

Icebreaker

In the chat, please share your go-to quote, motto, or mantra you always turn to when you meet challenging times.

“ Insert
Inspiration
Here.”



NATIONAL
CHARTER SCHOOL
RESOURCE CENTER

Indicators of Distress

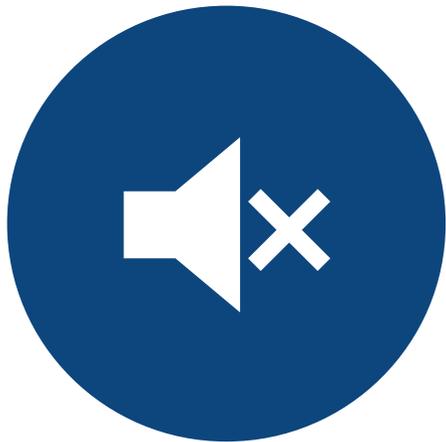
And What They Mean in the Charter Sector

A Workshop for Charter Management Organizations, Governing Boards, and School Leaders

November 12, 2020 | Virtual Presentation

charterschoolcenter.ed.gov

Norms for Discussion



Remember to mute yourself



Actively participate in breakout rooms



Utilize the chat

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 (MSG) in partnership with WestEd.



On the Webinar Today



Aimee Evan
National Charter
School Resource
Center



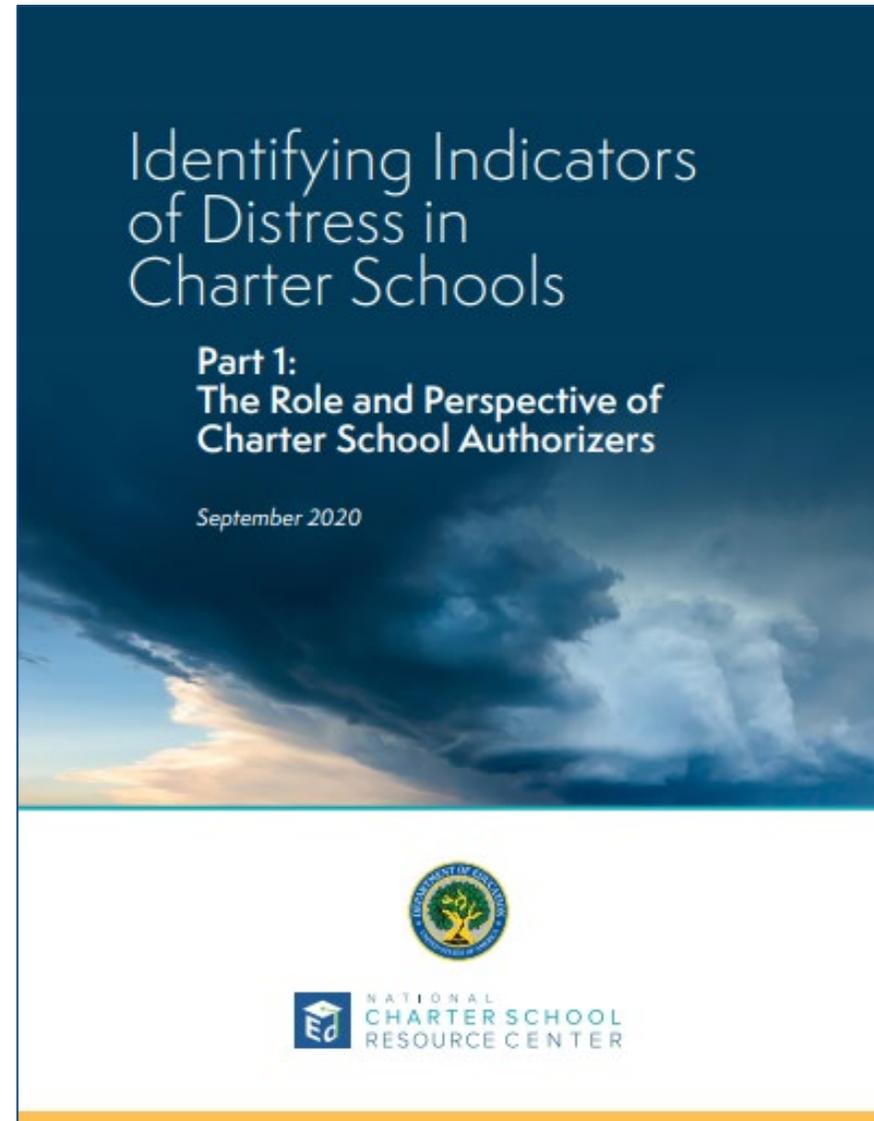
Laura Groth, Ed.D.
National Charter
School Resource
Center



