Welcome to the Webinar!

Expanding the Supply of High-Quality Charter Schools: Innovations in Incubation

We will be starting soon.
Expanding the Supply of High-Quality Charter Schools: Innovations in Incubation

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The **U.S. Department of Education** is committed to promoting effective practices, providing technical assistance, and disseminating the resources critical to ensuring the success of charter schools across the country. To that end, the Education Department, under a contract with Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research, has developed the **National Charter School Resource Center**.
Presenters

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Expanding the Supply of High-Quality Charter Schools

Innovations in Incubation

Joe Ableidinger

Ethan Gray
Webinar Overview

• Incubation is a promising strategy for accelerating the growth of high-quality charter schools.
• CEE-Trust members include established and emerging city-based incubators.
• Their experiences reveal **four critical focus areas** for charter incubators and **innovative responses to the challenges of incubation** in each area.
• Policymakers can support incubation through policy change in five major areas.
The Need for Charter Incubation

Limitations of current charter growth

- Top charter schools and CMOs reach too few students
- Need new strategies to expand available options
- Most charters and CMOs anticipate limited growth

Limited supply of promising leaders

- Critical shortage of quality charter leaders
- Too few paths to school leadership
- Insufficient support for top leadership candidates
The Promise of Charter Incubation

Up-front screening and targeted investment

- Rigorous screening, cultivating only prospective school leaders that show exceptional promise
- Invest substantial resources in promising candidates

Accelerate charter sector growth

- Intentionally build supply of promising leaders
- Create more hospitable environments for new charters to open and thrive
Early Evidence Suggests Incubation Pays Off

Established incubators have accelerated charter sector growth in their localities...

- Achieved strong results in incubated schools
- Created hospitable environments for incubation
- Helped recruit proven charter models

...but it is still too early to draw conclusions.

- Few established incubators
- Limited data
What is CEE-Tru$t?

18 members include mayors’ offices, city-based education reform organizations, and foundations dedicated to expanding education entrepreneurship

- The Teaching Trust - Dallas
- The Thomas B. Fordham Institute – Dayton
- The Rodel Foundation of Delaware – Delaware
- Innovative Schools - Delaware
- The Donnell-Kay Foundation – Denver
- The Skillman Foundation – Detroit
- The Mind Trust – Indianapolis
- The Kauffman Foundation – Kansas City
- The Hyde Family Foundations – Memphis
- Charter School Partners – Minneapolis
- Office of the Mayor Metropolitan Nashville & Davidson County – Nashville
- Newark Charter School Fund – Newark
- New Schools for New Orleans – New Orleans
- The Blue Ridge Foundation New York–New York City
- The Arizona Community Foundation – Arizona
- Rhode Island Mayoral Academies – Rhode Island
- The Office of Mayor Kevin Johnson – Sacramento
- The Office of Mayor Francis Slay – St. Louis
Member Characteristics

- All have track records of developing and leading change efforts in their cities
- Members engage in reform by:
  - Launching or growing education ventures
  - Partnering on collaborative projects
  - Sharing best practices and lessons learned
CEE-Trust Charter Incubation Working Group

• Formed to explore topic of charter incubation: intentionally building the supply of high-quality charter schools and CMOs without engaging directly in school management.

• Includes new and experienced incubators and others considering incubation

• Collaborate around common challenges, lessons learned, and potential partnerships
CEE-Trust Charter Incubators – Defining Characteristics

- Strategic focus on leadership development
- Expertise in new starts
- Selective screening for high-potential school leaders
- Publically accountable for leaders’ success or failure
- Strong community ties
Four Critical Focus Areas for City-Based Charter Incubators

- Attracting and developing effective school or CMO leaders
- Partnering strategically to help leaders open and operate high-quality charter schools and CMOs
- Championing charter schools and school leaders in the community
- Coordinating advocacy to support charter schools and new charter leaders
Attract and Develop Effective Leaders

- Look to a wide range of local sources for leadership talent
- Search regionally or nationally to meet talent needs
- Recruit and train leadership teams
- Carefully vet and remove candidates who fall short
Partner Strategically

