

“It has become increasingly clear that both the quality and number of state’s charter schools depend heavily on who is allowed to authorize charter schools and how well they do their job. This is perhaps the most significant lesson of the charter school movement to date.”

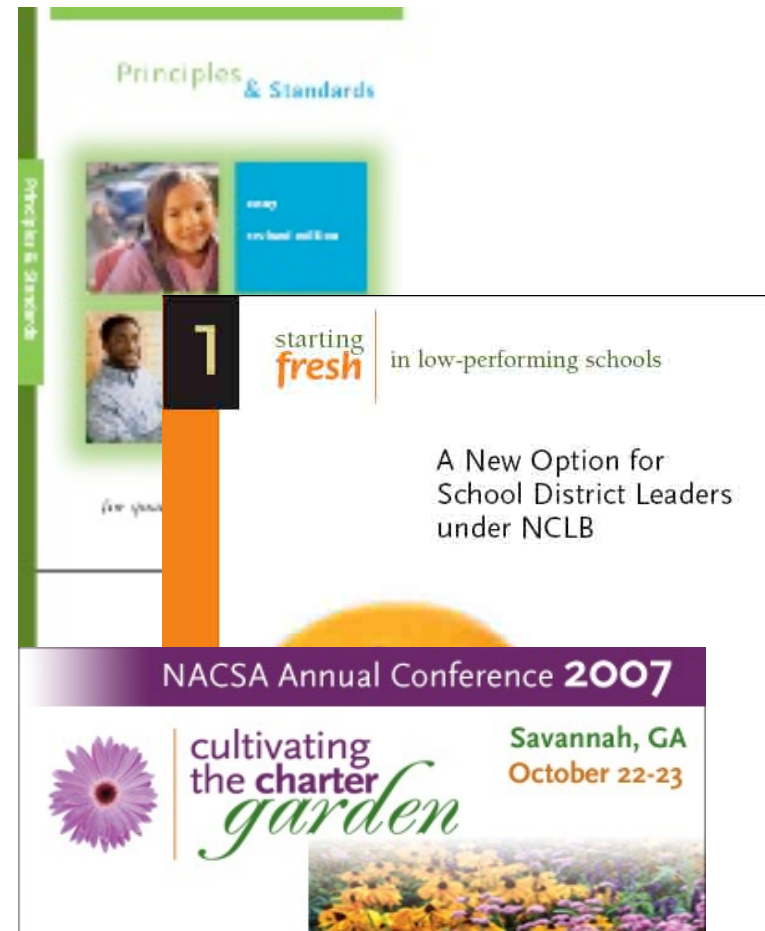
A Sum Greater than the Parts, Education Sector
Sara Mead and Andrew Rotherham, September 2007

“It’s chartering, more than lessons from charter schools, that is replicable by the public school system.”

Trends in Charter School Authorizing, Fordham Foundation

Who is NACSA?

- Founded in 2000
- Members: school districts, state ed. departments and others who authorize the majority of charter schools in the nation
- Mission:
 - To achieve quality charter schools through responsible oversight in the public interest
- Publications include:
 - Principals and Standards
 - Starting Fresh in Low-Performing Schools





Framing Authorizer Quality

Is Quality Authorizing Important?

“Both the quality and number of a state’s charter schools depend on who is allowed to authorize charter schools and how well they do their jobs.”

- Rotherham & Mead

Quality
Authorizing
Schools

System
Reform

“It is chartering ... that is replicable by the public school system.”

- Finn & Petrilli

“The charter movement can no longer coast on a theory and a hope... there are ways to strengthen the charter movement to counter the attack.”

National organizations should press “the charter movement to clean up its act and deliver the results promised.”

- Bruno Manno 2003

16 Years Later.....The State of Authorizing

- 10,000 entities are allowed to authorize in 40 states and the District of Columbia
 - State Boards and Local School Districts
 - Independent Chartering Boards
 - Public and Private Universities
 - Non-Profit Organizations
 - Municipalities and County Boards
- Only 854 are active authorizers – vast majority (732) are local school districts

Knowledge About Quality Authorizer Practices

- What is the role of authorizing in education reform? In creating great schools?
- Limited research on authorizer practice
- Little thought given to authorizing 15 years ago
- Recognition that authorizers are the primary quality control vehicle for charter schools
- How to define “successful authorizing” ?