Hannah Sullivan
National Charter
School Resource
Center

Workshop based on...

Available for download at
www.charterschoolcenter.ed.gov



Today's Big Question



How can we identify schools that are falling off-track and help get them back on-track?

Session Objectives

Learn

Learn about *upper stratosphere* characteristics – “indicators of distress” – of struggling schools prior to failure

Understand

Understand the potential role of an early warning system (EWS) approach to identify schools in distress early in the school failure trajectory

Share

Share about the indicators of distress you’re seeing

Incorporate

Incorporate indicators of distress and an EWS in your own work



Agenda



Why do indicators of distress help improve the quality of the education sector?



What indicators of distress did authorizers identify?



How are you or how can you identify indicators of distress at the building level?





Why indicators of distress help improve the quality of the education sector

Early Warning Systems and Death Spiral

Early Warning Systems:

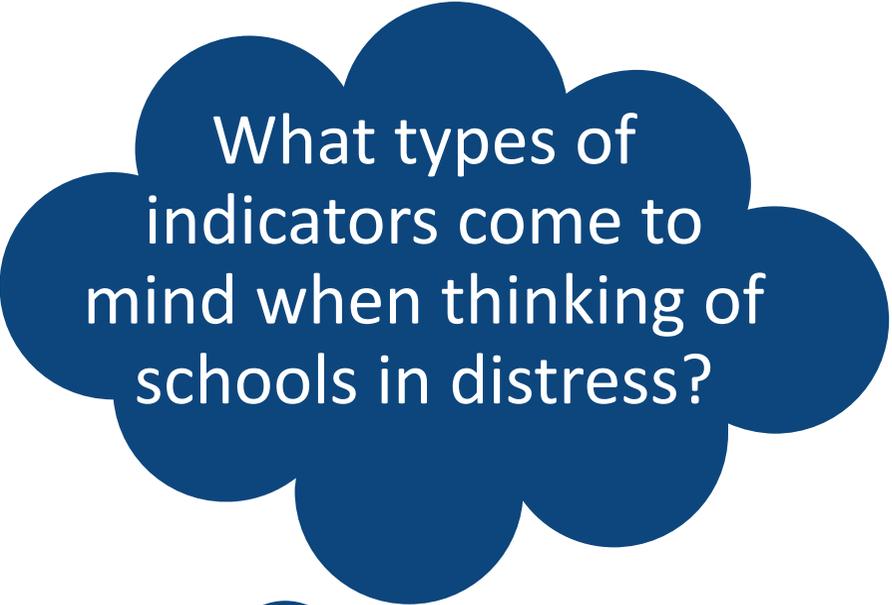
- Review past events in broad context to identify potential characteristics of distress
- Review past events in one's own context against characteristics
- Apply characteristics to current events in one's own context to predict potential future events

Death Spiral:

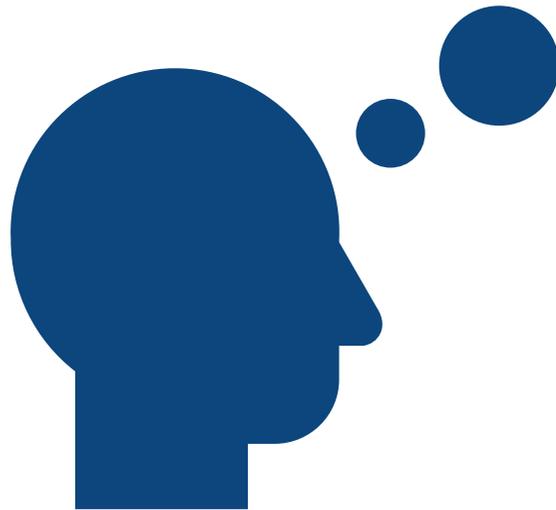
- Identify organizational decline
- Define the stages of decline to determine when and how intervention(s) needs to occur

Used together: Indicators can help identify schools in distress *and* determine the type of intervention(s) necessary *prior to school failure and negative impact on students.*

Guiding Question



What types of indicators come to mind when thinking of schools in distress?



Here's What We Heard So Far.....

Inability to Find Board Members

Not Meeting Performance Metrics

Declining Academic Performance

Low Enrollment

Audit Findings

Leadership Changes

Lack of Communication

No Improvement Despite Intervention

High Staff Turnover

Late Submission of Reports

Missed Deadlines

High Teacher Turnover





What indicators of distress did authorizers identify?

Indicators of Distress

Data signaling that a school's performance is declining in a number of areas.



