

the review

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A Closer Look at Florida's Charter Schools Mater Academy High School



It was a hard fall for Judy Marty, Principal of Mater Academy High School. After colliding with a student in the hall, she was knocked down to the floor, head first. A few minutes later, Marty was back on her feet, traveling at breakneck speed (except for a slight limp), to show a visitor around the school.

There seems to be no stopping the energetic and outgoing Marty. She is determined to

make Mater Academy High School a top-notch college preparatory high school, an anomaly in Hialeah Gardens, a neighborhood of mostly low-income Hispanic families in Miami-Dade County. Marty and her faculty and staff are pushing Mater High's students to reach their highest academic potential.

Continued on pg. 3

Where's the Money? New Loan Fund Offers Options to Florida Charter Schools

Where's the money?

That's the question many charter schools ask when they are looking to finance a new building or renovations on existing facilities.

Today, Florida charter schools serving low-income communities can turn to NCB Development Corporation for the answer. NCB Development Corporation has developed an \$80 million "Enhancement Fund" to make it easier for charter schools to acquire both long-term financing and short-term loans at competitive interest rates.

The Fund is designed for charter schools in Florida, Georgia, Minnesota and Wisconsin that serve a majority of students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch programs or are located in low income communities. Eligible charter schools may apply for financing for up to 90% of the value of a completed project, such as a new building

Continued on pg. 5

From the President's Corner

Welcome back to school! The 2005-06 school year marks the ninth year of the Florida charter school movement. We congratulate all of the charter school veterans for keeping your doors open through the good times and bad times, and welcome the many new charter schools that are opening this year.

The new school year also marks FCCS' seventh year of operation as the premiere membership association for Florida charter schools. We now serve more than 280 charter schools across the state!

Every year, we try to give our members more value for their membership dollars. This year, FCCS is unveiling a number of new programs for our member schools.

• **FCCS Neighborhood News:** You will soon be receiving a daily edition of FCCS' latest e-newsletter featuring a compilation of news stories from around the state and

nation on topics that affect charter schools. I hope that you find the *FCCS Neighborhood News* to be an improvement over our previous transmissions of news clips.

• **FCCS Preferred Consultants Program and Directory:** In the next few months, we will introduce the FCCS Preferred Consultants, a roster of experienced charter school consultants who are available to FCCS members for technical services in a variety of areas. The Preferred Consultants are selected according to their professional expertise in the charter school arena and willingness to provide services to FCCS members at reasonable rates.

• **Comprehensive Insurance Package for Charter School Members:** FCCS is now developing a comprehensive insurance package for member schools that will include competitively priced health insurance for employees along with other insurance coverage that every charter

school needs. We are very excited about the benefits and savings this program will bring to our member schools.

• **Expansion of the My Education Marketplace:** We are constantly working to improve on the success of The My Education Marketplace. Look for new vendors and services coming to the mall in 2005-06!

FCCS continues to work on your behalf to make your job running your charter school a little easier. Please be sure to take advantage of all of the benefits that FCCS membership provides.

Wishing you a very successful school year,



Robert Haag
President

Meet Steven Adams FLDOE's New Charter School Director



On June 1, 2005, Steven Adams began his new job as Director of Charter, Virtual and Home Education in the Florida Department

of Education's Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice. Adams has come to Tallahassee from Idaho, where he was a charter school consultant and founding president of Idaho Leadership Academy, a charter high school. He also served as President of the Idaho Charter School Network.

"I am not a traditional bureaucrat," Adams told *The Review*. "I am a charter school person. I know what it is like to be two weeks away from opening a new charter school and not have a building or enough funding." Adams hopes that his experience as a charter school operator will help

him understand the issues and concerns of Florida charter schools.

Adams was working as an administrator and teacher in a private school in rural Idaho when friends begged him to help them open a new charter school, Blackfoot Charter Community Learning Center. "I said 'no' three times," he explains, "but then I ended up working as the director of the school. I found that I really liked it because it was a place where I could make a difference."

He went on to open the Idaho Leadership Academy, a charter high school in the tiny town of Pingree, "which consists of a grain silo, post office, gas station and bar." The academy offers a Great Books curriculum through virtual and on-campus instruction. The school uses "synchronistic" technology, which allows teachers to instruct students in "real time" online classes.

