



NATIONAL
CHARTER SCHOOL
RESOURCE CENTER

How are State Entities Improving Authorizing?

*A NCSRC Policy Framework and Technical Assistance in CSP
States*

Thursday, July 9, 2020 | Virtual Presentation

charterschoolcenter.ed.gov

While We Wait... A Quick Icebreaker

Please introduce yourself in the chat (name and organization) and share your summer reading recommendation.



Norms for Today's Call

- Update your name to your full name and organization.
- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Show your video to enhance dialogue and interaction.
- Be open to other opinions and courteous to your peers.



About the NCSRC

The National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) provides technical assistance to federal grantees and resources supporting charter sector stakeholders. NCSRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and managed by Manhattan Strategy Group in partnership with WestEd.



On the Webinar Today

- Steve Canavero, Ph.D., National Charter School Resource Center
- Lauren Outlaw, National Charter School Resource Center
- Robin Chait, National Charter School Resource Center



Purpose and Agenda

- Introduce the NCSRC Policy Framework for High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices
- Share how three State Entity Grantees are supporting high-quality authorizing through their CSP grants
- Provide an opportunity for discussion with peers



Authorizing Matters

The relationship between the quality of charter schools in a portfolio and the authorizer is **not a mystery**.

This is *hard* work!



High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices

- Quality authorizers come in all forms: LEA, IHE, ICB, NFP, SEA, and NEG
- More *how* and *what* than *who*.
- Build upon law and policy with quality practices.



NCSRC Policy Framework Purpose



Tool for States to:

- » Review and assess policy support for high-quality authorizing practices
- » Identify TA needed to support high-quality authorizing



Tool for NCSRC to create:

- » Foundation for describing states' high-quality authorizing practices
- » State profiles describing authorizing policy contexts
- » Identifying innovative policies/practices

What this Tool is Not...



An exhaustive list of policies needed to support high quality authorizing practices



A tool for developing a ranking or rating of states' authorizing policy environments

Policy Framework Methodology and Common Themes/Practices

- **Methodology**

- Reviewed high-quality authorizing practices in ESSA; NACSA and NAPCS literature
- Identified common themes/practices
- Created indicators and sub-indicators related to each theme/practice

- **Common Themes/Practices**

- Authorization
- Performance Monitoring
- Renewal/Revocation
- Authorizer Accountability
- Authorizer Leadership, Student Access, and Student Services
- Authorizer Funding

NCSRC Policy Framework for High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices

Exhibit 2: Policy Framework for High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices

Each indicator and sub-indicator describe practices that should be included in State law or policy.

Policy Framework for High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices

Authorization

- Does not cap charter school growth
- Provides for more than one authorizing pathway

Application includes the following:

- Application criteria specified
- Timelines
- Evaluation review process
- Process for denied applications

Performance-based contract includes and provides for the following:

- A separate post-application agreement
- Rights and responsibilities of authorizer and school
- Academic, financial, and operational performance expectations for schools
- An initial term of not more than five years
- Fiscal, legal, and programmatic autonomy for schools
- Independent charter school governing boards

Performance Monitoring

- Provides for annual authorizer evaluation of schools based on the performance goals and expectations set forth in performance-based contract
- Establishes a comprehensive accountability/monitoring system that includes performance expectations and compliance requirements
- Minimizes schools' administrative and reporting burden
- Articulates authorizer action for schools that fail to meet performance expectations (e.g., probation, sanction, or turnaround)

Renewal/Revocation

- Establishes a clear renewal process and decision-making criteria
- Requires that decisions to renew/revoke be based on student academic achievement
- Requires clear school closure procedures (e.g., parent notification, student enrollment, student record transfer, and disposition of assets)

Authorizer Accountability

- Provides for a registration process for eligible authorizing entities
- Requires the State entity to review authorizers' performance
- Requires authorizers to adhere to standards for high-quality authorizing

Authorizer Leadership, Student Access, and Student Services

- Requires a mission or strategic vision for authorizing
- Promotes quality authorizing by requiring technical assistance and/or professional development for authorizers and/or charter school applicants
- Ensures equitable access to all students
- Requires appropriate services for educationally disadvantaged students (e.g., students with special needs, English learners, students in foster care, and/or unaccompanied homeless youth)