Leadership

Governing Board

Operations

Finance

Talent

Culture

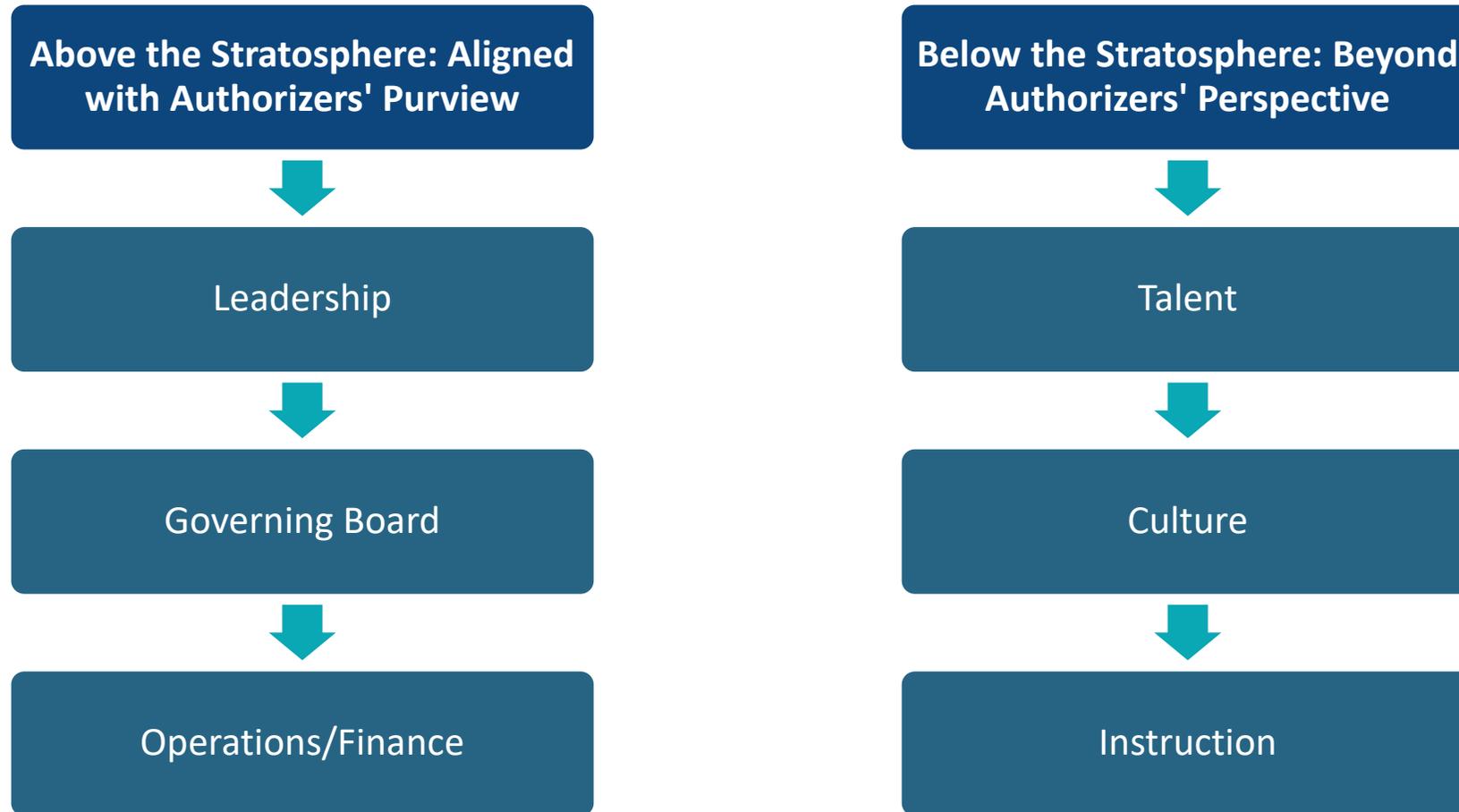
Instruction