Adams is excited about working in a state with "amazing diversity" and "dramatic population centers." Adams believes that

many of the problems facing Florida's charter schools are "fixable and solvable." He notes that Florida provides significantly more governmental support to charter schools than his home state of Idaho.

"I think it will help to have someone in this office who understands the academic and business aspects of running a charter school," Adams says. One of his goals is to determine the most effective way to deliver technical assistance to Florida charter schools. He also wants to generate more publicity about charter school success stories.

In addition to his role as director of charter schools, Adams is overseeing virtual education and home schooling in Florida, two areas in which he has personal experience. At Idaho Leadership Academy, he helped to design the school's virtual education program, and he and his wife, a teacher by training, have home-schooled their four daughters.

Adams can be reached at 850-245-0502 or by email at steven.adams@fldoe.org.

A Closer Look at Florida's Charter Schools: Mater Academy High School

Continued from pg. 1

No one expects it to be easy. The population at Mater High includes nearly 80% students on the free and reduced lunch program and a large percentage of students from newly immigrated families from Central and South America and the Caribbean Islands. Many of the students will be the first in their families to attend college.

Charter School in a Warehouse

Mater Academy High opened in 2002 in a renovated B.J.'s Warehouse building on one of Hialeah's busiest thoroughfares next to the Palmetto Expressway. The high school is one of four Mater Academy charter schools operated by Academica, one of Florida's fastest growing charter school management companies.

The high school shares the huge building with Mater Academy Middle School. Although the students share the hallways and cafeteria, the two schools have separate charters, principals and staff. The schools served a combined enrollment of 2,149 students in grades 6 – 11 in 2004-05, with 879 students enrolled in the high school. This year, high school enrollment has jumped to 1,168, including 96 students attending a new Performing Arts Academy.

Both Mater Academy High and Middle Schools have posted impressive gains in their students' performance on the FCAT. Its FCAT scores place it far ahead of the four local public high schools serving the same neighborhood. The high school received a grade of "B" in 2005, missing an "A" grade by one point. The previous year, it was graded a "C." Marty says that they will strive for a "high 'A'" this school year.

Individual Attention for Each Student

Marty believes that the key to higher student achievement is to reach each student individually. She roams the hallways, stopping students to chat with them about their work. She pops into classrooms often and without warning to observe teachers and students. In her interactions, there seems to be a sense of mutual respect and affection between Marty and the students. "You don't see many principals talking one-on-one

with students in other schools," one student remarks.

Mater Academy teachers share this hands-on approach to helping their students. "At other schools, teachers don't even know your name. Here I get to be close to my teachers," one 10th grader explains. Other students in the school repeat the same theme. "Teachers help you outside the classroom," "I like how my teachers trust me," "I have a friend-to-friend relationship with teachers."

Marty has structured the classrooms so that her lowest-performing students receive even more the individual attention than her honor students. "Some of our smallest classes are those for under-performing students," she explains.

Marty's approach to education has been honed from 36 years of experience. Prior to coming to Mater Academy, she served as Assistant Principal in charge of curriculum at two large high schools in Miami-Dade County. She has also coordinated financial aid and admissions programs at three universities, University of Miami, Nova University and St. Thomas Villanova University. Early in her career, she was a classroom teacher at the elementary level.

The First Class of College-Bound Seniors

The first class of students to attend Mater Academy High will be graduating this year. Marty gave these students a personal assignment in 11th grade to make sure that they are ready to apply to college. Every student had to select three colleges that they would like to apply to and write a research paper on them. As part of the paper, they had to complete the real application essays for each school and provide a financial analysis of how they would finance their college education. Marty graded the papers herself.

"It was hard work," one student noted proudly. Another student added with a laugh, "She was screaming at us on the P.A. system every day to make sure we finished our papers."

Marty wants every Mater student to be college-bound. She points to the fact that Mater offers the same higher level curriculum and extracurricular activities that students can find at any high-achieving high school. This includes 12 AP classes, an Honors curriculum, dual-enrollment courses

FCAT ACHIEVEMENTS

In math, 71% of Mater's high school students scored at Level III and above in the 2005 FCAT assessment. In other public high schools that serve Hialeah Gardens, 36% - 59% of students scored at Level III and above in math. In 2004, Mater Academy High School was one of the most improved schools in the state with its gain of 150 points in its school grade score.

at Miami-Dade Community College, and classes in dance, art, music, and television production. Students can also participate in a wide variety of clubs and sports teams.

