



THE STATE OF CHARTER  
SCHOOL AUTHORIZING



2008



A REPORT ON NACSA'S  
AUTHORIZER SURVEY



nacsa  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

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The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is the trusted resource and innovative leader working with educators and public officials to increase the number of high quality charter schools in cities and states across the nation. 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. Visit us at [www.qualitycharters.org](http://www.qualitycharters.org).

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- **CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZING:**
- **UNDERSTANDING THE BASIC**
- **FACTS AND FIGURES**
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**As the charter school sector continues to grow** it also continues to evolve.

The agencies that authorize charter schools are in the middle of some of the most important evolutionary developments. Authorizers are asked to facilitate the growth of high-quality charter management organizations that seek to replicate. School districts are urged to make chartering a proactive strategy for improving educational options in their communities. And all authorizers are asked to uphold high standards for approval and renewal of charters, while being fair and transparent and respecting school autonomy.

As our expectations for authorizers increase, so does our realization that there is much about this activity that we don't understand. For example, while many charter school advocates can identify that there are approximately 4600 charter schools currently in operation, few would have a guess as to how many active authorizers there are. While many charter advocates would immediately state that accountability is a central principle of charter schooling, few would know how many charter schools are actually held to charter contracts that specify clear accountability criteria and processes.

In 2008, NACSA began a multi-year effort to collect basic data to provide a better understanding of authorizers and their actions. We contacted state education departments, reviewed existing charter statutes and research, and performed an audit of publicly available information on the web sites of state agencies, charter support organizations, and authorizers. As a result, we developed the most comprehensive list of all identifiable, active charter authorizers available – encompassing more than 800 agencies from across the country.

We then developed a set of basic questions and focused our data collection efforts on the most active authorizers. This report presents an overview of what we found. Not surprisingly, this basic initial effort raised as many questions as it answered. Thus, in 2009 and beyond, NACSA is continuing and expanding its data collection efforts.

Our goal is to collect and disseminate data that informs charter school operators, advocates, policy makers, researchers and authorizers themselves, strengthening the scale and quality of the entire charter school sector.

## Authorizers Charter Schools: An Overview of the Numbers

As of January 2009, forty states and the District of Columbia had charter school laws (in addition to the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and Guam). These laws empower a variety of different agencies to authorize charter schools, creating an amalgam of authorizer types, characteristics and powers in each state. NACSA has identified six types of authorizers:

- Local Education Agencies (including county and regional agencies)
- State Education Agencies
- Higher Education Institutions
- Not for Profits
- Mayors/Municipalities
- Independent Chartering Boards.<sup>1</sup>

Table 1 breaks down the number of active authorizers by each of these types.

**Table 1: Number of Active Authorizers by Agency Type**

Local Education Agencies (LEA)	726
State Education Agencies (SEA)	21
Non-Profit Organizations (NFP)	21
Higher Education Institutions (HEI)	42
Independent Chartering Boards (ICB)	7
Mayors/Municipalities (MUN)	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>819</b>

These 819 authorizers provide oversight and hold accountable more than 4,600 charter schools across the country, serving 1.4 million students.

Of all the active charter authorizers identified by NACSA in 2008, 695 authorizers, or 85%, oversee fewer than five charter schools, with the majority of this group overseeing one or two. One hundred twenty-four authorizers oversee five or more charters. Only 66 authorizers, or 8% of all active authorizers, oversee ten or more charter schools.

These 66 authorizers that fall into the “ten or more” category oversee 54% of the nation’s charter schools and 77% of all charter school students across the country.

This small subset of the nation’s authorizers defines the environment, autonomies and accountability expectations for over three-quarters of all students attending charters. NACSA’s data indicates that this group tends to approve schools with larger enrollments than other authorizers. This fact presents some important questions.

**Which authorizers are the most “active?” What percentage of each authorizer type authorizes more than five charter schools? More than ten?**

Table 2 provides a breakdown of authorizers with five or more and ten or more charter schools by type of authorizer. It shows that, by type, State Education Agencies (SEAs) are currently some of the most active authorizers. Interestingly, while the vast majority of authorizers are Local Education Agencies (LEAs), we found only 10%, or 72 out of 726, of LEA authorizers oversee five or more schools. A much smaller group of 29 – representing a mere 4% of LEA authorizers – oversee ten or more schools. In other words, 90% of LEA authorizers oversee *fewer* than five charter schools.

