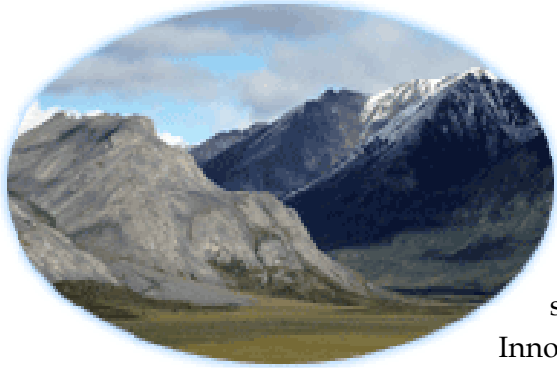


Sky Mountain Charter School

~Fall 2007~



Welcome!

Welcome to the 2007/2008 school year! I hope that all of you have gotten off to a great start and are as excited about our new school as the Sky Mountain team is. Sky Mountain Charter School (SMCS) is sponsored by the Lucerne Valley School District and is managed by Innovative Education Management (IEM). We are a Parent Driven School so we provide parent choice while still complying with the State of California's requirements for public schools. Because we are standards-based and parent-driven, there are a lot of choices in how you meet those standards and what curriculum you use to accomplish this. Your Education Specialist (ES) is available to provide your student with an individual education plan that will achieve optimum learning for your student. Our school is very unique and very committed to meeting the needs of all of our individual students.

We have an amazing team of ES's who are able to assist you with planning out your individualized education for each child. They are well versed in various teaching methodologies as well as a wide variety of curriculum that can be used to meet each student's individual needs.

Our Charter School has a Parent Council which consists of 19 parents of SMCS students. Our meetings will take place once a semester by teleconference. Thank you to all of the parents that stepped up and offered to be involved in this aspect of our school. Our first parent council meeting was November 1, 2007 and the minutes are posted on our website at <http://skymountaincs.org/ParentCouncil/index.htm>

We would also like to gather names of parents who would be interested in being part of a subcommittee in the following areas: STAR testing, fundraising, graduation, group educational activities, grants, or yearbook. If you are interested in helping with a committee, please contact Sarah Coyan, our Parent Support Clerk at scoyan@ieminc.org or #800-979-4436. If you are not already part of our parent list serve, please contact Sarah Coyan to have your e-mail address added to our list. We are looking forward to a fabulous first year and each of our parents and students are an integral part of our success as a school.

Sincerely,

Shana Fisk
Director of Instructional Services

~Community Building~

In our first few months of operation at Sky Mountain, we have all been busy with new training, beginning new positions, and just becoming comfortable with our multiple roles at Sky Mountain.

Now, we would like to concentrate on developing a school “community”. Share with your Education Specialist your ideas, inspirations and visions of what is possible for community building where you currently reside, and if you have lots of community building activities and events happening already, share with us how we can spread your good work and ideas to our SM communities in all the counties we serve.

Our parents are doing a lot of wonderful things with their children – Let’s find ways to meet together informally to share those great ideas with others!

Following are a sample of ideas that generate from an inspired parent-driven school:

- ❖ **For larger groups:** Find a fun local activity from an approved vendor (PE resource) that parents/students can participate in on a once a month basis such as bowling, skating, a climbing wall, etc. Try to find an activity where parents will be able to talk and connect with each other, as opposed to some place where you will need to be with your children the entire time.
- ❖ **For “class” activities:** Find out what you and other parents would be most interested in. Have park days or theme parties (holiday activities, etc) where the parents can take a turn hosting the activity for the students of similar ages in their area. ES’s often attend because they have found that one park day (or similar activity) a week (or every other week) can save hours of delivering materials to individual homes, or time spent talking on the phone with parents/students individually, between scheduled LR meetings. In this way, any materials that have arrived for a family can be delivered at that time, and families can also give their ES’s orders then. Save questions for that day, and all parents attending can benefit from the answers. At your first “class” activity, ask each other what you would like to happen additionally and what each is willing to contribute for the year (activity, location, planning).

Community development is a priority at Sky Mountain and in partnership with each other; we will create exciting and supportive activities and events for all of our students!

~The SMCS Administrative Team

Brain-Compatible Learning Tips

- ❖ Take 1-3 minute breaks every 12-15 minutes of schooling. Breaks can include: getting a drink, stretching, brain gym movements, listening to a song with movement, talking through a concept just learned, or doing some type of active movement. Homeschoolers who have adopted this concept and take regular breaks during the school day have found tremendous results from taking the time to give the brain time to file away all the new learning.
 - <http://www.pesoftware.com/Resources/moveLearn.html>
 - www.braingym.com
- ❖ Use music during the school day. Different types of music stimulate different parts of the brain and can assist in memory and learning.
 - <http://www.happalmer.com/articlepg1.htm>
 - <http://www.musicandlearning.com/>

Vendor Highlights...

