



NATIONAL
CHARTER SCHOOL
RESOURCE CENTER

“The Death Spiral”

Identifying Early Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools

An Intimate Discussion with Authorizers

Virtual | Zoom

charterschoolcenter.ed.gov

Icebreaker

Please share in the chat your name, organization and your go-to quote, motto, or mantra you always turn to when you meet challenging times.

“

Insert
Inspiration
Here.

”

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 (MSG) in partnership with WestEd.



On the Webinar Today



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National Charter
School Resource
Center



Laura Groth, Ed.D.
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National Charter
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Tess Stovall
Tennessee State
Board of Education



**Jamie Garwood,
Ph.D.**
Ball State
University



John Carwell
Delaware
Department of
Education

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 from your peers about how they use the data they are already collecting to identify struggling schools prior to failure

Incorporate

Incorporate indicators of distress in your monitoring and support of schools

Understand

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



Agenda



Why should authorizers be aware of indicators of distress?



What are indicators of distress?



How can indicators of distress be used to get schools back on track to success?



How are authorizers using indicators of distress?





Why should authorizers be aware of indicators of distress?

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 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?

A dramatic sky with dark, heavy clouds and a bright, golden light source breaking through near the horizon. The clouds are dark blue and grey, with some lighter, wispy clouds near the bottom. The light source is a bright, golden glow that illuminates the clouds from below, creating a strong contrast with the dark sky above. The overall mood is somber and intense.

What are indicators of distress?