**Table 2: Authorizers With 5 or More and Ten or More Charter Schools By Authorizer Type 2008**

Authorizer Type	% With 5 or More	% With 10 or More
HEI	38	21
ICB	57	57
LEA	10	4
MUN	100	50
NFP	48	38
SEA	81	19

**Why are so many LEA authorizers sponsoring a small number of schools?**

At this point, the data alone do not answer this question, but several explanations are possible. Many LEAs may view chartering as an opportunity to provide a niche program for motivated school leaders, teachers, or unique populations of students. It also may be that there is a group of LEA authorizers who have been forced into authorizing through a charter appeals process and have not embraced it as an opportunity for creating new options for families. Finally, it may be that most active chartering districts have comparatively small student populations that limit the number of schools needed in the district or the number of students interested in enrolling in charters in their area.

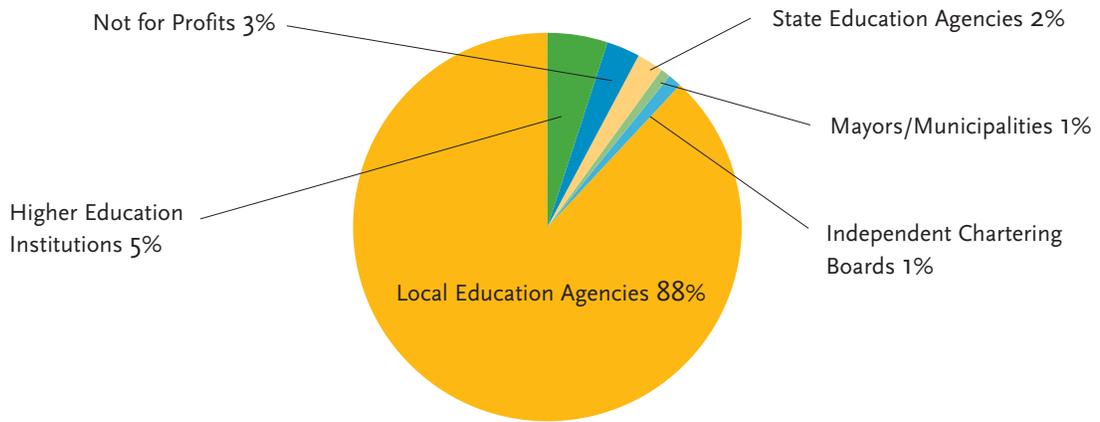
**Why is the number of schools an authorizer oversees important?**

NACSA's work with authorizers around the country has revealed that many authorizers with a few charters tend to treat each one as a special program without developing uniform practices and protocols applicable across schools. By the time an authorizer charters five schools, agencies begin to create specific practices around authorizing, but they may not be fully formed or include all core aspects of authorizing (i.e., charter granting, contracting, monitoring and renewal decision-making). By the time an authorizer charters ten or more schools, most authorizing offices have in place systems and protocols to manage most, if not all, core duties.

