

Charter School Authorizers Group Issues 2012 Professional Practice Index

NACSA report provides roadmap for better charter schools

March 6, 2013 (CHICAGO) –The [National Association of Charter School Authorizers \(NACSA\)](#) today released its [2012 Index of Essential Practices](#), a set of professional practices to guide quality charter school approval and monitoring.

Good charter school authorizing is critical to improving the quality of charter schools across the nation. For authorizers—those entities that approve, monitor, renew and if necessary, close charter schools—the *Index* also serves as a tool for initial self-evaluation, and includes findings on individual authorizer practices across the country.

“The *Index* lays out a set of authorizing practices that can strengthen the charter school initiative in a given state—and that means better schools for children and families,” said NACSA President and CEO Greg Richmond.

NACSA’s *Index of Essential Practices* articulates a set of 12 practices for authorizers that can significantly improve the quality of their work—and in turn the quality of the charter schools in their portfolios. The 12 *Index* components, which include practices such as requiring a signed contract with each charter school and having established renewal criteria, are basic, minimum expectations—not complex challenges that will take years to implement. They serve as a starting point to enable any of the nation’s nearly 1,000 charter authorizers to improve their own work.

Reporting on authorizers that include those responsible for overseeing the majority of charter schools in the nation, this year’s *Index* indicates authorizers are implementing nine or ten of the 12 Essential Practices.

“This report tells us whether authorizers are using these Essential Practices, but it does not evaluate how well they’re using these practices, so it’s not the whole story. The ultimate measure of strong authorizer practice is the quality of an authorizer’s schools and whether children are learning,” Richmond said.

The *Index* is informed by NACSA’s annual authorizer survey, which in 2012 covered 157 active authorizers, both large and small. A companion report, *The State of Charter School Authorizing 2012*, will be released in the coming weeks. It will contain aggregated results of NACSA’s entire authorizer survey, showing patterns in adoption of essential practices, new data on charter school openings and closures, and other indicators of progress in the authorizing profession.

Quality authorizing is the cornerstone of NACSA’s *One Million Lives* campaign, launched in late 2012 to engage a broad coalition to give one million more children the chance at a great education by closing the lowest-performing charter schools and opening many more great new charter schools.

About NACSA:

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is committed to advancing excellence and accountability in the charter school sector and to increasing the number of high-quality charter

schools across the nation. To accomplish this mission, NACSA works to improve the policies and practices of authorizers—the organizations designated to approve, monitor, renew, and, if necessary, close charter schools. NACSA provides training, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers. It also advocates for laws and policies that raise the bar for excellence among authorizers and the schools they charter. In late 2012, NACSA launched its [One Million Lives](#) campaign to give one million more children the opportunity to attend a great school. Visit www.qualitycharters.org

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