



**NACSA President Headlines National Charter School Week Event,  
Emphasizes Role of Public Officials in Increasing the Quality of the Charter Sector**

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In celebration of National Charter School Week, President and CEO of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Greg Richmond headlined a panel discussion entitled *Chartering the Course: The Leadership Role Public Officials Play in Creating and Supporting a Successful Charter School Sector* hosted by the US Senate Charter School Caucus, and co-chaired by Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) on Capitol Hill last week.

Richmond, who established the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Charter Schools Office in 1996 and went on to serve as Chief Officer for New Schools Development within CPS, discussed the critical role that state superintendents, mayors, and district leaders play in leading the charge for education reform by advancing and investing in high quality charter schools.

"US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's Renaissance 2010 initiative is undoubtedly the most effective and concrete model of this leadership strategy to close failing schools and create better educational opportunities," Richmond said. "Arne and I learned first hand in Chicago that critical to success is understanding "what works" and applying inventive and thoughtful authorizing strategies that create more options and better schools for students."

US Senator Landrieu echoed Richmond's comments, stressing that the charter school sector is uniquely positioned to execute successful strategies to improve our nation's education system.

"I have been a longtime advocate of public charter schools, which help to better educate students and build stronger, more prosperous cities," Senator Landrieu said. "I am a true believer that with public charter schools, we have a real chance to implement a new model of schooling that can break the chains of mediocrity and provide opportunities for children to excel."

Richmond was featured with other national education leaders, including US Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO), NY City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein, Cumberland, Rhode Island Mayor Dan McKee, US Department of Education's Deputy Assistant Secretary Jim Shelton, and President of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools Nelson Smith. The panelists offered personal accounts of their work on the front lines in cities and states to implement strategies to turn around low-performing schools, focusing on high quality standards and practices.

Richmond emphasized NACSA's work empowering public officials across the country to spur change and increase standards within the charter school sector. "We are experts in the field of charter authorizing, and we work hand in hand with leaders from Denver to New Orleans to create and sustain a high quality charter school sector," Richmond stated. "The confluence of public officials and education leaders advocating for the charter sector has never been greater. We must capitalize on this opportunity and partner with these leaders to put to use the strategies that we know work."

*NACSA ([www.qualitycharters.org](http://www.qualitycharters.org)) is the trusted resource and innovative leader for quality authorizing. NACSA provides training, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers and education leaders interested in increasing the number of high quality schools and improving student outcomes.*

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