- ❖ *Acorn Naturalist* provides quick delivery.
- ❖ *At Home Science* provides lab kits and science supplies.
- ❖ *Brainpop* and *Brainpop Junior* are fun and useful. You can easily find a lesson and activity on just about anything.
- ❖ *Captain Leslie Science* provides amazing hands-on Science lessons for students K-6.
- ❖ *Dance Spectrum* offers dance classes in Beaumont.
- ❖ *Dorothy McCandliss* is a credentialed math teacher who has created her own math curriculum. She has small classes and makes math exciting!
- ❖ *Dream Come True* offers less expensive Waldorf supplies.
- ❖ *Earthroots* is a service vendor for outdoor activities in the Orange County area.
- ❖ *Educators Publishing Service* offers Explode the Code online phonics
- ❖ *Excellence in Education* has had a great reputation over the years in being personally concerned with the children. They offer creative materials in their Duarte bookstore that parents can view before buying.
- ❖ *High Desert Gymnastics* offers tumbling classes for all ages in Wrightwood.
- ❖ *Ice Castle* offers ice skating lessons for all ages in Lake Arrowhead.
- ❖ *Lakeshore Learning* provides quick delivery and a wide array of fun activities and supplies.
- ❖ *Mountain Arts Academy* offers dance, piano, and voice lessons in Wrightwood.
- ❖ *Music Central* offers music lessons in guitar, piano, etc. all ages in most areas.
- ❖ *North Dakota Center for Distance Education*
- ❖ *Office Depot* provides fast delivery.
- ❖ *Rainbow Resource* is a popular vendor with so much variety and reasonable prices.
- ❖ *Rex Hull* is a dedicated guitar instructor in the Murrieta area. He has many years of experience and loves working with home schooling kids.
- ❖ *Swordplay* in Burbank is great at building confidence. The trainers have a great sense of humor when teaching the fencing skill.
- ❖ *Tumble City* offers gymnastics classes in Yucaipa.
- ❖ *U.S Tae Kwon Do* offers martial arts for all ages in Wrightwood.
- ❖ *Xrtainment* is a very popular vendor in Redlands that offers PE classes and activities.

PERFORMANCE *Series*

Computer Adaptive Internet Assessment for Schools

No one knows his or her way around the classroom like Scantron. For more than three decades Scantron has led the industry in data collection and assessment systems designed to meet educator's needs – from the first "bubble tests" to the latest in computer adaptive technology. As more and more school districts are embarking on a systemic reform of education and holding districts, schools, teachers, and students accountable to the standards, the demand for a comprehensive standards-based accountability system has increased. With this in mind, Scantron's solution is designed to target the instructional level of each student according to a set of specific standards (California Content Standards) and to ensure that *No Child is Left Behind*.

Scantron's latest educational tool provides teachers and administrators with an assessment tool that uses the power and immediacy of the Internet.

What is it?

The *PERFORMANCE Series™* utilizes an innovative computer-adaptive, Internet based model to target the instructional level of each student by altering question difficulty based on previous answers. Once the test has been completed, the results are immediately available providing an accurate evaluation of the student's abilities – in approximately 45-60 minutes for the longer version and approximately 20 minutes for the shorter version which we will be using this year. *PERFORMANCE Series™* will help your teachers place students at the appropriate instructional levels (target grades 2-12). Educators can use this product to evaluate skill mastery, place incoming students, and provide immediate reports to parents and tutors on progress made as the course proceeds. The advantage of the Scantron assessment solution over traditional assessments is that it measures actual growth of each student.

The content areas that are available are Reading, Math, Language Arts, and Science. We will be using the areas of Reading, Math, and Language Arts this year. There is also an add on program called Skills Connection Online (SCOL) that will help you easily create remedial activities and assessments for your students which target the skills that they need along with a home study guide. The advantage of SCOL is that it provides an online integration with the *PERFORMANCE Series™* program so you can seamlessly generate a test for students based on the standards suggested from *PERFORMANCE Series™*. Your teachers will be able to generate a test now in seconds and have them tie back the items to specific state standards. Special Education departments like to use *PERFORMANCE Series™* to help write the IEP goals. They also benefit from Skills Connection Online to create pre and post assessments to measure if the students have met their learning goals that were identified.

How it works

Every student participates in a unique, Web-based assessment that adapts automatically to the student's instructional level, quickly honing in on questions that fit — they're neither too easy nor too hard. Once completed, customized reports allow each student's instructional level and academic gains to be measured and tracked over time based on Pennsylvania State objectives and standards. You will now have accurate knowledge of which skills have been successfully attained and which still needs to be focused on for each and every student. Your teachers can quickly identify and determine learning gaps to ensure that all students get the most from the instruction.

Staff Development

In order to get the maximum benefit of this testing solution and to expedite implementation, Scantron requires a minimum of two (2) full days of Professional Staff Development.