Indicators of Distress

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



Leadership

Governing Board

Operations

Finance

Talent

Culture

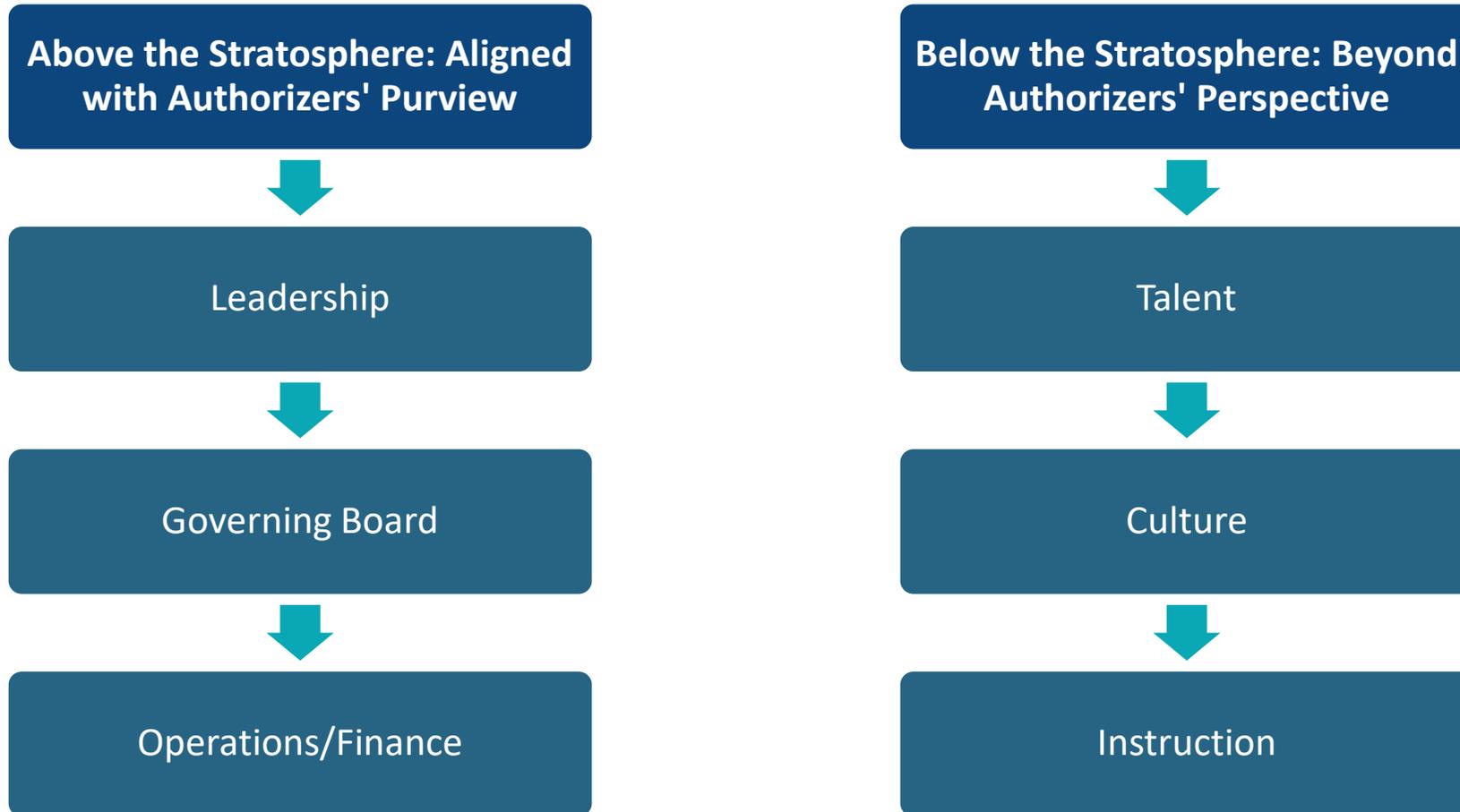
Instruction



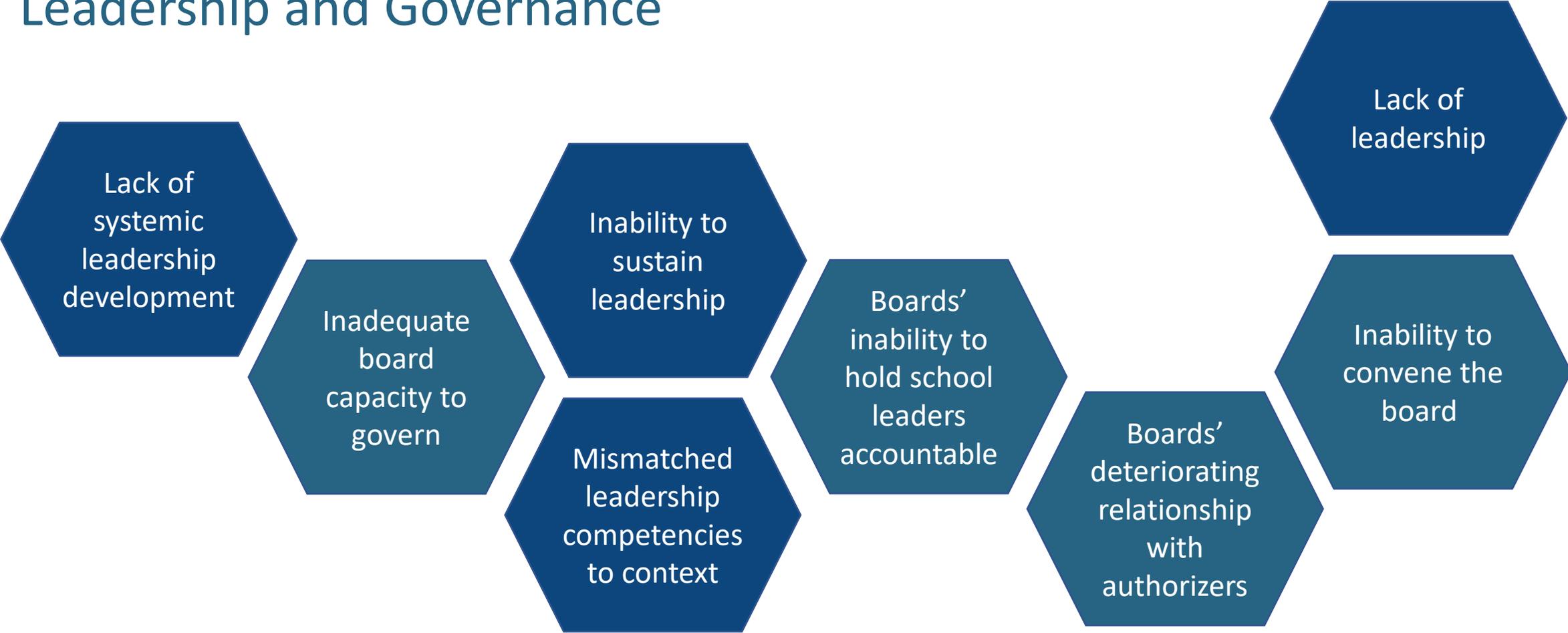
Finding: Authorizers tend to focus on indicators at the upper layer of the stratosphere of a school's functions.