Authorizer Funding

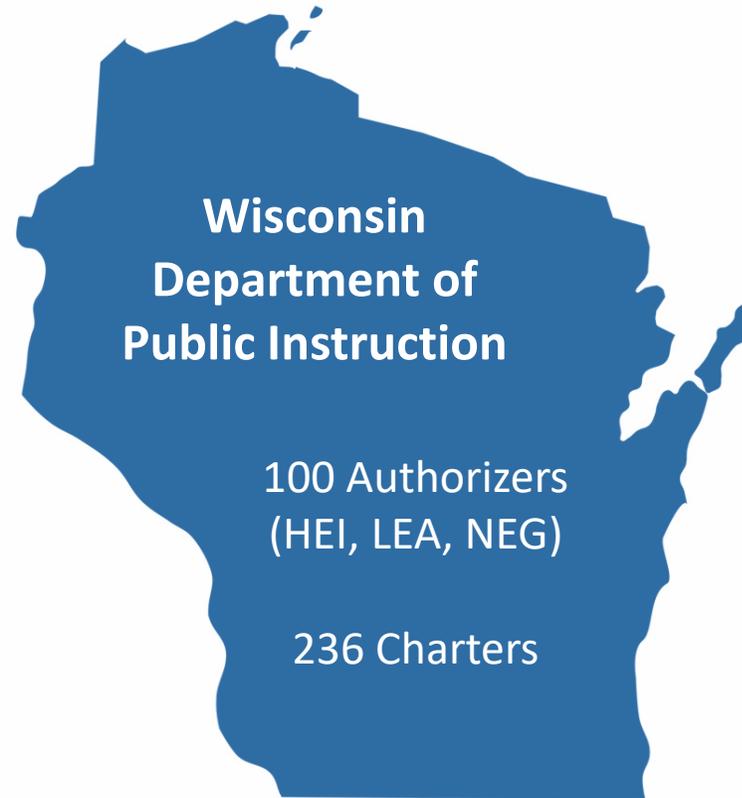
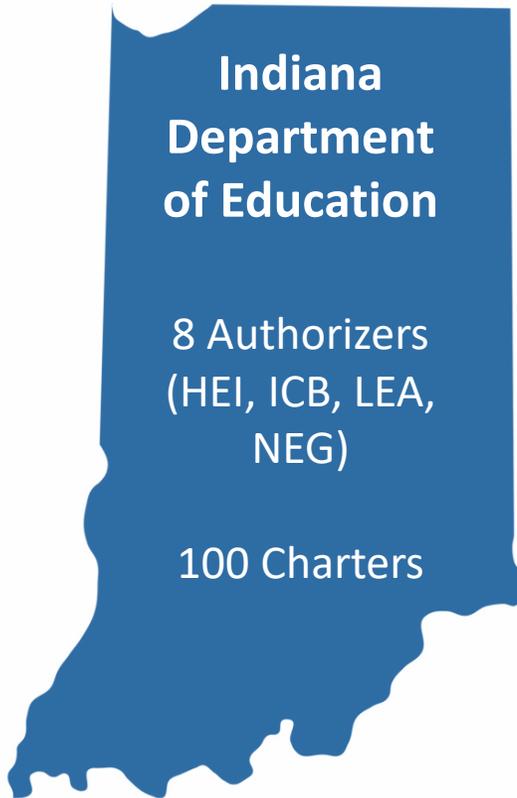
- Provides a mechanism for guaranteed access to authorizer funding
- Includes a process for holding authorizers accountable for how funding is used



Technical Assistance Approaches

Provide	Evaluate	Conduct	Develop	Convene
Provide professional development to authorizers on national, promising practices	Evaluate authorizing practices and make recommendations for improvements	Conduct outreach to potential authorizers and training for new authorizers	Develop model tools and resources for authorizing	Convene authorizers in professional learning communities to share current practices

State Entity Presenters



High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices in the Crossroads of America

*Indiana Department of Education Charter School
Program Team*

<https://www.doe.in.gov/grants/charter-school-program>



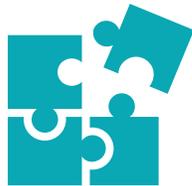
Grant-Funded Authorizer Activities

Grant Funded Activity	Activity Description
Authorizer Quality Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Establish authorizing quality criteria- Create needs assessment framework and process- Conduct needs assessments- Provide technical support
New Authorizer Bootcamp	A customized NACSA bootcamp specifically created based on IN charter law and authorizing context with customized support for IN authorizers
Authorizer Innovation Grant	Formula-based grant prioritizing individual needs to build charter school capacity via innovation, incubation, expansion, replication, and improvement

Priorities



Leverage support to build capacity for the Indiana charter schools to grow quality programs