This year, the school has added a Performing Arts Academy that is built upon the school's established drama, dance, music and film production programs. Students enrolled in the Performing Arts Academy attend their academy classes during an optional seventh period from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

To provide additional performance space, a new theater and band room are being built as part of the new three-story building under construction on the Mater campus. The building will also house middle school classrooms.

At the end of the visit, Marty hurries to the security office where computer monitors show the images from video cameras mounted throughout the school. Her earlier collision has been faithfully recorded. The videotape shows Marty talking earnestly to a male student, then turning and being knocked flat by another student rounding the corner.

"If you hadn't stopped to reprimand that student, this would have never happened," remarks her head of security. Marty laughs. *Not a chance.*

Understanding the E-Rate

Discounts on Telecommunications and Internet Services Available to Charter Schools

The secret is out. More charter schools are learning about the program known as “the E-rate,” which can save them thousands of dollars in technology costs. The program gives schools and libraries an opportunity to apply for discounts from eligible providers for telecommunications, Internet access, internal connections and maintenance services.

Every year, \$2.25 billion in E-rate discounts are awarded to public and private schools, school districts, and libraries. Yet, relatively few Florida charter schools have applied for the discounts. In 2004, 18 Florida charter schools received discounts totaling approximately \$206,960 for telecommunications and Internet services through the E-rate program. In 2005, 13 charter schools applied for discounts.

Discounts range from 20% to 90% of the costs of eligible services. The percentage discount is determined by the level of disadvantage (free lunch program) and the urban/rural status of the population a school serves. Charter schools may apply individually or a group of charter schools may apply as a consortium.

The official E-rate application period is July 1, 2005- June 30, 2006. However, it is advisable to submit your application as early as possible. Schools that apply normally receive their letters of commitment between March and April.

Funds are distributed in order of priority in terms of types of eligible services. First priority is given to discounts for telecommunications and Internet access (e-mail, and dial-up). The second priority is internal connections (switches, hubs, routers and wiring) and basic maintenance on internal connections.

The E-rate is funded through a Universal Service fee charged to companies and provide interstate and/or international telecommunications services. It is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD).

HOW TO APPLY FOR E-RATE DISCOUNTS

The chart below outlines the basic steps you must follow to apply for and receive discounts through the E-rate program. Detailed instructions and forms are available at www.sl.universalservice.org.

Step 1. Create a Technology Plan

If your school is planning to apply only for discounts for basic local and/or long distance telephone services (wireline or wireless), you do not need to prepare a Technology Plan.

However, if you are going to apply for discounts on other technology products and services, you will need to create a Technology Plan that includes:

- Clear goals and a realistic strategy for using telecommunications and information technology
- A professional development strategy to ensure that staff know how to use these new technologies
- An assessment of the telecommunication services, hardware, software, and other services that will be needed
- A sufficient budget to acquire and support the non-discounted elements of the plan: the hardware, soft-ware, professional development, and other services that will be needed to implement the strategy
- An evaluation process that enables the school or library to monitor progress toward the specified goals.

Technology Plans must be approved by an SLD (Schools and Libraries Division)-certified technology plan approver. To find a certified technology plan approver, you can send an inquiry via email on the USAC's website, www.sl.universalservice.org. (Look in the Reference Area and scroll down to “Technology Planning.”)

Tip: If you are not comfortable or familiar with telecommunications technology, ask an expert to help you put together a technology plan for your school. MaaSa Technologies, an FCCS Preferred Partner, is one such company that can do this for you (877-888-7931 ext 3612).

Step 2. Complete Form 470 to open the competitive bid process

After you have identified your technology needs, you will need to complete a Description of Services Requested and Certification Form (Form 470) online or on paper. This form is then filed by email or mail.

Step 3. Receive bids from service providers and select provider

The SLD will then post your Form 470 on its Web site to notify service providers that you are seeking certain products and services. The service providers will contact your school directly. You must wait 28 days to review all of the bids you receive before selecting the service provider for the services you wish to purchase.

Step 4. Request E-rate funding

Now you are ready to complete Form 471 (Services Ordered and Certification Form), which is the request for funding from the E-rate program. You can complete the form either online or on paper. If you are applying as a single charter school, you can also use an online “Interview Interface” form that guides applicants through the process of filling out the Form 471 using a series of questions. After SLD receives your Form 471, it sends you a letter acknowledging what you have requested.