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

Stratosphere



Leadership and Governance



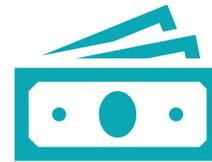
Operations and Finance



Breakdown in compliance and reporting functions



Failure to align to market needs



Failure to properly manage finances



Misappropriation of funds



How can indicators of distress be used to get schools back on track to success?



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



How are authorizers using indicators of distress?

Panel Discussion



Delaware
Department of Education

SEA, 20 Charter Schools



TENNESSEE
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SEA, 3 Charter Schools



BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY

Indiana, HEI, 24 Charter Schools

Guiding questions

1

Where do you see the role of authorizers heading with respect to schools in distress prior to formal renewals?

2

What is the role of authorizers in determining equitable outcomes for all students?

3

Should authorizers push to capture further data “below the stratosphere” and pertaining to talent, culture, and/or instruction?



Applying the Indicators of Distress

Breakout Room Discussion

DISCLAIMER

The following caselets are fictional and do not depict any actual persons or events. Any resemblance to actual people, schools, or scenarios, is purely coincidental.



Caselets



What are the issues you see at this school?



How could you collect information to learn about these issues?



How detrimental are these issues to the health of this school?



If this school was under your authorization, what would you do?

Q&A



What's Next?



