Finance, HR, and Operations
Do’s & Don’ts

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Charter School Tools
Financial Management Do’s & Don’ts

Do...

• Have a board treasurer or finance committee.
• Make sure your monthly financial report also looks forward.
• Budget a contingency.
• Ensure proper contract review.
• If you smell smoke, yell FIRE!

Don’t...

• Skimp on finance talent or expect DFO to be a superhero.
• Delay bank reconciliations.
• Use it.
• Undertake a real estate project without lots of help.
• Have low expectations.
Grants Management Do’s & Don’ts

Do...

• Understand the difference between Types 1/3 and 2/5.
• Budget as part of normal budgeting process.
• Be thoughtful about budgeting salaries vs. OTPS, adjust and amend.
• Track grant receivables.
• Plan for sustainability.

Don’t...

• Budget for programs without a plan.
• Chase more grants than your program can sustain.
• Ignore compliance.
• Leave money on the table.
• Be afraid to ask LDE for help – they’re great!
Hiring/Firing Do’s & Don’ts

Do...
- Get the right people on the bus.
- Design a high quality selection process.
- Standardize offer letters – separate signatory.
- Always be recruiting!

Don’t...
- Fire without following formal termination procedure.
- Discriminate in interviewing or hiring.
- Pay severance without release agreement reviewed by attorney.
- Hesitate to remove an ineffective teacher.
Hiring/Firing Do’s & Don’ts

Which of these questions can you ask during a job interview?

• Are you from around here originally?
• Where were you born?
• Do you rent or own your home?
• Do you have kids? How many kids do you have?
• Who is your aunt/uncle/cousin? (in common field)
• Do you belong to a sorority/fraternity? (not on resume)
• Do you prefer to go by Ms. or Mrs.?
• Would you have a problem working through the week of Mardi Gras?
• Have you always lived around here?
• How is your credit history? Do you have a mortgage? We would like to run a credit check.
School Operations Do’s & Don’ts

Do…
• Manage purchases – budget, bid, negotiate, contract. In advance!
• Get the relationship with the school leader right.
• Ensure a safe and clean facility.
• Learn and share best practices (e.g., bus tier)
• Be a “sales rep” for the school!

Don’t…
• Be afraid to walk away from your district shared services.
• Get steamrolled by school leader.
• Be sloppy about cash handling and student activities.
• Let issues linger.
• Be afraid to ask for help outside your zone.
Foodservice Do’s & Don’ts

Do...
• Become or join an SFA.
• Collaborate on bids for best pricing.
• Use best practices to improve participation.
• Participate in CEP if feasible, or collect 100% of FRL forms.

Don’t...
• Miss deadlines.
• Submit claims without auditing for accurate data and participation.
• Ignore USDA and state regs.
• Lose money on the program.
Risk Management Do’s & Don’ts

Do...
• Get a certificate of insurance from everyone working at your school.
• Have a standard Facility Use Agreement.
• Update employee manual and get signed.
• File an incident report, even if no one appears injured.

Don’t...
• Allow just anyone to walk into the school.
• Blow off fire drills, lockdown drills, crisis planning.
• Blow off training (handbook, harassment, reporter)
• Buy valuable small assets (e.g., iPads) without a way to control.
Questions

What is implication of Community Eligibility Program (CEP) on Title grants?
Questions

What is the impact of the changes in e-rate on my school?
Thank you!

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Presentation will be uploaded to
www.charterschooltools.org