- The first of the two-day mandatory onsite training sessions is the "pre-assessment" training, which is referred to as the *Site Set Up Training*.

This session instructs attendees how to develop an understanding of *PERFORMANCE Series™* and learn how to prepare the site(s) for immediate student testing.

- The second day of the two-day mandatory onsite training session is the "post assessment" training, which is referred to as the *Data Interpretation Training*. In this session, attendees' will develop a further understanding of *PERFORMANCE Series™*, access test results and reports, and interpret data for classroom applications.

Sky Mountain Charter School

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) Plan

The Collaborative Teaching Model

Policy

According to the Federal NCLB Highly Qualified Teachers regulations, all our students must be taught by a NCLB certified "Highly Qualified Teachers" (HQT) as "teacher of record" beginning in the 2008 school year. Each local educational agency (LEA) must develop a plan to ensure that all elementary, middle and high school teachers who are assigned to teach core academic subjects meet the NCLB requirements to ensure they are highly qualified. For IEM schools this means that the assigned ES must either be NCLB certified in each particular subject each of their students are taking, or the student must have another "teacher of record" who is NCLB certified serving the student for that course, or the student is taking that course at a community college, or the course is taken from one of our school approved online vendors. All ESs must be NCLB-compliant in at least one subject area.

The Collaborative Teaching Model

IEM schools will be utilizing a model called the Collaborative Teaching Model to meet the Federal NCLB requirements.

- Under this model, each student continues to be served by one ES who is their "supervising teacher" for all subjects.
- The assigned ES is also the "teacher of record" for all courses their students are taking that they are NCLB certified to teach (See examples below).
- For any NCLB subject areas in which the assigned ES is not NCLB-certified, the ES must see that each of their students are being served in another approved way for those courses.
- All ESs are encouraged to obtain as many NCLB certifications as possible, so that they might be better able to serve all assigned students.
- ESs with Single Subject credentials **only** may only serve high school students until they are certified in "multi-subjects".

NCLB Core Academic Subjects for K-8th grades

For IEM schools, K-8th graders can be served in all subjects by a teacher certified in multi-subjects, as 7th and 8th grades have been designated to be a part of our elementary school program. An exception to this would be a junior high student who is taking a high school course for high school credit. Also Algebra 1 has been designated a high school level course for NCLB purposes (even though it is expected to be taken in 7th or 8th grade) that must be overseen by a NCLB math certified HQT.

NCLB Core Academic Subjects for 9th to 12th grades

The core academic subjects for California High Schools are:

- English (which includes Drama and Theater for NCLB purposes)
- Reading/Language Arts (CLAD certification meets the NCLB requirements)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Sciences (which include Civics, Government, Economics, History, and Geography)
- Foreign language
- Arts
- As of now, **PE and dance** courses do not require a NCLB certified teacher, along with **all other electives** not in subject areas named above.

Ways that a student can be served by a HQT in a subject area in which their ES is not currently certified

Any of the following are recognized ways to meet the NCLB HQT requirements for your students:

- Take courses through a school approved course that meets the CA standards and is aligned with STAR and CAHSEE
- Take an online course like Oddseware or Hippocampus
- Take courses at a community college
- ES has completed the California High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) form for a core subject(s) area.

Watch for further procedures as they are developed in this pilot year—2008.

Resources for College Bound

Grad Requirements

[Worksheet](http://www.ieminc.org/genericforms/GradReqWorksht.pdf)
[Handbook](http://www.ieminc.org/genericforms/gradreqhdbk.pdf)

Information on community colleges
www.collegebound.net

UC/CSU approved community college course
www.assist.org

CA Community College list with program and degree offerings
<http://www.cccco.edu/find/find.htm>

Help with college choices
<http://www.californiacolleges.edu/>

Approved online courses (honor)
<http://www.hippocampus.org/>
<http://www.curriki.org/xwiki/bin/view/Main/WebHome>
<http://www.uccp.org/>

A-G courses

<http://www.ieminc.org/handbook/highschool/UCadmission/03cacolladm.pdf>
www.ucop.edu/doorways/guide
<http://www.ucop.edu/a-gGuide/ag/a-g/purpose.html>

SAT

Subject test information
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/SATII.html>
Reasoning test information:
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/SATI.html>

SAT scores threshold + a-g course requirements
<http://www.sscs.cc/Guidance/colladmreqmt/a-g&UC%20Admission.htm>

CHSPE
<http://www.chspe.net>

CAHSEE
Sample questions:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>

College Fairs
http://www.wacac.org/college_sched.php

Occupational Outlook handbook:
<http://www.bls.gov/oco>
www.mapping-your-future.org

College Search Resources

www.californiacolleges.edu
www.cacareerzone.org
www.csumentor.edu
www.collegeboard.com
www.actstudent.org
www.globalcomputing.com/university.htm
www.allaboutcollege.com/