

CASCADE LOCKS AWARDED CHARTER SCHOOL PLANNING GRANT

Oregon Department of Education awards \$56,000 to the Cascade Locks Community Charter School Committee for planning implementation of new school.

Cascade Locks, Oregon; December 16, 2009 –

The Cascade Locks Community Charter School Committee will receive \$56,000 in grant assistance from the Oregon Department of Education to plan the implementation of a new high quality charter school in the community, the Committee announced today. The funds will assist the committee in preparing a strong application to open a new charter school in Cascade Locks. Expenditures can include the design of a K-12 curriculum, design of assessment methods to be used, professional development of staff and teachers working in the school, professional development of the Board of Directors, and community outreach programs. The committee expects to submit the plan to the Hood River County School District for approval within the next two months.

“Oregon is a leader in developing charter schools across the state in close consultation with local communities,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo. “The federal government has recognized our hard work by providing us with the funding to assist the planning and development of charter applications across Oregon – one of just five states to receive such a grant. It is my hope that these funds will now help develop a strong charter application that will improve the educational opportunities for the community of Cascade Locks.”

“This grant was awarded through a competitive process” said George Fischer of the Cascade Locks Community Charter School Committee, adding “Our vision is to make our school great and special, worthy of someplace as great and special as Cascade Locks. We will create an academically strong small school environment and gain a deep understanding of the area while working toward the betterment of the community.”

"The school district is looking forward to seeing the proposal that the Cascade Locks community team will develop for a K-12 charter school in Cascade Locks” said Pat Evenson-Brady, retiring Superintendent of Hood River County Schools. “We understand the great desire in the community for a high school program located in Cascade Locks for approximately 40 high school students. The Hood River County School District is committed to providing high-quality 21st Century education for all students in the district and will welcome a proposal that can provide that kind of education in Cascade Locks."

Once operational, the Cascade Locks Charter School will be eligible to receive two additional grants totaling \$450,000 over the following two years. These funds will be used to finance one time start up costs.

There were twenty-four applications submitted Oregon Public Charter School Incentive Grant Program in September, 2009. Cascade Locks was one of 14 applications that were approved for funding.

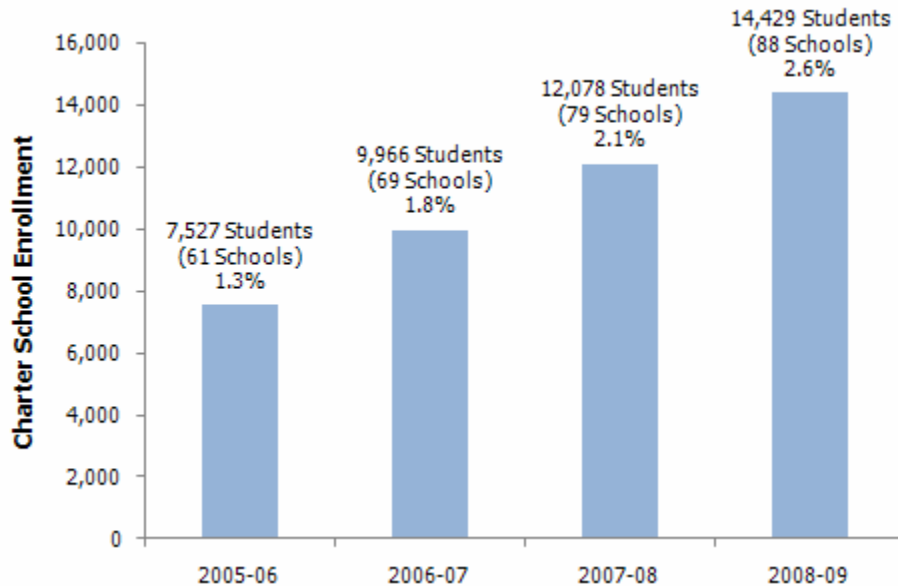
Public Charter Schools

In 2007-08, Oregon K-12 public schools had an enrollment of 556,375 students in Spring Membership. By 2008-09 that figure had dropped slightly to 554,951 public school students. Public charter school student enrollment has risen from 2.1 percent of the total enrollment in 2007-08 and now represents 2.6 percent of total students enrolled.

Charter schools, authorized by legislation in 1999, were designed to create new, innovative, and more flexible ways of educating all children within the public school system. In Oregon, all charter schools are public schools.

In the 2008-09 school year, there were 88 charter schools (up from 79 charter schools in 2007-08), with approximately 14,429 students enrolled. This is an increase of 2,351 students from the previous year when 12,078 students were enrolled.

**Oregon Total Charter School Enrollment
& Percent of All Public School Enrollment**
2005-06 to 2008-09



Source: Spring Membership Data Collection

The Cascade Locks Community Charter School Committee is a local group of volunteers working for the betterment of the children and the community of Cascade Locks. The elected Committee members are George Fischer, President; Myra Walker, Vice President; and Molly Aguliar, Secretary. Donna Nolin, Randy Holmstrom, Chuck

Daughtry and Tom Cramblett were additional signatories to the grant application. Bobby Walker represents Cascade Locks on the Hood River County School District Board.

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