to CWCS!!!

What is CSF? The California Scholarship Federation (CSF) is a statewide organization whose purpose is to recognize students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement. Qualifying for membership is on a semester basis following a point system that requires A's and B's in mostly "a-g college prep" level coursework.

What is NHS? National Honor Society is a nationwide organization that seeks to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to demonstrate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools. Qualifying for membership is yearly and students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in the most difficult curriculum as well as demonstrated community service.

Please contact Mary Halter for an application. Application deadline is September 9, 2005.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans provides **\$2,500** scholarships to **seniors** who have exhibited integrity and perseverance in overcoming personal adversity and who aspire to pursue higher education. **Two hundred** scholarships will be awarded in California. Eligibility requirements include: must plan to enroll full-time in Fall 2006 at a 2 or 4-year college, have a strong commitment to pursuing a bachelor's degree, have demonstrated financial need, a record of involvement in co-curricular and community activities, minimum 2.0 GPA, must be a U.S. citizen or in the process of becoming a U.S. citizen. Apply online or download a paper application at: <https://www.horatioalger.com/scholarships/apply.cfm> **Deadline to submit your application is October 15.**

Target All-Around Scholarship Program - For students whose hard work goes beyond their textbooks. By volunteering in their communities these students remind us that, even with busy schedules, there's always time to help others. Target will award one \$25,000 scholarship to a national winner and over **six hundred \$1,000** scholarships to **seniors** and current college students. Recipients will be selected based on: number of community volunteer service hours, volunteer leadership awards and honors, volunteer supervisor recommendation, minimum 2.0 GPA and essay. Applicants must enroll full-time in fall 2006 at a 2 or 4-year college, university or vocational-technical school. **NO financial information is required.** Apply online by **November 1** at: http://target.com/target_group/community_giving/scholarships.jhtml .

Christermon Foundation Beverage Industry College Scholarship Program has awarded 3.1 million dollars in college scholarships since 1987. Scholarships ranging from **\$1,500 to \$5,000** will be awarded to **seniors** whose parent, grandparent or legal guardian currently hold full time employment with, or who are owners of, a company holding a valid **California liquor, beer or wine license**. This includes **restaurants, hotels, retail & wholesale grocery establishments, airlines, breweries, wineries, distributors, etc.** Must be planning to attend a 4-year college in Fall 2006, show evidence of community service and a strong academic record. Apply online at: www.christermon.com . **Deadline to submit application is February 1, 2006.**

Don't Get Scammed

Look for the following signs that a scholarship search may be a scholarship scam!

1. "This scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."
2. "You can't get this information anywhere else."
3. "May I have your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship?"
4. "We'll do all the work."
5. "The scholarship may cost some money."
6. You have never entered this particular contest and "You've been selected by a 'national foundation' to receive a scholarship," or "You're a finalist."



College Entrance Exam Test Dates and Deadlines

Test	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
ACT	Sept 24	Aug 19	Sept 2
SAT I & II	Oct 8	Sept 7	Sept 14
ACT	Oct 22	Sept 16	Sept 30
SAT I & II	Nov 5	Sept 30	Oct 12
SAT I & II	Dec 3	Oct 28	Nov 9
ACT	Dec 10	Nov 4	Nov 17
SAT I & II	Jan 28	Dec 22	Jan 4

To Register:

SAT – www.collegeboard.com

ACT – www.act.org

School Code : 053706

Need help preparing for ACT, SAT and ASVAB exams? The Lodi Public Library subscribes to a test preparation service that is free to current Lodi Library cardholders. Many practice exams and skill-building exercises are offered. To access this FREE service go to: <http://www.lodi.gov/library/index.htm>
Click on "learnatest.com" symbol click on the link
Register as a new user (user id is your current Lodi library card number)
Practice exams include: SAT, ACT, ASVAB, Basic Skills, AP, EMT, Cosmetology, Firefighter, GED, etc.