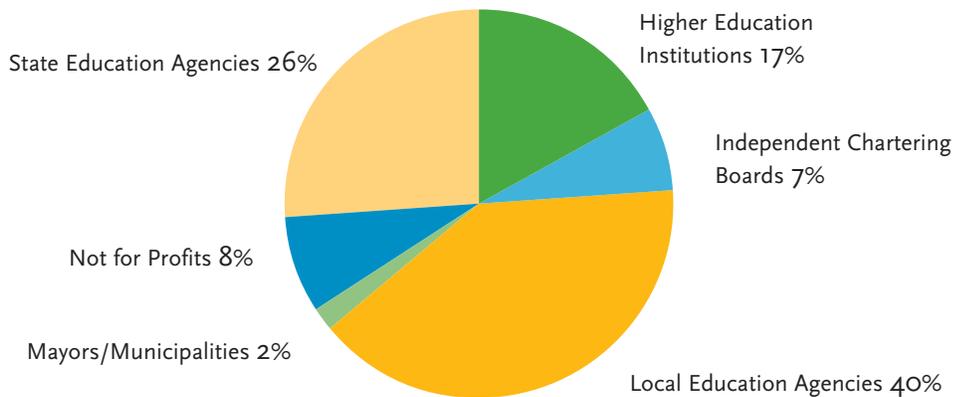
**The Fifty Largest Authorizers**

NACSA took a closer look at the largest fifty authorizers ranked by number of schools authorized.<sup>11</sup> These authorizers are those with the largest number of charter schools open and enrolling students, overseeing 2349 schools enrolling approximately 855,000 or 61% of all students enrolled in charter schools. Each of the top fifty authorizes eleven or more charter schools. Graphs 1 and 2 compare the agency type breakdown of all authorizers to those in the top fifty.

**Graph 1: All Authorizers by Agency Type**



**Graph 2: Largest 50 Authorizers by Agency Type**



In addition to simply identifying the authorizer landscape in terms of number of authorizers, number of schools, and number of students, we surveyed the largest fifty authorizers about applications received, applications approved, contracting and other core authorizer practices. We included questions that addressed some of the issues practicing authorizers expressed interest in knowing. The answers, and the questions they inspired follow in the next two sections. The first examines what core practices that authorizers are performing and the second examines what types of revenue and resources support their work.

## A Look at the Core Work of Authorizing

Our experience has shown that strong authorizing leads to greater numbers of high quality charter schools. Granting new charters, making renewal decisions, and acting to revoke a troubled school's charter are central to an authorizer's mission. Each of these "high stakes" actions requires authorizers to make evidence-based decisions in the best interest of the public and the students. Expectations for these practices should be set forth in three critical documents – the application, the contract, and the performance or accountability plan.

### Requests for Proposals: Authorizers & Applications

By implementing a thoughtful application or RFP process, authorizers strengthen both the quality and quantity of charter schools. A well-designed RFP ensures that both the applicant and the authorizer are putting in place all of the elements needed to establish a successful school.

NACSA's 2008 survey found that 76% of the fifty largest authorizers in the U.S. release an RFP every year (Graph 3). Because an RFP is a fundamental professional practice, one question that immediately comes to mind is, "Why are a quarter of the nation's largest authorizers *not* releasing an RFP?" A variety of reasons are possible:

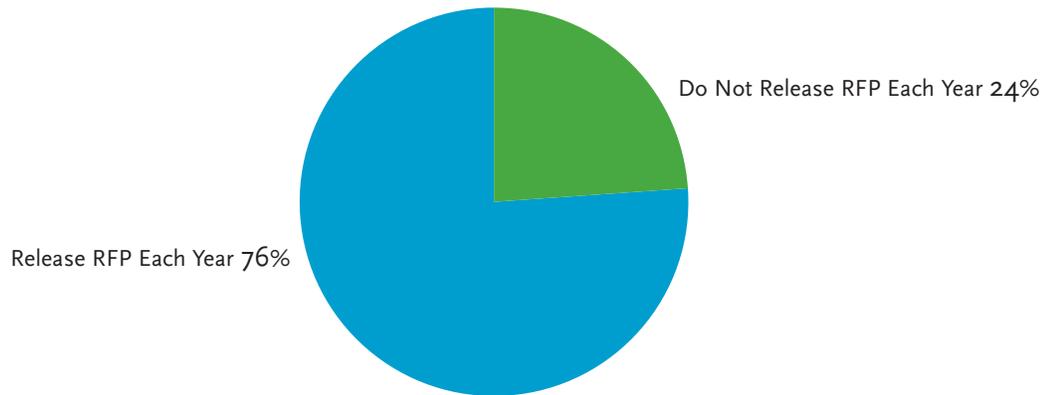
- The existence of caps limits the number of charter schools allowable in a state, region or city limit or prohibit the RFP release,
- Staff capacity in authorizing agencies limits the ability to release an RFP, review applications and grant charters,
- State laws prohibit authorizers from controlling the timing and structure of charter applications, or
- Changes in agency leadership or political environments reduce the willingness to authorize additional charters.