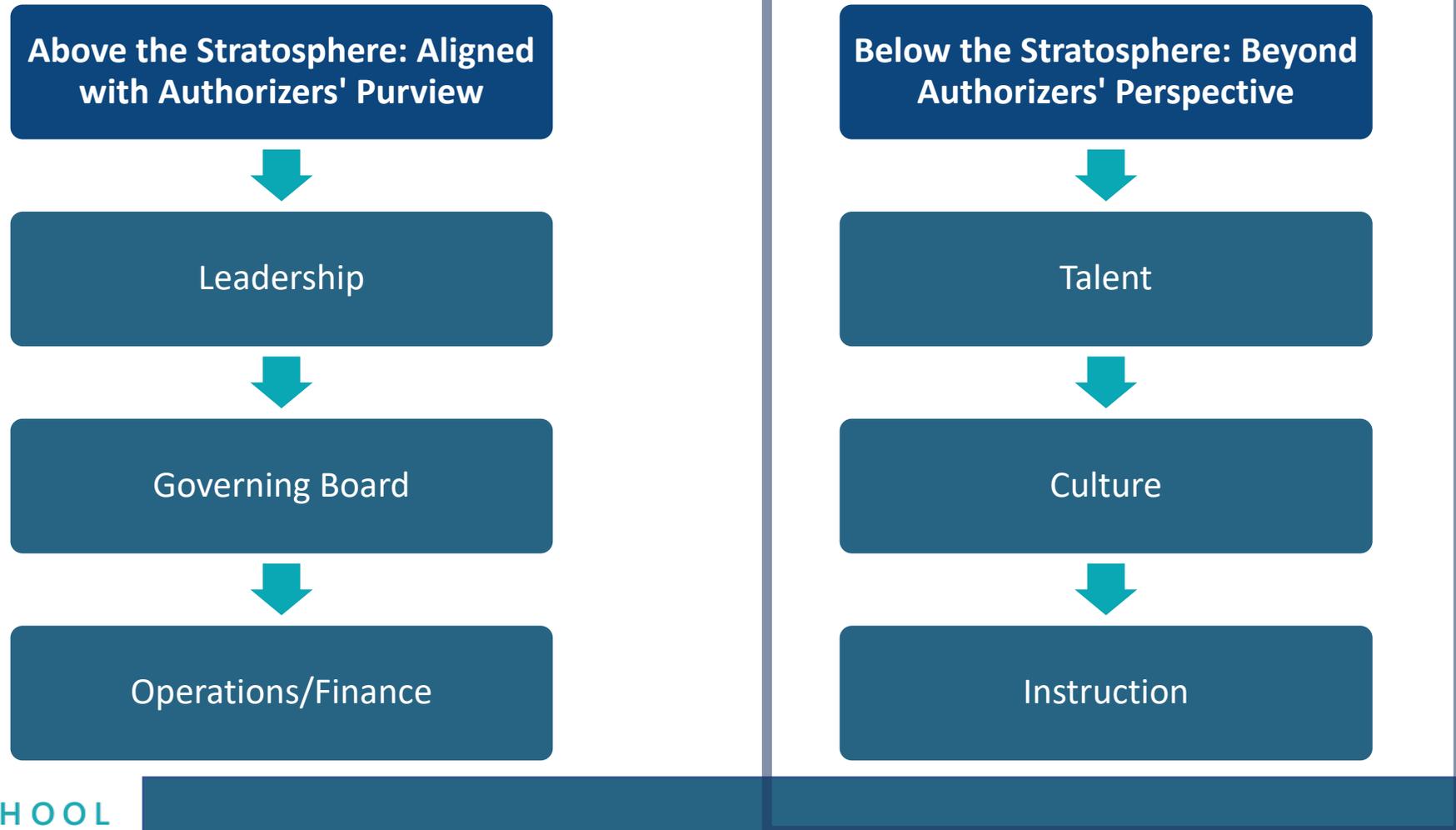
Finding: Authorizers tend to focus on indicators at the upper layer of the stratosphere of a school's functions.