Education Pays - Find out the value of an education at: <http://www.educationpays.org> .
Charts show various career paths and your earning potential based on training and education.

Did you know that nearly 50% of the fastest growing jobs in the next ten years will be in the health and medical sciences? (According to the U.S. Department of Labor.) In response to this growing demand, the National Institutes of Health has created a new interactive web site, *Life Works*, to allow students and parents to explore over 100 career possibilities. Check out this free career information resource at: www.science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks .



Math Happenings

Hopefully, you are all off to a positive start with your math curriculum. Remember, there is plenty of support available if you need it. If the following options do not meet your needs, please contact me, Debbie Kutz, dkutz@connectingwaters.org, and I will attempt to find the help you need.

Drop-in math coaching for grades 4-12 at both learning centers (no cost):

Manteca—Fridays, 9-11, beginning Sept 7

Ceres—Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30

HiMAP Program (<http://www.csustan.edu/math/MAP/HiMAP-Home.html>) --coaching for 7th through 12th grades at CSUS

Private Tutoring—contact your ES or me for suggestions

Various websites with math ideas and activities:

<http://www.ieminc.org/handbook/curriculum/cresource/mathweb.htm>

also www.funbrain.com

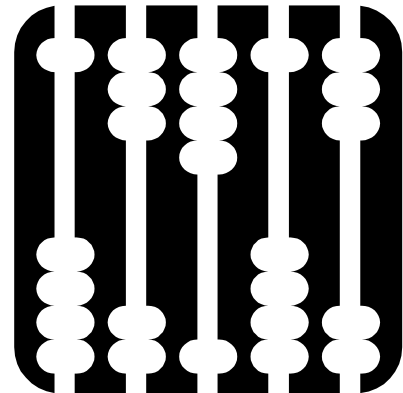
We are offering several new math courses and workshops at the learning centers this year, as a support to your work at home with your students. One of the workshops we are offering is a CAHSEE workshop. The CAHSEE workshops provide review of math concepts that will be tested on the California High School Exit Exam. I am also teaching PreAlgebra, Algebra 1 a-g, and Geometry at the Ceres Learning Center. One of the goals of these courses is to develop mathematical thinkers of our students. The focus will not only be skill development, but also problem-solving and group work. Lastly, we would also like to offer training workshops for parents and ESs to share ideas and activities for teaching some of the foundational math concepts and skills. (If there are particular topics in which you would be interested, please drop me an email with that information). Look for these in upcoming newsletters.

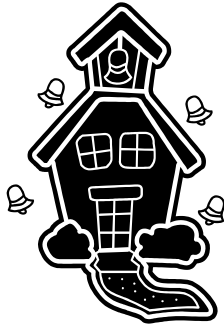
One last note...many times, there is more than one way to practice a skill or teach a math concept. When it comes to learning facts that need to be memorized, I think the key is repetition without boredom. Use as many different learning modalities as possible—write it, say it, sing it, do it, build it, play it, draw it. Also, if your student is having difficulty grasping a concept the way your curriculum presents it, you may want to research some other ways to teach it. I'd be interested in knowing when your students have significant "Aha!" math moments and what helped you achieve them. Or, if you need some help researching something, let me know.

May you have many enjoyable math moments this school year!