Each of these possible explanations merits further data collection and analysis.

#### APPLICATION PROCESS

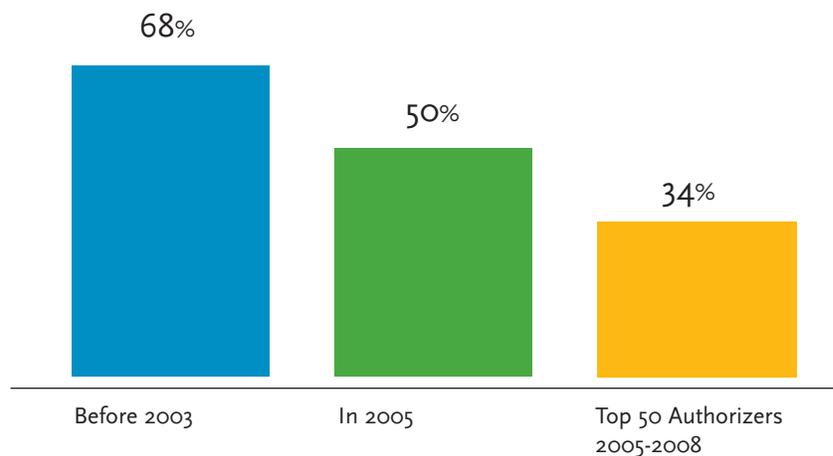
A quality authorizer implements a comprehensive application process that follows fair procedures and rigorous criteria and grants charters only to those developers who demonstrate strong capacity for establishing and operating a quality charter school.

– NACSA's *Principles & Standards*<sup>iii</sup>

**Graph 3: Percent of Top 50 Authorizers with Annual RFP Release****Are authorizers granting new charters?**

In 2005, NACSA partnered with The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation to collect data for its publication, *Trends in Charter School Authorizing*.<sup>iv</sup> The *Trends* report found that the new charter application granting rates dropped from approximately a 68% approval of new charter applications before 2003, to a 50% approval rate by 2005. From its recent survey, NACSA learned that between 2005 and 2008, the country's fifty largest authorizers received over 1,400 applications for new schools. Of those applications, 516 or 34% received a charter to open a school (Graph 4).

Two important observations can be drawn from this data. First, although the 2005 and the 2008 data sets are not identical, the approval rate appears to be dropping, from 68% five years ago to 34% by 2008. This comparison must be viewed cautiously. It is possible that the difference between the 2003 and the 2008 approval rates is explained by factors other than the passage of time. Second, a simple calculation of the NACSA 2008 data set shows that the fifty largest authorizers approved an average of 12 new schools over three years, or an average of just over four new schools per year.

**Graph 4: New Charter Application Approval Rates**

## Why is the rate of new application approval constricting?

Information from the *Trends* report and our recent survey suggest an overall constriction of charter school approvals. If it is the case, there are many possible explanations including:

- Statutory caps may be limiting the number of new charter schools.
- The number of interested and *qualified* charter applicants may be declining.
- The political pressure for authorizers to only grant charters to “proven” models may be leading to a focus on a narrow set of replicators.
- Some districts are creating new ‘charter-like’ schools within a larger district structure, which may be causing those educators to forgo the development of a charter school.
- Authorizers may be using appropriate, higher standards to evaluate and approve applications.

At this time, the data itself does not tell us the degree that each of the above is occurring. Further data collection and analysis will be necessary.

## Contracts and Performance Expectations

A charter contract, sometimes referred to as the “charter” or a memorandum of understanding (MOU), defines what a school will achieve over the life of its approved contractual term. While some authorizers use the charter application as the basic contract, this practice is problematic.

NACSA’s 2009 Issue Brief *Terms of the Deal*:

*A Quality Charter School Contract Defined* identifies the distinction between a charter application and charter contract: “the charter application contains the aspirations and theories of what the school can be. The contract defines the practical expectations for what, in fact, the school will become.”<sup>v</sup> Given the necessary autonomies, responsibilities, and requirements when a school petitions its authorizer for renewal, all authorizers should, and must, enter into a formal, written agreement with the schools they oversee.