Step 5. Receive Decision Letter

After your request has been received, the SLD issues a letter to you (Funding Commitment Decision Letter) and to the service provider, notifying you of its decisions for each funding request. If your request is approved, you will move on to the next step.

Step 6. Inform SLD of Delivery of Services

If your request for discounted services is approved, you will file Form 486 to report when delivery of services has begun for each funded request.

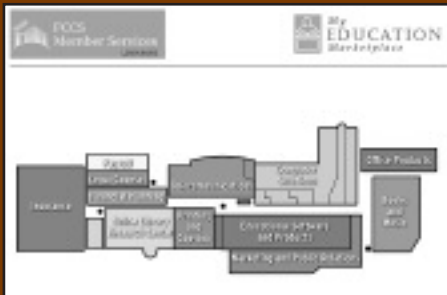
Step 7. Service providers submit invoice forms to SLD

If you receive the approved discounts on your bills from your service providers, the providers must file Form 474 to receive payments from the SLD. Or, if you have paid in full for the services you received, you submit Form 472 to receive a reimbursement. Both of these forms must be filed by a deadline provided by the SLD.

Step 8. Keep all your records for five years after the last service date

Remember to keep all your records related to the program for at least five years to comply with audits and other inquiries.

The My Education Marketplace Has a New Look



Vendors organized by Category

It is now easier for FCCS members to shop online at The My Education Marketplace. FCCS decided to revamp the design when its familiar virtual mall became crowded with new vendors.

The Marketplace is now organized by category. When you click on the “My Education Marketplace” button, a new mall map appears, showing each category of goods and services. The categories are:

- Books and Music
- Computer Solutions
- Education Software and Products
- Financial Planning
- Insurance
- Legal Counsel
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Office Products
- Online Library and Research Center
- Payroll
- Printing and Copying
- Telecommunications

When you click on each category, a list of Preferred Partner vendors appears, each with a description of special discounts or services provided to FCCS member schools.

FCCS is constantly upgrading and adding to its roster of Preferred Partners. The My Education Marketplace now has 30 participating vendors, all of which have passed the 10-point quality checklist to become Preferred Partners. If a vendor does not continue to meet the quality checklist of standards, it is removed from the Marketplace.

Be sure to check out the new My Education Marketplace mall at www.floridacharterschools.org.

Where's the Money? New Loan Fund Offers Options to Florida Charter Schools

Continued from pg. 1

or improvements to an existing leased building.

NCB Development Corporation is a non-profit organization that works in

low-income communities across the country. NCBDC has been a charter school lender for 10 years and has loaned or invested more than \$1 billion for community facilities during its 25-year history, including more than \$8.6 million in financing for Florida charter schools.

If you are interested in learning more about The Enhancement Fund, please call Anne Geggie, Business Development Officer for NCB Development Corporation, at 202-521-2935, email: ageggie@ncbdc.org.

Ask Dr. Ruth



Jump Start for Helping Parents Increase Their Child's School Success

Question:

School is re-opening in a few weeks and I know the parents at the Open House will have many questions for me. I would like to give each parent handouts with suggestions for the coming year but I am not sure what to include. How can you assist me?

Dear Teacher,

One of the most commonly asked questions parents have is about classroom tests, quizzes, and homework. You may want to include these samples in your parent packet. It will assist your parents in getting a “jump start” in creating healthy work and study habits that can lead to school success. The language and vocabulary that you use for the chart will depend on the age and grade level of the students. For children in early grades, you may want to substitute a picture for the words.

Study Habits Checklist

Directions: Place a check mark on each line before you begin studying and/or doing your homework.

I am ready to study when I have:

- A quiet area
- A table or desk all to myself
- Good lighting
- Two sharpened pencils or pens
- Paper, notebooks, and folders
- School books needed for the assignment
- Homework planner opened to today's date
- Dictionary
- Drink and snack on the table or desk
- Timer and
- Other supplies needed for any assignment (crayons, glue, White Out, rulers...)

Parent-Student Contract

I will do my homework every night at _____ P.M.

I will review my class notes, study or finish my homework by _____ P.M.

Signed by parent and child:



KEY

Remind the parents to reward and praise their child if they are following the charts and completing them. If the child does not, remember consequences will occur. “Be consistent” is the key for the parents.

Leadership Conference A Hit with Attendees

“Powerful,” “Awesome,” “Very proactive,” were just some of the words used by participants to describe the two-day Leadership III Charter School Conference, “Strategies for Success,” held in Fort Lauderdale on July 28 and 29.