Debbie Kutz

Math Specialist





MANTECA LEARNING CENTER NEWS

Alison Lull & Shanda Rickman, Site Program Coordinators

Shalimar Eldridge & Alysia Ayala, Site Clerks

955 W. Center, Ste. 9

209-239-7306 FAX 209-823-7439 NEW HOURS M-F 9:00-4:00

As we continue a new school year with new site coordinators, new hours, and a new way of funding our Learning Centers, I strongly encourage parents, ESs, and students to avail themselves of the many resources housed at the Manteca Learning Center. Not only do we offer exciting site classes (please see the following class schedule and ask your ES to enroll you) and new computers, but we also have many textbooks, teacher's editions, workbooks, standards based Starline Press packets, a large fiction section, reference books, videos, CD-ROMs, educational games, and more! All this is available to check-out with no charges incurred by the instructional funds account. There will also be no charges to the instructional funds account to use the site for meetings with your ES, to attend classes, or to use the computers and printers. We will still ask you to sign in and out when you use the site, so we have a record of the utilization of the center and to monitor our younger students who are enrolled in classes. Shanda and I welcome suggestions from parents, students, and ESs to improve the Manteca Learning Center. We also would like to encourage parents and ESs who have expertise in special areas and who would enjoy teaching site classes to contact me about setting up and scheduling site classes. Best wishes in your educational endeavors this year.

Alison Lull, Co-Site Coordinator

COMMUNITY SERVICE CREDIT OPPORTUNITY

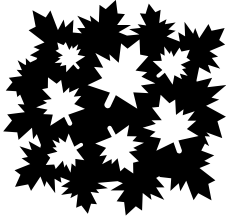
High School students now have the opportunity to earn Community Service credit by volunteering at the Manteca Learning Center. Interested high school students who desire to learn clerical skills while earning life skills credit should contact their ES. Your ES should then make the arrangements with Alison Lull or Shanda Rickman for this community service opportunity.

Materials for Checkout: We are bursting at the seams with returned books and new Starline Press state aligned curriculum. Visit the center before ordering to see if we have what you need.

Computer Lab: The computer lab has 6 computers available for student use during regular business hours for school related work. Please note that a computer use contract must be signed by the parent and on file at the Center.

Scholastic Book Orders: Shalimar is continuing to assist families who want to use their own funds to order books from Scholastic Book Club. Flyers are available at the Manteca Learning Center. Books are available at all grade levels. Payment is due at the time orders are placed. This is an inexpensive way to build your personal library. Free books earned through book sales go to the Learning Center Library for everyone to enjoy.

City of Manteca Parks and Rec. Classes offered include: Martial Arts, Kids in the Kitchen, Dance, Art, Cheerleading, Gymnastics, Science and Art Exploration, Babysitter Training, Tennis, CPR/First Aid, and more. Access their schedule on the web at www.ci.manteca.ca.us/parks, pick up a schedule at 252 Magnolia Lane in Manteca, or call 239-8470. To register have your ES fill out a purchase order request at least a week before the class starts. You will need to bring in a copy of the purchase order when you sign up for a class. Please note that our school cannot pay for team league sports or private lessons.



Prospective Fall Classes

The following classes are prospective until approved and filled. Please ask your ES to sign you up ASAP as some fill quickly.

9690 CAHSEE Math Workshop Grades 10-12, Instructor: Debbie Kutz, 8/22-31 (M, W, F, M, & W), 12-2, \$35.50. Required Text: CA High School Exit Exam Workbook, M9W1CA, \$6.00, From CGP (Coordination Group Publications).

Optional: CA High School Exit Exam Study Guide M9S1CA, \$6.00.

9679 Choir, Grades 5-12, Instructor: Jack Hepworth, Wednesdays starting 8/24, 11-12:00, \$66.69. ES: See course notes in enrollment database for text info. Students will have modeled for them and will rehearse choral singing technique, sight singing, and music theory.

9678 Cooking With Kids Grades 3-5, maximum 4 students. Thursdays, Sept. 8-Oct. 27, 2-3:00. Cost: \$74.60. Instructor: Caroline Elness. Classes held at instructor's home, 1193 Lexington Ave. off of Louise Ave. in Manteca.

9684 Intro to Spanish Grades 3-7, Instructor: Roberto Gomez. Thursdays 9:30-10:30, \$87.25

9685 Spanish 1 Standards Grades 8-12, Instructor: Roberto Gomez. Thursdays 11-12, \$87.25. Note: class will cover listening, speaking, and cultural standards. For complete HS Standards credit, student must complete additional Spanish course at home. ES: See course notes in enrollment database for text info.

Algebra 1 Grades 9-10, Instructor: Jack Kaiser, Mondays 9:30-11:30, \$144.