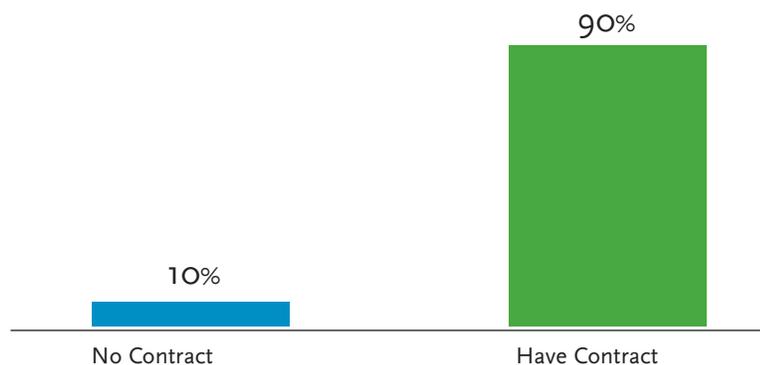
Ninety percent of the largest fifty authorizers in the country incorporate this critical step into their oversight role by signing a formal contract with their schools (Graph 5). Thus, of the 2349 schools authorized by the fifty largest authorizers, approximately 2100 have contracts and 200 do not. Because authorizers that oversee more schools are more likely to have professional practices in place than authorizers that oversee fewer schools, it is likely that a greater percentage of those smaller authorizers do not have contracts with their schools.

### PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING

**A quality authorizer** negotiates contracts with charter schools that clearly articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, expected outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences and other material terms.

– NACSA’s *Principles & Standards*

**Graph 5: Percent of Top 50 Authorizers Requiring Formal Contract**



## Expectations for Performance

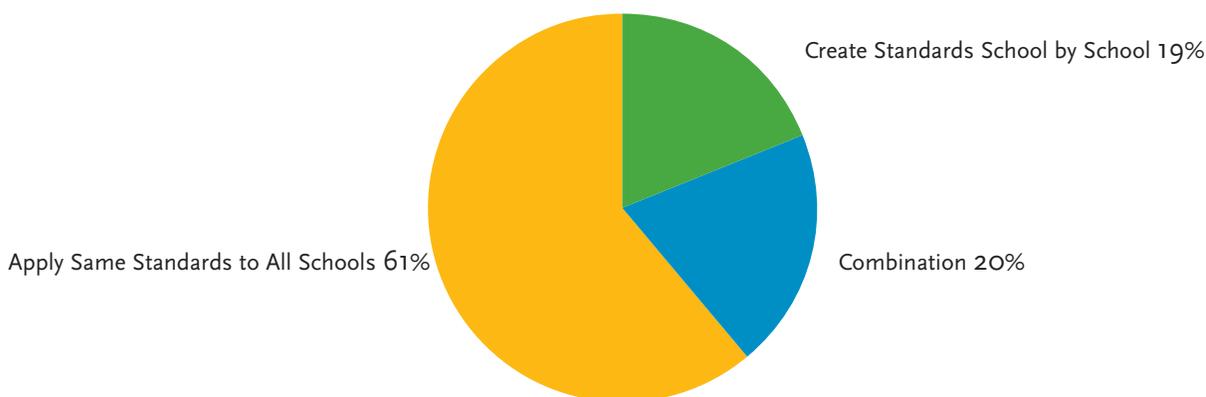
Authorizers use accountability standards, sometimes called performance expectations, as an additional way to clearly define outcomes for charter schools. These plans define the criteria the authorizer will use to determine the school's success, particularly at renewal.

NACSA advocates that authorizers apply a consistent set of core performance expectations for all the schools they oversee. Common academic targets for measurable, objective student performance standards (such as AYP, growth, graduation, etc.) should be included in the performance or accountability plan an authorizer creates for every school. Core operational targets (board adherence to by-laws, compliance requirements) and fiscal expectations should also be included. This consistency of academic, operational and financial standards assures the schools and the public that school performance expectations are being established and applied fairly across all charter schools.

NACSA also recommends that authorizers offer schools the opportunity to voluntarily add performance expectations that capture important elements of each school's unique mission. Thus, professional authorizing practice calls for a combination of pre-determined performance expectations set by the authorizer and unique goals set by the school.