Increase coordination and collaboration



Quarterly Authorizer Meeting



Proactive Communication

Lessons Learned



Maintain frequent, collaborative communication

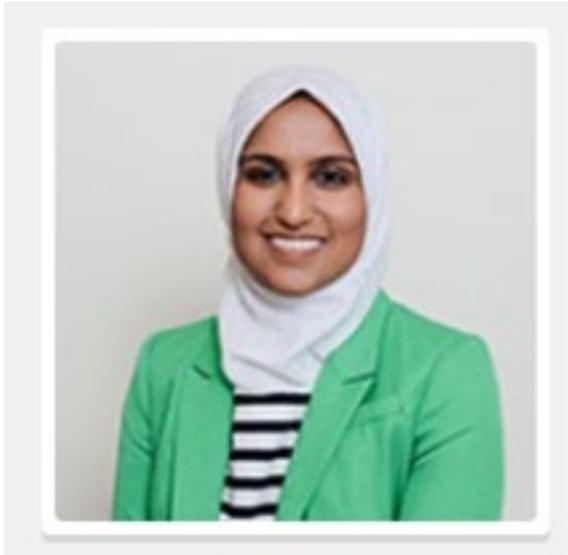
Seek and welcome feedback AND implement it!



Communicate with authorizers only about negative news or complaints

Ignore authorizer feedback/concerns

Indiana's Contact Information



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Questions for Indiana?



High-Quality Charter School Authorizing in the Badger State

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Wisconsin Resource Center for Charter Schools

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sms/charter-schools>
<http://wrccs.org/>



WI Activities to Support High-Quality Authorizing

The Program consists of the following:

 Defined terms

 Competencies

 Best Practices

 Application

 Model Contracts

 Conference and Trainings

 Personalized Support

 Mentor program

A Closer Look

Community Engagement

Provides community resources explaining school options

Legal

Establishes/reviews charter contract to ensure alignment with WRCCS/DPI Benchmarks

Mission

Plans/sets mission and vision for authorizer with clear goals that align with community and geography allowing autonomy for charter schools; develops/refines authorizer's understanding of legal and philosophical roles and responsibilities

Culture

Develops/sustains/models a positive and empowering work environment where all stakeholders can experience working conditions that sustain energy and dedication for years

Strategic Planning

Creates/refines: annual monitoring tools, a plan and procedure for soliciting applications for new charter school concepts, a plan and procedure for reviewing new charter school applications, a process for onboarding new schools to the authorizers portfolio

Performance Management

Creates/ensures: a set of performance, practices for holding schools accountable with corrective action planning, practices to navigate school revocation decisions and timeline, systems for school renewal decisions and timelines, a system for recognizing high-performing schools



Authorizing Practice Priorities

High-quality materials

- Uniform understanding of authorizer roles and responsibilities

Engaging active authorizers

- 96 active authorizers (91 are districts) over 50% engaged by Year 3 of project

Engaging inactive authorizers

- About 350 potential authorizers engaged several new ones

Increasing transparency

- Application solicitation and process contract performance standards

WRCCS Year Book

The screenshot displays the WRCCS Yearbook interface. At the top left is the WRCCS logo (WI RESOURCE CENTER FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS) and the title "Yearbook". On the top right, there are navigation icons for "Schools", "By The Numbers", "Printable Version", and "Back to WRCCS". Below these is a "View As:" section with "Listing" and "Map" options. The main area is a map of Wisconsin with numerous blue location pins. A sidebar on the left contains a search bar and several filter dropdown menus: "By Primary Educational Model", "By School Type", "By Authorizer", "By CESA", "Mentor School?", "Charter School Program Sub-Grantee?", and "In Planning?". At the bottom of the sidebar, it says "Showing 239 schools".

Lessons learned

Work to support specific needs of All schools to meet the needs of ALL students.

Build a warehouse of resources to support the needs and strengths of WI Charters.

We are here to build capacity in Wisconsin.

Cultivate relationships among schools and facilitate sharing of high-quality practices.



Wisconsin's Contact Information

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- Mike Bormett Michael.Bormett@dpi.wi.gov

Questions for Wisconsin?



High-Quality Charter School Authorizing in the Star of the North

Minnesota Department of Education

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/cs/>



Activities to Support Quality Authorizing Include:



Annual Authorizer Conference

Authorizer Training Funds available through Federal CSP Grant

Minnesota Authorizer Performance Evaluation System (MAPES)

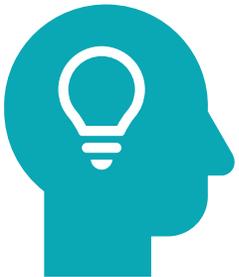
Ongoing Technical Assistance as requests are received or as needed

Theory of Action



Annual Authorizer Conferences

- MAPES Round 1 results influenced authorizer conference and training topics
- MDE review of authorizer submissions and charter school activities also influences conference and training topics



LESSONS LEARNED:

- Authorizer input ensures topics are timely and relevant to authorizer work
- Be prepared to address “hot topics”

Authorizer Training Funds

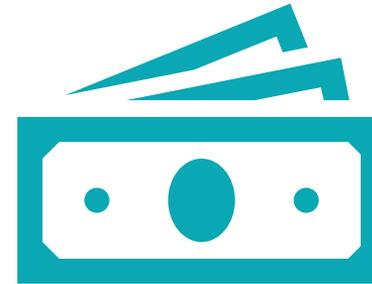
CSP supports Minnesota authorizers in attending training, particularly focused on fiscal oversight.