REQUIREMENTS FOR 1ST GRADERS

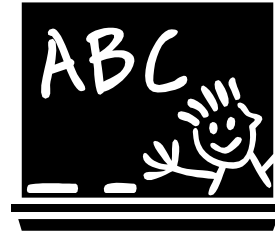
Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP) is a preventative health program serving California's children and youth. CHDP makes early health care available to eligible children, not only children with obvious health problems, but also to children who seem well. The CHDP program works with the Department of Education in administering and monitoring this requirement and assists low-income children to meet the requirement by providing them with state-paid health assessments.

CHDP School Requirements:

By law, all children entering the first grade are required to have either a certificate of a CHDP health examination or a waiver on file at the school in which they enroll. School health examinations must be completed within 18 months prior to or 90 days after 1st grade entry unless the parent or guardian signs a waiver stating they do not want, or they are unable to obtain an examination for their child.

If you have questions regarding the CHDP requirements please call Cary Sharp in Student Records at 800-979-4436.

The Ceres Learning Center



September Teacher Spotlight

We welcome two new instructors to the learning center this semester. Deborah Kutz is our new math specialist and will be teaching an A-G Algebra class and a Geometry course. Also new to the center is Jack Hepworth who will be teaching Choir. The center is an ideal place for students to meet teachers, attend classes, gather resources, work on computers, or even take music lessons. We are continually improving in order to provide you with new curriculum choices and dynamic classes that will motivate and challenge students. Check our class schedule for all classes available and their times & dates.

We also want to give a big thanks to Mandy Harris, Alexis Higa, Celeste Higa, Shy'anne Higa for all their help at the learning center the week before school started. It was much appreciated by the site clerks.

Sign Up for New Classes

Be sure to sign up early for the wonderful classes available at the Ceres Learning Center. These classes are an opportunity for your students to learn in a collaborative group setting where they can interact with others learning the same subject. Please call the Ceres Learning Center at 541-1531 BEFORE the start date of the first class to make sure the class will begin on time. Class start times depend upon student enrollment. SS=School Sponsored Class

CWCS School Pictures!

What will you get FREE just for coming in and taking a picture?

A free credit card style student id card with the CW logo that can be used for student discounts and the CAHSEE in the spring!

Also, a student picture in the full color yearbook!

Can parents take pictures and also receive an id card?

Yes, for a fee of \$5.00 you can also have a beautiful school id card!

Can I purchase regular picture packages?

Yes, the picture packages are very reasonably priced.

Make checks payable to Leonard's Photography

You will also be able to purchase a full color yearbook for only \$25.00.

Make checks payable to CWCS

Picture day Sept 7, 2005 from 10am-3pm

Re-takes Oct 26, 2005 from 10am-3pm



Call the Ceres Learning Center 541-1531 to make an appointment for your student!

PLEASE BE SURE TO ATTEND PICTURE DAY IF AT ALL POSSIBLE!!!!

The ID cards that they make for us are very nice credit card style.