Most large authorizers report that they are implementing performance expectations that follow NACSA recommendations. Of the largest fifty authorizers, 61% report that they apply the same standards to every charter school authorized and 20% use a combination of consistent standards and unique standards. However, almost one in five of the largest authorizers reported that they set different standards for each of their schools, on a case-by-case basis. This practice is not in conformance with NACSA's *Principles and Standards* (Graph 6).

**Graph 6: How the Top 50 Authorizers Apply Performance Expectations**



## Renewal Application Guidelines

Just as schools need to know what academic, operational and financial performance standards they are expected to achieve, as renewal approaches they need to know what process the authorizer will follow to evaluate school performance data and reach a renewal decision. Accordingly, NACSA recommends that authorizers publish a timetable and process for renewal and 76% of the fifty largest authorizers report that they do so. Unfortunately, roughly one-quarter do not (Graph 7).

In practice, from 2005 to 2008, the fifty largest authorizers received 694 applications to renew the charters of existing schools. Authorizers granted 87% of renewal petitions (614 schools) and declined to renew the remaining 13% (80 schools).

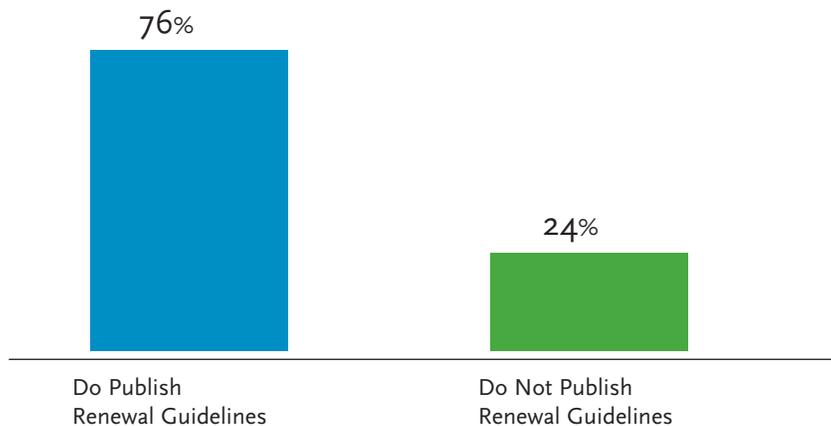
In addition, during the same time period, the largest fifty authorizers revoked the charters of 44 schools prior to the contracted end of the charter term. Revocations accounted for less than 6% of all high-stakes actions taken by this group between 2005 and 2008.<sup>vi</sup>

**RENEWAL DECISION-MAKING**

A quality authorizer designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses comprehensive data to make merit-based renewal decisions; articulates the criteria for renewal; publishes a time-table and process for renewal decision-making; clearly communicates the options and consequences available under state law including revocation, non-renewal, renewal with conditions, and renewal.