• Pool resources and share strategies and tools among charter leaders
• Match internal capacity with external partnerships
• Network with external partners to access human capital pipelines
Champion Charter Schools and School Leaders in the Community

• Build exceptional boards
• Introduce leaders to communities well in advance of school opening
• Facilitate deep and ongoing community engagement
Coordinate Advocacy to Support New Charter Leaders

• Develop strategic partnerships and build coalitions among operators, authorizers, and districts
• Advocate for public and philanthropic funding
• Publicize school-level and city-wide victories
Top Five Policies to Support Incubation

• Eliminate charter caps, but set a high bar for new charter approvals
• Mandate and hold authorizers accountable for closure or restructuring of low-achieving charter schools
• Fund charter schools equitably for operations and facilities
• Provide charter school leaders substantial operational autonomy
• Streamline approval and governance policies for charter models once they prove successful
Top Five Policies to Support Incubation:

Eliminate Charter Caps

What can policymakers do?

- Eliminate charter school caps
- Empower a range of authorizers and hold them accountable

How will eliminating caps help incubators?

- Cities and states that support growth and focus on quality are more attractive places to start schools
- Possible “smart caps” that eliminate limits on growth of networks that demonstrate excellent results
Top Five Policies to Support Incubation: Hold Authorizers Accountable

What can policymakers do?

- Hold authorizers accountable for approving, monitoring, and if necessary closing charter schools
- Do not count closed schools against authorizer caps

How will it help incubators?

- Closing failing schools can benefit prospective charter school operators, including incubated school leaders, by freeing up space under state charter caps
- Charter markets with reputations for quality may attract more promising leaders
Top Five Policies to Support Incubation: **Fund Charters and Incubators**

What can policymakers do?

- Reduce funding disparities between charters and district schools for operations and facilities
- Allocate public funding to support incubation

How will it help incubators?

- Funding equity will allow charters to optimize operational efficiency and improve performance
- Public funding can provide sustainable support while allowing careful monitoring of incubators’ results
Top Five Policies to Support Incubation: Grant Leaders Operational Autonomy

What can policymakers do?

- Grant charters exemptions or waivers from restrictive laws in areas such as staffing, curriculum, budgets, and scheduling
- Restrict ability of authorizers to infringe on leaders’ autonomies in key operational areas

How will it help incubators?

- States that grant charters more significant autonomies may attract and retain more promising leaders
Top Five Policies to Support Incubation: Streamline Policies to Reward Results

What can policymakers do?

- Permit access to streamlined approval processes for successful incubators
- Permit boards to oversee multiple schools

How will it help incubators?

- Reward successful track record for incubated schools
- Efficient sharing of screening responsibility between incubators and authorizers
- Make it easier to recruit exceptional board members
What Makes Charter Incubation More Compelling than Other Education Reform Strategies?

Relative costs of incubation

- One-time incubation investment of $200-$500k
- SIG grants average $2.59 million over three years
- Turnarounds and other reforms involve ongoing costs

Incubation alleviates major risks of new starts

- By design, incubation helps alleviate risk by focusing on screening and supporting highest-potential leaders
- Most efforts to fix low-performing schools have failed due to incremental reforms and lack of rapid retry
PUBLIC IMPACT is a national education policy and management consulting firm based in Chapel Hill, N.C. We are a small, growing team of researchers, thought leaders, tool-builders, and on-the-ground consultants who help education leaders and policymakers improve student learning in K-12 education. We believe that if we focus on a core set of promising strategies for change, we can make dramatic improvements for all students.

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CEE-Trust - founded in 2010 by The Mind Trust - is a growing network of 18 city-based non-profits, foundations, and mayors’ offices that support education innovation and reform. CEE-Trust’s goal is to accelerate the growth of high-impact entrepreneurial education solutions in member cities. CEE-Trust achieves this goal by designing collaborations between cities, identifying and documenting best practices, hosting events, and producing analysis of cutting edge issues.

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Questions?

Raise your hand or enter your question in the chat box on the left side of your screen.
Thank you for participating.

- We look forward to your participation in future webinars hosted by the National Charter School Resource Center.
- This webinar will be archived at the following website: http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/webinars/
- Please share your feedback with us through the evaluation.