Judging by the satisfaction surveys completed by conference participants, the conference was a hit with nearly all of its 260 attendees. Among those attending were teachers, principals, board members and parents from 65 charter schools located in 37 cities.

“Strategies for Success” was directed by Dr. Ruth Jacoby and sponsored by Somerset Academy Middle School, the Florida

Consortium of Charter Schools and the Parents Network for a Better Education. The conference was funded by a Florida Charter School Dissemination Grant. The goal was to disseminate effective instructional and management strategies to charter schools throughout the state.

Keynote speakers Annette Breaux, Ron Walker, and Dr. Randy Sprick brought laughter and even tears during their lively presentations on how to reach and teach students. Dr. Joseph Torgesen, Director of the Florida Center for Reading Research, offered research-based strategies for teaching reading to all levels of students. Twelve Florida charter school principals and teachers led break-out sessions on a variety of topics, from data driven decision making to budgeting to how to survive an attack on the school leadership.

The conference also offered something new: a one-day Parent Leadership



Academy for charter school parent leaders or leaders-to-be. Twelve parents attended the Leadership Academy to learn more about how best to help their children in school and how to organize a successful parent organization. Most of the parents attended the Leadership Academy for free. Scholarships were given to parents whose schools sent three or more school personnel.

“We hope to do another conference next year to reach out to even more charter schools especially the new additions,” says Jacoby. “It’s so important to offer professional development opportunities to charter schools that relate to their specific needs and requests. Conferences such as this offer all charter school personnel an opportunity to network and hopefully to gain a positive link to each other all year long.”



Preferred Partner in Focus T.R. Jones & Company

With each issue of The Review, we are presenting one of our Preferred Partners, companies that have passed FCCS' 10-point Quality Checklist. We developed the Preferred Partners program to help charter schools identify companies of quality that understand their operations. You can find information on all of the Preferred Partners, as well as special offers available to FCCS members, on the My Education Marketplace page of our website, www.floridacharterschools.org.

In this issue, we are featuring the topic of insurance services offered through T.R. Jones & Company.

T.R. Jones & Company has provided insurance to individuals, businesses and schools in Florida for more than 50 years. It is now reaching out to Florida's charter schools to offer its expertise in insuring educational institutions with a focus on one-on-one customer service.

Ana Fernandez, T.R. Jones' consultant who works with charter schools, makes a point of sitting down with every potential client to thoroughly review their current insurance coverage. She finds that charter schools often lack important coverage.

"I'm always surprised how many schools lack important coverage that they think

T.R. Jones & Company offers the following coverages and services:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 Building and Personal Property | 4 Workers' Compensation & PEO including Payroll Services |
| 4 Loss of Tuition & Extra Expense | 4 Educators Legal Liability |
| 4 Equipment Breakdown | 4 Special Events |
| 4 General Liability | 4 Counseling Professional Liability |
| 4 Corporal Punishment | 4 Employee Benefits |
| 4 Athletic Participant & Student Accident | 4 Specialized Loss Control & Disaster Preparedness |
| 4 Abuse & Molestation | 4 Internet Resource Tool |
| 4 Automobile Liability & Physical Damage | |
| 4 Excess Umbrella Liability | |

they have," says Ana Fernandez. "For instance, many schools assume that they have abuse and molestation coverage, but that is actually excluded from their policy."

Another issue is how charter schools are classified by their insurance companies. "Charter schools often need to be properly classified in order to receive the insurance coverage they need," Jones explains.

Miami Shores/Barry University Charter School (now Doctors Charter School) used T.R. Jones for insurance coverage for more than eight years. "We have been very pleased with the company," said Pam Wicks, Administrative Secretary/Treasurer of the school. "They are always available whenever we have a question." "Over the years, we've filed claims for damage caused by vandalism and lightning strikes. We have always been pleased with the response to our claims."

The company has developed a "Hurricane Preparedness Plan," that is written with charter schools in mind. The company also has an Internet resource tool that allows customers to file claims online, which can help to speed up the process of filing a claim.

Fernandez believes that it is knowledge and experience with the needs of charter schools, including the types of liabilities they may have, that set T.R. Jones & Company apart. "I take it as a personal responsibility to protect my clients' assets as much as possible."