Report Release



Webinar on Sept 23



Workshop for CMOs and Independent Charter Schools in late October



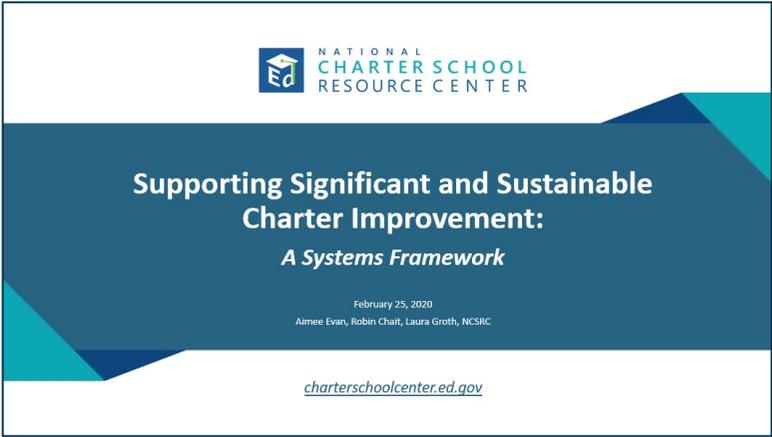
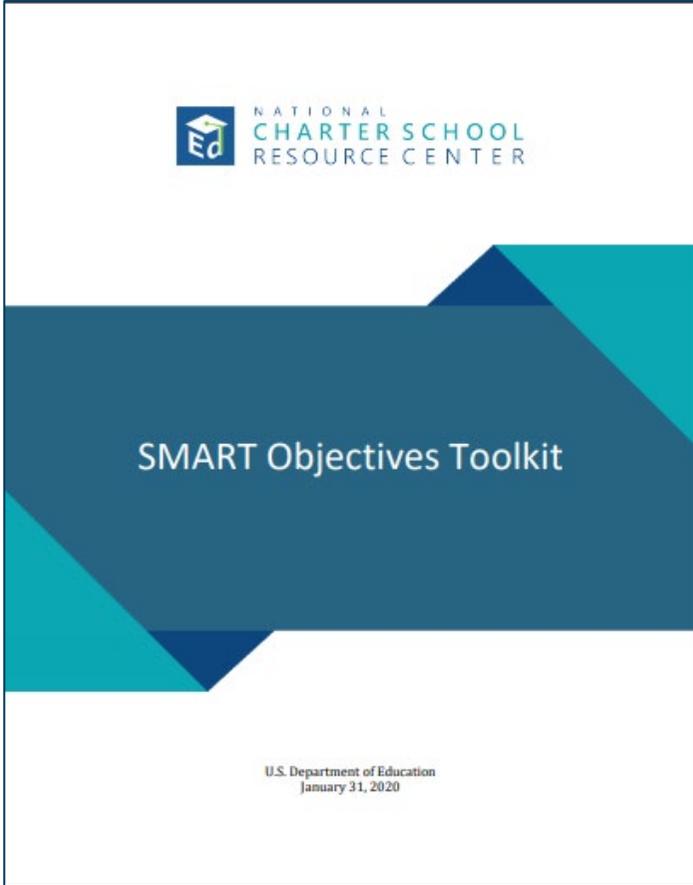
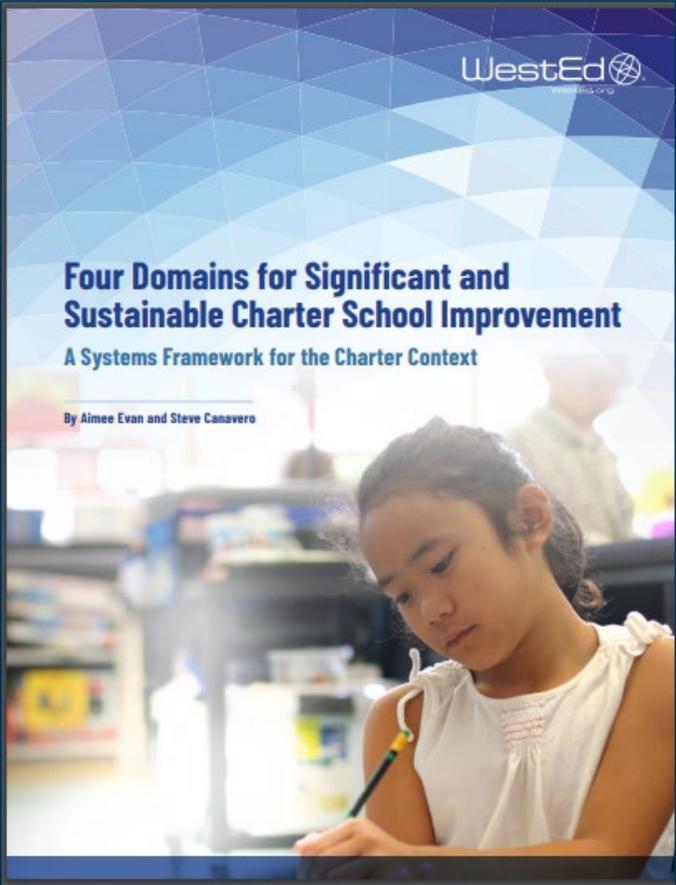
Additional Tools



Further Research



Resources to Assist with Sustaining High-Quality Charter Schools



Recently Posted to NCSRC Website



SE Grantee Profiles and Webinar

<https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/webinar/tale-two-grantees-how-nysed-and-ncdpi-are-using-csp-funds-make-difference-their-states>



CMO Grantee Profiles and Webinar

<https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/webinar/tale-two-grantees-how-appletree-institute-and-hiawatha-academies-are-using-csp-funds-make>



How are State Entities Improving Authorizing? Webinar

<https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/webinar/how-are-state-entities-improving-authorizing-ncsrc-policy-framework-and-technical>

Keep an Eye Out for Upcoming NCSRC Virtual Events & Resources

- *Identifying Indicators of Distress in Charter Schools*
- English Learners and Charter Schools: A Learning Experience Focused on EL Instruction
- Leading in the Unknown Self-Guided Master Class



How can you contact us?



charterschoolcenter.ed.gov



contact-us@charterschoolcenter.org

Response requested, please!

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





THANK YOU!