Ceres Learning Center ~ Prospective Fall '06 Classes as of 6/28/05

<u>Time</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u># of Classes</u>	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Course #</u>	<u>Approx. Price</u>
MONDAY							
9:30-10:30	Guitar Lessons	K-12	8/29/05	12	J. Gray	TBA	TBA
9:00-10:00	Life Skills 101	Jr. High	8/29/05	16	B. Harris	9632	\$134
10:00-11:00	Life Skills 101	9-12 th	8/29/05	16	B. Harris	9631	\$134
11:00-12:00	Cool Crafts	K-6	8/29/05	16	B. Harris	9628	\$134
12:00-1:00	Hands on Science	K-6	8/29/05	16	B. Harris	9629	\$134
1:00-2:00	Etiquette	7-12 th	8/29/05	16	B. Harris	9630	\$134
2:00-3:00	Character First	K-12	9/12/05	Every first Monday of the month			FREE
MONDAY & WEDNESDAY							
9:00-11:00	Geometry	9 th -12 th	9/1/2005	12	D. Kutz	9745	\$250.55
TUESDAY							
10:00-11:30	Drawing 2	4-12 th	8/29/05	12	J. Gray	9646	\$85
1:00-2:00	JR/HS Writing	7-12 th	8/30/05	16	T. Matranga	9695	\$146
2:00-3:00	Choir	K-12 th	8/23/05	16	J. Hepworth	9680	TBA
2:00-3:00	Advanced Writing	9-12 th	8/30/05	16	T. Matranga	9696	\$146
TUESDAY & THURSDAY							
9:00-10:30	Pre Algebra	Jr. High	8/30/05	16	D. Kutz	9651	\$256
10:30-12:00	Algebra A-G	9-12 th	8/30/05	16	D. Kutz	9652	\$256
11:00-12:00	Spanish 1	9-12 th	8/30/05	35	B. Monroe	9637	\$256
12:00-1:00	Spanish 2	9-12 th	8/30/05	35	B. Monroe	9636	\$230
WEDNESDAY							
9:00-10:15	US History	9-12 th	8/31/05	16	J. Kaiser	9633	\$144
10:30-12:00	Economics	9-12 th	8/31/05	16	J. Kaiser	9634	\$144
12:00-1:30	Government	9-12 th	8/29/05	16	J. Kaiser	9635	\$144
1:00-3:00	Guitar	8yrs up	8/29/05	12	J.Gray	TBA	TBA
THURSDAY							
9:00-3:00	Piano Lessons	K-12 th	TBA	16	C. Pierson	TBA	\$225
9:00-10:30	World History	9-12 th	9/1/05	16	J. Kaiser	9644	\$144
10:00-11:00	Color 1	K-12 th	9/1/05	12	J. Gray	9647	\$85
10:30-11:30	Geography	4-8 th	9/1/05	16	J. Kaiser	9645	\$144
FRIDAY							
9:00-10:00	Beg. Drawing 1	K-12 th	9/2/05	12	J. Gray	9646	\$85
9:30-1:00	Guitar	K-12 th	9/2/05	12	J. Gray	TBA	TBA
12:15-2:15	Algebra 1	9-12 th	9/2/05	16	J. Pelezynski	9649	\$224
2:30-4:30	Algebra 2	9-12 th	9/2/05	16	J. Pelezynski	9650	\$225
2:00-3:30	Guitar	K-12 th	9/2/05	12	J. Gray	TBA	TBA
3:30-4:30	Beg. Drawing 1	K-12 th	9/2/05	12	J. Gray	9759	\$85

Individual Guitar Lessons: Call D. Harris @ 303-1547

Individual Guitar Lessons: Call J. Gray @ 541-1531

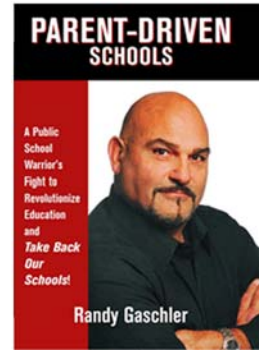
Math Tutoring: Call J. Carkeet @ 632-8256

Walk-In Math Tutoring: Debbie Kutz ~ Tuesdays 12:30-2:30pm



PARENT DRIVEN SCHOOLS

**A Charter School Warrior's Fight to Revolutionize
Public Education.**



If your child's school is run by politicians, and bureaucrats determined what subjects were being taught and parents have no say at all, would you demand changes? If you answered "yes" then this book was written for you.

I wrote Parent Driven Schools because as a parent, coach, and a teacher for most of my adult life, I am convinced that America's system of public education is flawed. I firmly believe that we - you and me and all the other parents and caring people in this country - have the power to fix it. We can change public education. The power to do that lies with us; in our hands, and in our hearts.