NACSA Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing



- First published in 2004
- Widely accepted
- Used by state officials and legislatures

NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*



- Capacity and Infrastructure
- Applications Process
- Performance Contracts
- Oversight & Evaluation
- Renewal Decisions

Principles & Standards: Missing Elements

- Standards for student admission lotteries
- Standards for special education
- Standards for annual audits
- Standards for regular financial reporting
- Standards for conflicts of interest of charter school governing board members
- Standards for financial relationships between charter schools and authorizers
- Standards for overall quality of an authorizer's portfolio of schools

NACSA's CASE

- **Goal:**

Establish a high quality set of professional standards and a system of evaluation that allows authorizers to measure their practice against authorizers with high-performing portfolios of schools.

- **Philosophies:**

- Focus on authorizer obligations and outcomes, rather than only inputs; include measures of school performance.
- Establish standards and an evaluation process that are objective and transparent; provide full information to authorizers to enable them to achieve high performance.

CASE Development

- Linked to Principles & Standards
- National Advisory Board
- NACSA Review of Quality Authorizing Practices
- NACSA Review of Quality Accreditation/Certification Protocols
- Draft CASE Standards, Benchmarks & Evaluation Criteria
- Market Research

CASE Advisory Board Members

First Name	Last Name	Title	Organization
Jonas	Chartock	President, CEO	Charter School Policy Institute
Cliff	Chuang	Coordinator of Charter School Research & Finance	Massachusetts Department of Education, Charter Schools Office
Jim	Ford	Program Coordinator	National Council of LaRaza/Raza Development Fund, Inc.
Howard	Fuller	Chair, Institute for the Transformation of Learning	Marquette University
Jim	Goenner	Executive Director	The Center for Charter Schools at Central Michigan University
Jim	Griffin	President	Colorado League of Charter Schools
Scott	Hamilton	Senior Research Fellow	Thomas B. Fordham Foundation
Bill	Lake	Vice President for School Fiscal Services	Charter Schools Institute, State University of New York
Robin	Lake	Associate Director	Center on Reinventing Public Education
Jill	Levine	Director of School Services	Illinois Facilities Fund
Bruno	Manno	Senior Associate	Annie E. Casey Foundation
Alex	Medler	Senior Researcher	Colorado Children's Campaign
James	Merriman		Walton Family Foundation
Sara	Mead	Senior Research Fellow	New American Foundation
Paul	O'Neill	Senior Vice President & Deputy General Counsel	Edison Schools
Marta	Reyes	Executive Director	California State Board of Education
Dan	Roy	Charter Schools Director	Office of the Mayor, City of Indianapolis
Terry	Ryan	Program Director	Fordham Foundation
Don	Shalvey	CEO	Aspire Public Schools
Nelson	Smith	President	National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
Justin	Testerman	Director of Charter School Sponsorship	Volunteers of America of Minnesota
Stephanie	Van Koevering	Executive Director	Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers
Jed	Wallace	Director	High Tech High Learning

CASE Standards

NACSA CASE Standard #1

Charter Application Documents, Criteria & Processes

A quality authorizer implements a comprehensive and documented application process that follows fair procedures and rigorous criteria granting charters only to those developers who demonstrate strong capacity for establishing and operating a charter school likely to improve student learning.

NACSA CASE Standard #2

Performance Contracting

A quality authorizer negotiates contracts with charter schools that clearly articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, expected outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences and other material terms.

NACSA CASE Standard #3

Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

A quality authorizer conducts contract oversight that evaluates performance, monitors compliance, informs intervention and renewal decisions, and ensures autonomy provided under applicable law.

NACSA CASE Standard #4

Renewal Decision making

A quality authorizer designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses comprehensive data to make merit-based renewal decisions.

NACSA CASE Standard # 5

Portfolio Performance

A quality authorizer's policies, procedures and chartering decisions promote quality learning outcomes for students.



nacsa
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

NACSA CASE Standard #1

Charter Application Documents, Criteria & Processes

A quality authorizer implements a comprehensive and documented application process that follows fair procedures and rigorous criteria granting charters only to those developers who demonstrate strong capacity for establishing and operating a charter school likely to improve student learning.

1. The authorizer establishes chartering opportunities, processes, criteria and decisions that are detailed, clear, and communicated to the public.

- a. publicizes chartering opportunities, processes, criteria and decisions to a wide audience utilizing a variety of strategies (for example: published documents, the media, the internet or public meetings);
- b. establishes and follows timelines and notification procedures that respect the interest of applicants and the public; provides prompt notification of decisions and informs applicants of their rights and responsibilities;
- c. publicly announces chartering decisions;
- d. provides accurate and timely information in response inquiries from potential applicants, submitted applicants and the public;
- e. provides prompt notification of decisions informing applicants that have been denied options for appeal, if applicable; and
- f. meets requirements defined in state law.

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Thank You