Exploring the Potential of Citywide Charter Strategies

May 12th, 2011
Charter schools now serve 1.8 million kids.
Where are the schools?

56% in urban areas
Major Growth in Certain Cities

Source: Analysis of the Alliance’s Public Charter School Dashboard. The total number of students served by charters in Los Angeles (footnote #1) and Detroit (footnote #2) is not to scale. The total number of students served by charters in L.A. is 68,469. The total number of students served by charters in Detroit is 50,139. Cities highlighted in red have more than 10% growth in charter enrollment from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010.
Does support match needs?
• Fragmented Market for Support
  ▪ Disaggregated Services
  ▪ Barriers to opening and operating high quality charter schools (e.g. facilities, funding, human capital) impede the charter movement’s long-term sustainability

• Lack of coordination between stakeholders (e.g., charter operators, CSOs, authorizers, district and local leadership, funders, service providers, and advocacy organizations) results in wasted resources, duplication of efforts, and missed opportunities to improve quality
NAPCS History & Context

2006-2009 Federal Grant
Build the capacity of state charter support organizations to grow and support public charter schools

2008-2010 Gates Capacity Grant
CSOs are lean, and can’t provide enough support for charter schools

Support Gaps Exist
Addressing a Range of CharterNeeds

**Specific Charter School Needs**
- Human Capital
- Facilities
- Special Education
- Funding
- New School Development / Incubation

**Cross-Cutting Charter Sector Needs**
- Accountability and Quality
- Alignment and Coordination
- Community Engagement

Source: FSG research and analysis.

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### Support Indicators for City Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Policy Environment</th>
<th>Local Political Support</th>
<th>Strong Authorizing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Supportive state policies around charter funding, charter growth, and charter laws</td>
<td>• City leaders (e.g., Mayor, city commissioners) are proponents of charters</td>
<td>• Authorizer (e.g., district, state, university, other entity) is focused on ensuring charter quality</td>
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<td><strong>District Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>High-Performing Charters</strong></td>
<td><strong>Infrastructure Support</strong></td>
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<td>• Charter commitment from Superintendent, School Board, and district’s charter office</td>
<td>• Existence of one or more high-performing charters with the ability to scale and carry the voice of quality for the charter sector</td>
<td>• State CSO leads advocacy efforts</td>
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<td>• Strong service provider network (e.g., back office)</td>
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<td>• Local funder support of charters</td>
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<td>• Deep pool of quality talent (e.g., leaders, teachers)</td>
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Source: FSG research and analysis.

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D.C., Newark, New York City, and New Orleans have developed city-based CSOs as part of their local charter support sector.
## Current Citywide Organizing Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizing Structure</th>
<th>Primary Role(s)</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use Existing Local Organizations</strong></td>
<td>• Informal convener</td>
<td>• CEI-PEA in New York</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Locally staffed facilitator</td>
<td>• CCSA’s Oakland Collaborative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Create a City-Based CSO</strong></td>
<td>• Technical assistance provider and local advocate</td>
<td>• New Schools for New Orleans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Grantmaker</td>
<td>• New York City Charter Center</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Newark Charter School Fund</td>
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<td>• DC Schools Fund</td>
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Implementing a Citywide Strategy

**Step 1: Situation Assessment**
- What is the current state of the local charter sector?
  - Charter school needs and charter sector needs
  - Existing players
  - Local support environment

**Step 2: Goal Development**
- What are the goals and corresponding activities for a citywide charter strategy?
  - Improve charter sector coordination
  - Investing in capacity building for charters
  - Improve district-charter alignment

**Step 3: Organizing Structure**
- What is the best organizing structure for a citywide charter strategy?
  - Resource requirements
  - Staffing needs
  - Plan for sustainability over time

Source: FSG research and analysis.

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Charter Needs Assessment

• Identify charter needs that a citywide charter strategy should address

Existing Players

• Map the ecosystem of existing charter support organizations to better understand potential gaps in service

Support Environment

• Assess the key elements that provide a supportive environment for a citywide charter strategy
Step 2: Goal Development

- **Improve Charter Sector Coordination**
  - Increase collaboration and best practice sharing among operators and service providers, leading to improved efficiency

- **Invest in Capacity Building for Charters**
  - Provide resource-intensive support to address high-priority needs such as human capital

- **Improve District-Charter Alignment**
  - Work collaboratively with district to increase the overall quality of schools and drive-system-wide reform
## Step 3: Organizing Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizing Options</th>
<th>Existing Entity with Low Resource Requirements</th>
<th>New Entity with Moderate Resource Requirements</th>
<th>New Entity with High Resource Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>• Leverage existing charter support provider or local education organization</td>
<td>• Establish backbone supporting organization with dedicated staff</td>
<td>• Create a city-based CSO like NYC Charter School Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Requirements</strong></td>
<td>• $100K-$500K per year</td>
<td>• $500K+ per year</td>
<td>• $4M+ per year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing Needs</strong></td>
<td>• 1-2 FTEs</td>
<td>• 3+ FTEs</td>
<td>• 3+ FTEs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Roles</strong></td>
<td>• Coordinator and Facilitator</td>
<td>• Project Manager, Facilitator, and Data Manager</td>
<td>• Funder, Incubator, Technical Assistance Provider, Coordinator, and Advocate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Vision: Collective Impact

**Current State:**
Fragmented Charter Sector
- Lack of Coordination at the City Level

**Evolving State:**
Citywide Charter Strategies
- Increasing Momentum for Citywide Charter Strategies

**Desired End State:**
Improved Educational Results for All Children

Common Agenda Around Quality Public Schools, with Charters Playing an Important Role
- Common Agenda
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Shared Measurement Systems
- Continuous Communication
- Supporting Infrastructure

Source: FSG research and analysis.

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