Authorizers identify indicators of distress related to school leadership, school governing boards, and operational/financial elements, which are often tied to areas of concern in talent, culture, and instruction.

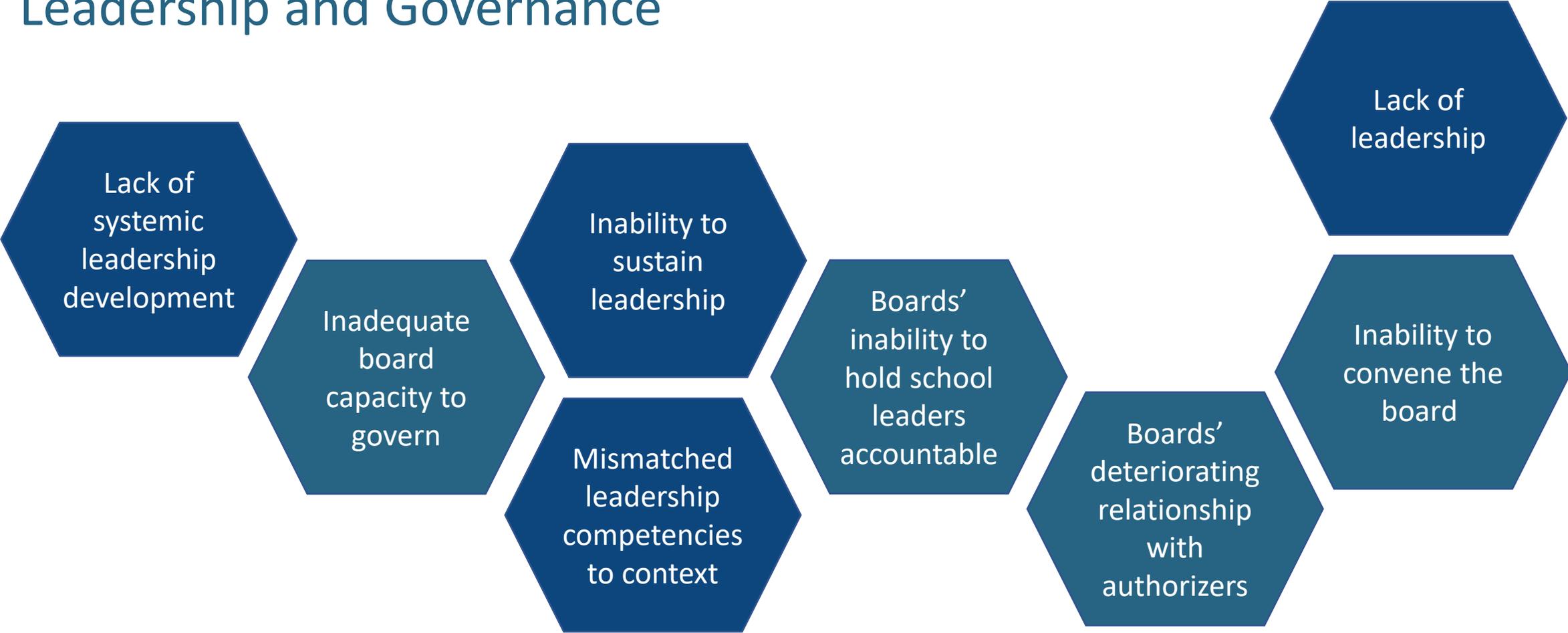
Stratosphere



Stratosphere



Leadership and Governance



Operations

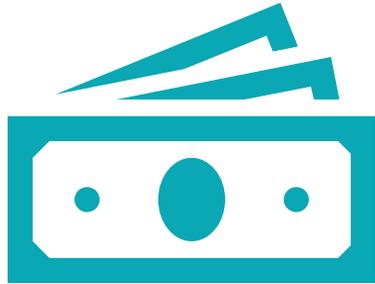


Breakdown in compliance and reporting functions



Failure to align to market needs

Finance



Failure to properly manage
finances



Misappropriation of funds

Indicators Below the Stratosphere



Talent

- Hiring challenges and turnover
- Teacher capacity decline



Culture

- Lack of connection with students and families
- Inhospitable professional culture



Instruction

- Lack of focus on instruction
- Cohesion or alignment issues in curriculum, standards, assessments



Finding: The context of authorizing has continued to evolve as the field matures, especially as it relates to school improvement.

Authorizers are weighing the implications of school improvement needs on their work in supporting school autonomy and accountability.



**How are you or how can you use indicators of distress at
the building level?**

Small Group Discussion

Small Group Discussion: What to Look for and How

- As a group, pick one of three caselets to dissect:
 - The case of the **Elusive Enrollments**
 - **Will I Stay or Will I Go?** The case of **Teacher Turnover**
 - The case of **Board vs. School Leader**

Small Group Discussion: Using Hindsight as Foresight

As a group, confer and answer the questions:



What are the issues you see at this school?



Digging deeper: What else might be going on? What would *you* look into to find out?



What help does this school need? How could they get it? Who would provide the support?



Beyond the Caselet: What needs are not being served by the current options for support? In your perspective, is the authorizing sector moving towards helping schools improve?

Q&A



What's Next?

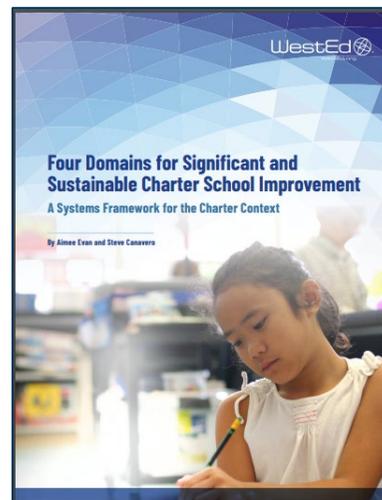
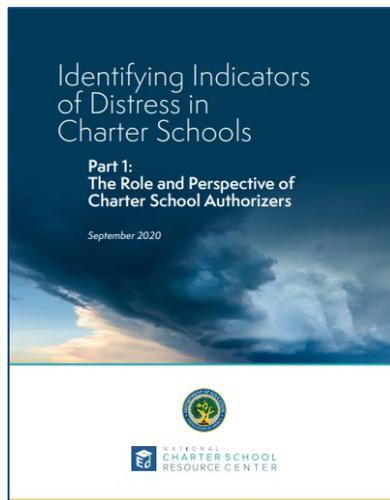
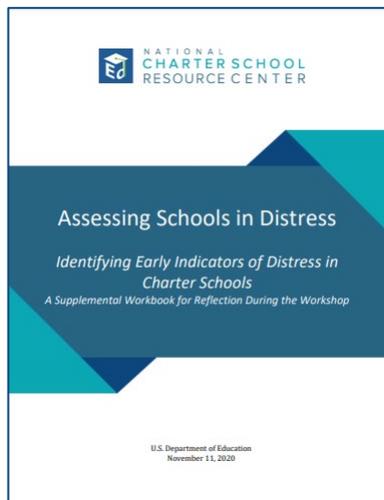