- All commissioner-approved Minnesota authorizers with executed grant contracts are eligible to receive up to \$2,500 per year for each of the five CSP Grant years
- Funds support attendance at non-MDE training and educational opportunities
- MDE ensures cost reimbursements are allowable

Authorizer Training Lessons Learned

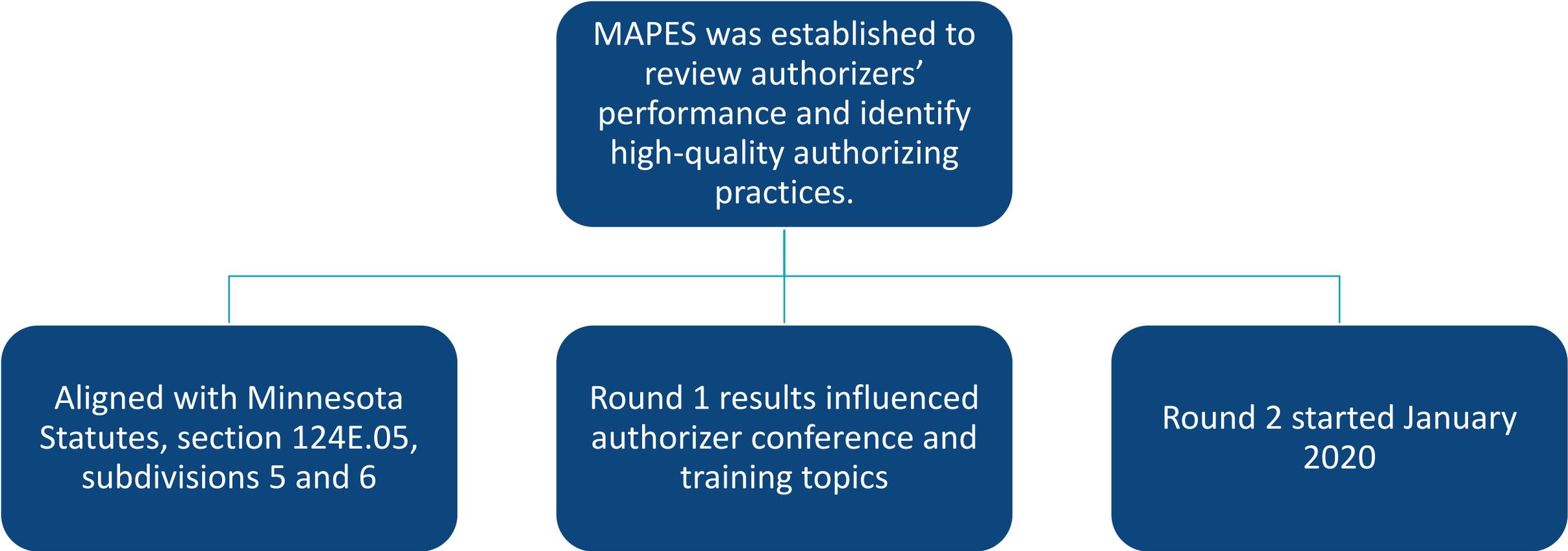


Establish processes for communicating, training, applying, approving applications, disseminating funds, accountability, etc. prior to implementing the program



Clearly communicate appropriate use of funds

MAPES Overview



MAPES Objectives Include:

Setting	Setting clear expectations between authorizers and MDE
Ensuring	Ensuring authorizer accountability and the fulfillment of the authorizer application
Promoting	Promoting high-quality charter schools and authorizer excellence
Promoting	Promoting national principles and standards for quality authorizing
Evaluating	Evaluating authorizer performance through a lens of continuous improvement

MAPES Lessons Learned



Engage authorizers and other stakeholders throughout the development of the evaluation system



Publish the evaluation system at least one year prior to implementation



Ensure alignment with relevant statutes



Celebrate the successes



Be open to feedback

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How is YOUR State using its SE CSP grant to support high-quality authorizing practices?

In Breakout Rooms



Keep an Eye Out for Upcoming NCRSC Virtual Events & Resources

- EL Instruction Learning Module
- Leading in the Unknown Self-Guided Master Class
- Grantee Profiles



How can you contact us?



charterschoolcenter.ed.gov



contact-us@charterschoolcenter.org

Don't Forget...



To leverage the SE Exchange to connect with your peers!

Response requested, please!

Please respond to the pop-up polling questions to let us know how we did on this event.



