



2016 NACSA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Standing Up to Scrutiny: Designing a Strong Charter Renewal Process

Although the charter bargain—autonomy for accountability—culminates in the charter renewal decision, the groundwork for sound, defensible renewal decisions that can stand up to scrutiny (and possibly, protests and attacks) should be laid much earlier than that. Ideally, a strong renewal process should be planned and built at the beginning of the charter term. Join us as we discuss the components of a quality charter renewal process, including the renewal application, timelines, and criteria. We'll also share how authorizers can be preparing for renewal throughout a school's charter term.

Session Title: Standing Up to Scrutiny: Designing a Strong Charter Renewal Process

Session speakers: Barbara Zeile (The Gov. John Engler Center for Charter Schools at CMU)

Kathryn Mullen Upton (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation)

Context: *(In what context was this information presented? Workshop? Panel discussion? What were the goals of the session?)*

This session took place in a traditional presentation-and-discussion format led by two experienced authorizers. The objectives were to help authorizers:

- Learn the importance of planning the renewal decision process from the beginning of the charter term, and
- Understand the **key components of an effective renewal process (establishing clear expectations; monitoring and reporting performance; intervening when necessary; and presenting the body of evidence to justify the renewal or non-renewal decision).**

Key Takeaways: *(Please provide 3 key takeaways from your session. What points do you want to reinforce with attendees? If they learned 3 things from the session, what should they be?)*

1. Establish clear academic, financial, and operational/organizational expectations clearly from the outset – laid out in the charter contract; and communicate the monitoring and renewal process to the school from the beginning so all expectations are clear. Align your renewal-related documents with your charter application,



contract, and monitoring/oversight documents for consistent, clear expectations and to speed internal processes.

2. Communicate the school's performance clearly to the school and its stakeholders every year, in an annual report that becomes part of the school's documented public record.
3. Intervene if necessary, but communicate clearly and effectively with each school's governing board so that they take action before you need to.

Additional Resources: *(Where can attendees receive additional information? Resources on the Knowledge Core? Other publications? NACSA consulting services or other member benefits? These will be published on the website alongside the PowerPoint and any handouts you send me, so no need to attach those resources. However, feel free to share links to pages on the NACSA website, contact information for speakers/facilitators, links to topical news articles or videos you may have shared, etc.)*

Resources shared in the session were sample renewal materials from the presenters, and NACSA's Annual Report Toolkit ("Annual Reports Made Easy"). All session materials are posted on NACSA's website.

Additional resources related to the renewal process and renewal decision-making are available in NACSA's Knowledge Core.

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