Additional Tools



Further Research

Resources to Assist in Identifying Indicators of Distress



Webinar recordings for authorizers and other stakeholders in the charter school sector.

www.charterschoolcenter.ed.org

The screenshot shows the website's header with the logo, search bar, and newsletter sign-up. A navigation bar includes 'FOCUS AREAS', 'AUDIENCE', 'RESOURCES', 'FUNDING', 'FAQS', 'COVID-19', and 'LOGIN/SEARCH'. The main content area features the title of the report, a 'SHARE VIA' button with social media icons, and a 'Download resource' button. A list of related reports and toolkits is provided on the right side of the page.

Identifying Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools Part 1: The Role and Perspective of Charter School Authorizers

Policy, Board Governance, Increasing Achievement, Operations and Compliance, Leadership
REPORTS | 21 SEP, 2020

State Education Agency, Charter School Management Organizations, Educators, Charter School Family and Community, Policy Maker, Policy, Board Governance, Increasing Achievement, Operations and Compliance, Leadership

Download resource

"Identifying Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools" labels and categorizes the indicators of distress that authorizers encounter as a school's quality begins to decline. This report can help authorizers and other charter sector stakeholders recognize signs of distress in schools in their unique contexts and take action towards the goal of school improvement.

To further explore this research, view the following NCSRC webinar recordings with charter sector stakeholders.

- The Death Spiral: Identifying Early Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools (A Conversation with Authorizers)
- Risk in Charter School Lending: Indicators of Distress and the Charter School Growth Fund's Approach to Risk Management
- Indicators of Distress (And What They Mean in the Charter Sector)

The report is critical reading for various charter sector stakeholders.

- State entities can use the report to better understand authorizers' evolving roles, especially related to school improvement.
- Charter school developers and leaders and CMOs can utilize the report to help assess quality and health and drive improvement in schools in distress.
- Charter support organizations can leverage the report to help facilitate continual support throughout the school lifecycle.

"Identifying Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools" is the product of extensive qualitative research and formal interviews with nine authorizers across policy contexts from a variety of authorizing entities. It is the first in a multi-part series published by the National Charter School Resource Center.

Featured Publications

- A Synthesis of Research on Charter School Facilities
REPORTS | 06 OCT, 2020
- Identifying Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools Part 1: The Role and Perspective of Charter School Authorizers
REPORTS | 21 SEP, 2020
- Critical Questions and Steps for Leaders to Reduce or End School-Based Policing
TOOLKITS | 12 JUN, 2020
- Charting the Course to Equity: K-12 Leaders of Color and Student Success
REPORTS | 01 NOV, 2019
- Policy Framework for High-Quality Charter Authorizing Practices
TOOLKITS | 06 JUL, 2020

Response requested, please!

Please respond to the survey to let us know how we did on this event.



Available on the NCSRC Website



Recorded Webinars



Toolkits, Resources, and
Reports



CSP Grantee Profiles and
Case Studies

ICYMI: Recent NCSRC Virtual Events & Resources

- Report: *A Synthesis of Research on Charter School Facilities*
- English Learners and Charter Schools: A Learning Experience Focused on EL Instruction
- Leading in the Unknown Self-Guided Master Class

Coming Soon...

- Family Engagement Toolkit & Webinar



How can you contact us?



charterschoolcenter.ed.gov



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THANK YOU!