More information on T.R. Jones & Company's insurance services for charter schools is available by calling the dedicated FCCS member schools' line at 1-800-333-0777. Fernandez will provide a free on-site consultation on request to interested charter schools.

Office Depot Donates 1,000 Backpacks to Title 1 Charter Schools

Office Depot donated 1,000 backpacks to FCCS to distribute to Florida's Title I charter schools. In August, FCCS shipped backpacks to 39 charter schools throughout the state. The number of backpacks sent to each school was based on the school's enrollment.

Students from the Charter School of Excellence display the backpacks donated by Office Depot to Florida's Title I charter schools. Accompanying them are Dennis McClung, Office Depot Store Manager; Arlin Bedard, Office Depot District Manager; Mary Levinson, FCCS; and Ruth Kalinsky, teacher.



How to be A Political Animal



By Rene Lewis,
Tew Cardenas LLP

Now that the 2005 Legislative Session has concluded, these upcoming months are the perfect time for you and your school to get to know your legislators – and more importantly, for your legislators to get to know you!

Legislators receive an enormous amount of phone calls, emails and letters from their constituents. Unfortunately, their full agendas limit their ability to personally read and respond to all correspondence. How then, can you be sure your voice is heard? Here are some tips to help you get the most impact out of your communications with your legislators.

Know who your legislators are and how to contact them. If you don't know who represents you or your school, find out by using the online guide located at www.leg.state.fl.us. Your legislator's page will give you his or her mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email address.

Call now to schedule an introductory meeting. Chances are, the member is familiar with your organization, but has not had the opportunity to reach out to you. Make it easy on them and make the first move. If you and your legislator are unable to schedule a one-on-one meeting, a conference call may be arranged. Also, it is important to note that meeting with your legislator's aide can be just as effective in getting information to the member. It is their responsibility to brief them on key issues and constituent meetings in the district. Establishing relationships with staff in the legislative office will assist in getting your message across.

In either instance, plan your visit or call carefully. Keep to the point and discuss only one issue. Organize your thoughts ahead of time and make notes to help you stay on track. Put together a one page 'fact sheet' on your school and its accomplishments. Legislators respond to succinct bullet points that are easy to read and retain. Leave the briefing paper with your legislator. This will help him or her better retain what you present.

Once you have initially met your legislator, be creative in keeping him or her interested in your organization. Is there a parent/teacher meeting coming up? Invite them to address the meeting and provide a legislative update on education. Have a "potluck" fundraising dinner scheduled? Have them actively participate by perhaps serving food. Most members are good sports and it will give them a chance to meet many of your associates, and their constituents, at the same time. Need a substitute teacher? Who better to teach a state government class than one involved in the process directly!

Further, many members will have town hall meetings, or open hours, where citizens are invited to meet their legislator and discuss issues expected to be at the forefront of debate before, during or after the legislative session. Make sure you are there to participate. You may even consider bringing students to the meeting as local media will be on hand and are always interested in covering local schools and their interests.

In addition, place legislators on your mailing list for newsletters, events and meetings, including press releases. The more information you send to their offices, the better acquainted they will become with your leadership, organization, and ultimately your key issues.

Legislators will begin committee meetings in Tallahassee this September. They will continue to meet one week a month until 2006,



Legislative Committee Meetings Tentative Schedule for 2005-06:

- September 12-14
- October 10-14
- November 7-10
- December 5-9
- January 9-13 and 23-27
- February 6-10, 13-17, and 20-24

2006 Legislative Session:

- March 7 through May 5

and then more frequently until the Legislative Session begins March 7 through May 5. If you are planning on being in Tallahassee during these interim committee weeks, call or write for an appointment with your legislators as soon as possible. In fact, you may even consider giving testimony on charter schools at public hearings held by the Legislature, which would require contacting the appropriate committee administrative assistant to schedule.

The old adage, "There is strength in numbers," is certainly true when it comes to lobbying your issue. There is no better example than the Florida Consortium of Charter Schools' "Charter School Day" and "Walk the Halls" on April 25, 2006, a one day lobbying effort in Tallahassee. If you have not yet had the chance to participate, it is a tremendous opportunity to meet not only your local legislators, but also those who sit on key education and appropriation committees that are important to the cause. Show your support by bringing your school's administrators, teachers, parents and children to discuss first hand the importance of charter schools and the great accomplishments achieved throughout Florida.

These are some suggestions that over time will prove successful in educating your legislators and their staff on your school and in forming a long lasting partnership.