Order your copy today at www.parentdrivenschools.com

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Just a note to let you know that former student, 2003 graduate, **Jen Brown**, was deployed to Iraq on August 20th. She is the 6th female in the history of the Marine Corp to do the job she is doing. She will be air crew chief on a CH46 and she has trained to be the door gunner. She will be gone for 7 months. Please keep her in your thoughts as she is also a newlywed so it is a lot of changes for her and her family.

Thank you!
Kim Lewis
kumbala777@comcast.net

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A New Law That Reiterates the Importance of Testing Our Students: AB1137 - Impact on Charter Renewal

Assembly Bill (AB) 1137, a bill to amend the Education Code regarding certain aspects of charter schools, is scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2004. This bill contains three primary “sections:” 1) Funding; 2) Oversight and Reporting; 3) Charter Renewal. This legal legislative update briefly describes the section regarding charter renewal.

Typically, charter schools are “authorized” by a school district. In charter school parlance, school districts are also known as “charter granting agencies” or “charter granting authorities.” A charter is a document that describes certain requirements of the charter school. In exchange for the accountability contained in the charter document, charter schools are given more autonomy under the Education Code than traditional public schools. The initial period of authorization is up to five years, with subsequent renewals occurring in five year intervals. However, renewal is by no means automatic. Charter schools must convince their authorizing agency (e.g. school district) that the terms of the charter document and all legal requirements have been fulfilled. This is where the new “renewal conditions” for AB 1137 become relevant.

AB 1137 requires charter schools to meet one of five conditions for renewal.

1. The charter school must have attained Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets.
2. The charter school must receive a 4 or higher on the statewide API rankings
3. The charter school must receive a 4 or higher on the similar schools API rankings
4. The school’s granting agency determines that academic performance of the school’s students at least equals that of the public schools the students would have attended and of the other district schools where the charter is located.
5. The school has qualified for the Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM)

The fourth renewal criterion could be the most helpful option for charter schools not performing well on the API and not in the ASAM. “According to this law, ‘documented and clear and convincing data’ must be provided that the school’s academic performance is at least equal to that of the public schools the charter school students otherwise would have been required to attend as well as to the academic performance of the schools in the district where the charter school is located, taking into account the student population served at the charter school. Academic achievement data should include, but is not limited to, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests. The chartering granting agency must also consider academic performance data submitted by the charter school.” (Charter Currents Fall 2004 published by the Charter Schools Development Center)

The purpose of the pre/post testing is as follows.

1. Identify reading and math levels for proper curriculum placement information as outlined in our WASC action plan.
2. Help us identify those students needing interventions.
3. We are using a computer adaptive assessment which means that the student will be tested at their level.
4. It will provide us a baseline for students that transfer to us and are low performing.

5. Provide an instrument so that we have comparison data for our students other than STAR as outlined in our action plan. This instrument should show growth for some of our lower performing students whereas in only using the STAR they may be 'below or far below basic'. For example a regular ed 5th grade student who is working at a 3rd grade level must take the 5th grade STAR exam and will not do very well. The pre/post test will hopefully show gains where the STAR will not show improvement for this student.
6. Our charter renewal is based on our yearly API scores. Last year we didn't receive an API score, this year we will but we don't know what it will be. If we only have API data we may miss the mark for renewal. Many schools are collecting other data to show their districts and the state that their students are making improvements. This becomes more critical in our school where we provide so many choices to our families. At this level pre/post testing becomes a proactive and strategic step towards charter renewal.
7. To fulfill the WASC recommendation 'to create a systematic objective assessment designed to measure individual student growth'.

Because our charter expires on April 11, 2007, it is our goal to go before the district and the state to renew our charter this spring. Our goal is to have enough data so that we can show that we are doing a good job and the students enrolled at CWCS are showing growth. STAR results, pre/post testing, WRAT, will be part of this data.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is a model of accountability which uses student outcomes as a measure of school performance. Under NCLB, average test scores are used to determine whether schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in raising student achievement. The goal is that every school would have an API of 800 and meeting the AYP requirements.