

Charter Schools Through Charter Schools

trarily, and the charter school has the right to appeal the decisions of its sponsor to the state board or to the circuit court.

Once operating, the charter school receives funding from the district for each student it serves. The state gives each district additional revenue beyond the local property tax so that every district has the same amount of funding per pupil after adjustments for the number of kids with special needs and the average age of their teachers. The statute requires that the charter school and the district negotiate the amount the charter school will be paid but for elementary and middle schools, this amount may not be less than 80% of the district's general purpose grant per pupil (around \$3800 per student) or for high schools, 95% of the district per pupil funding (about \$4500). If the state board charters the school, the district must pay the charter school at least 95% for any grade level. Districts retain responsibility for special education students attending charter schools and for most of the transportation needs of students. The statute does not require a district to provide any facilities, services, or equipment to a public charter school. Building costs aren't funded out of the general fund budget of districts, and the operating funds the charter school receives must be used to furnish building,

equipment and other special costs. Renting space typically costs schools from \$600 to \$1,000 per pupil. One time start-up costs for a new public charter school are often around \$100,000.

There will be help for new charter school development. The statute established a charter school development fund for the federal funds the state may receive under a possible federal grant. Charter schools serving at-risk youth are to be given priority. Congress and the President want to encourage charter schools, and Congress allocated \$100 million for charter school grants. Strangely, Oregon received a grant in the past even without a charter law.

Public charter schools create a new form of public school accountable not only to the ideals of public education but to the parents it must serve. The legislature has put in place a non-coercive law which could have a powerful effect on the future of reform as charter schools develop a new model of self-governing and self-reforming schools that re focused on and rewarded

for student learning.

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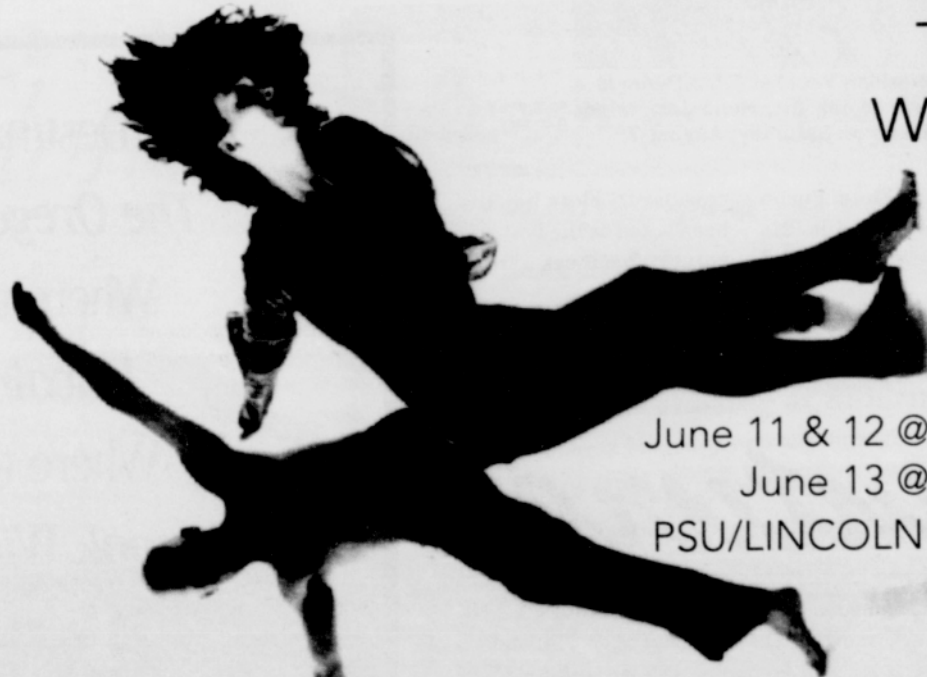
by phone at 503/234-4600 or email at edcenter@teleport.com

PURPOSE OF A Charter School

- Improve pupil learning.
- Encourage the use of different and innovative learning methods.
- Increase choice of learning opportunities for pupils.
- Establish a new form of accountability for schools.
- Require the measurement of learning outcomes and create innovative measurement tools.
- Make schools the unit for reform.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to own the learning program at the school site.

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