– NACSA's Principles & Standards

**Graph 7: Percent of Top 50 Authorizers Publishing Renewal Guidelines**

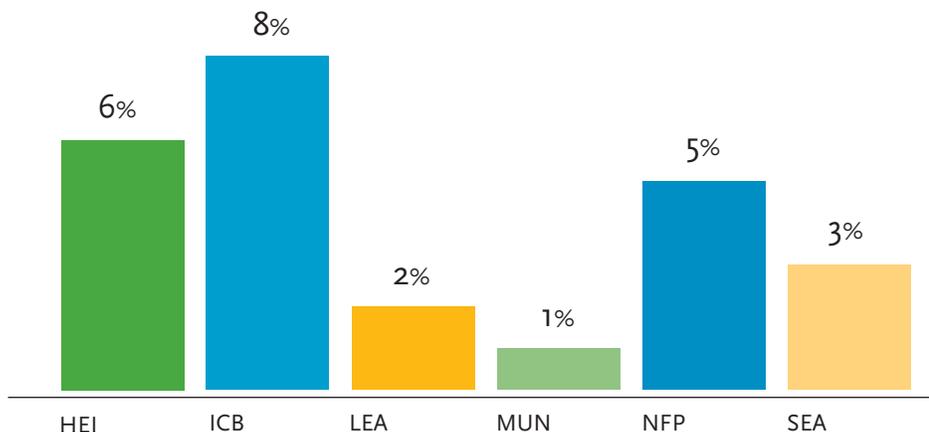


**The effect of renewals and revocations on the charter sector's growth**

As stated earlier, the average number of new charter approvals by the fifty largest authorizers from 2005 to 2008 was 12 schools. Combining the non-renewal and the revocation data above, we find that from 2005 to 2008 the average number of closures was three schools. When approval and closure data are combined, we can determine that the fifty largest authorizers each added, on average, nine schools to the charter sector from 2005 to 2008.

As the following graph indicates, that growth varied significantly by type of authorizer, with independent chartering boards and universities adding the most schools and LEAs and municipalities adding the fewest (Graph 8).

**Graph 8: Net Increase in Approved & Open Charters by Authorizer Type 2005-2008**



# Supporting the Work of Authorizers – Revenue and Resources

## Authorizer Funding

The mechanisms for funding the work of authorizers vary from state to state. Some statutes provide for specific funding mechanisms; others are silent. Most funding mechanisms fall into one of the following categories: 1) fees charged to schools by authorizers, 2) direct appropriation from state budgets, 3) funds secured from a parent organization's operating budget, or 4) some combination of those sources. Graph 9 shows the breakdown of revenue sources for the largest fifty authorizers.

As identified above, 13% of the largest fifty authorizers report receipt of a direct appropriation from state budgets. These include LEAs, SEAs, and ICBs. Twenty-nine percent of these authorizers – including representatives of all authorizer types – reported receiving funds from their parent organization. Similarly, all authorizer types are represented in the group that receive funding from some combination of sources.

The largest segment (40%) of authorizers in this group receive their revenue from fees charged to schools. Many state charter statutes set parameters for the fees authorizers can charge. In some statutes the percentage is specific; others identify a range under which authorizers are allowed to set their fees. Of the 40 states and the District of Columbia with charter school laws, 13 allow authorizers to claim a percentage or portion of revenue the school receives. Appendix I provides a breakdown of allowable authorizer fees by state.

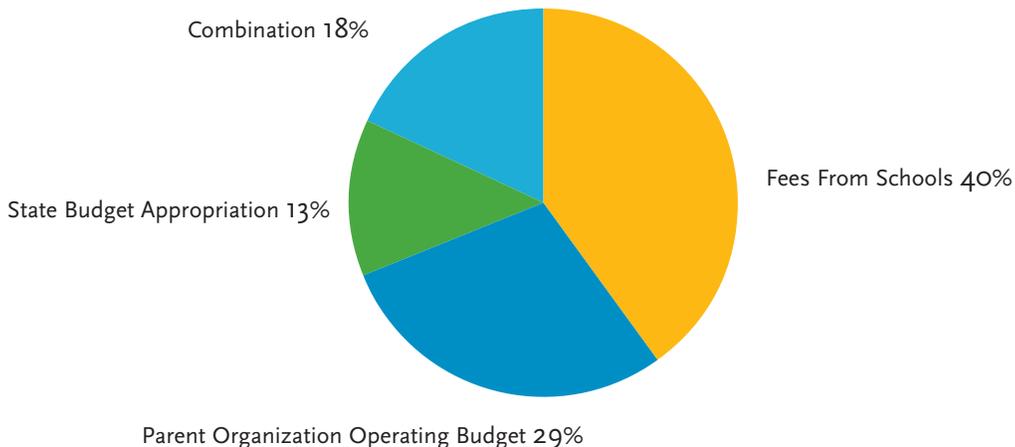
The data suggest that no clear consensus has developed about the best way to fund the work of authorizers. Indeed, NACSA believes that each of the four categories of funding has strengths and weaknesses. Each can work well and each can work poorly. Whichever method is in place, it is essential that authorizers have adequate resources to perform their duties.

### AGENCY CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

A quality authorizer creates organizational structures and commits human and financial resources necessary for conducting its authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.

– NACSA's Principles & Standards

Graph 9: Top 50 Authorizers Revenue Sources



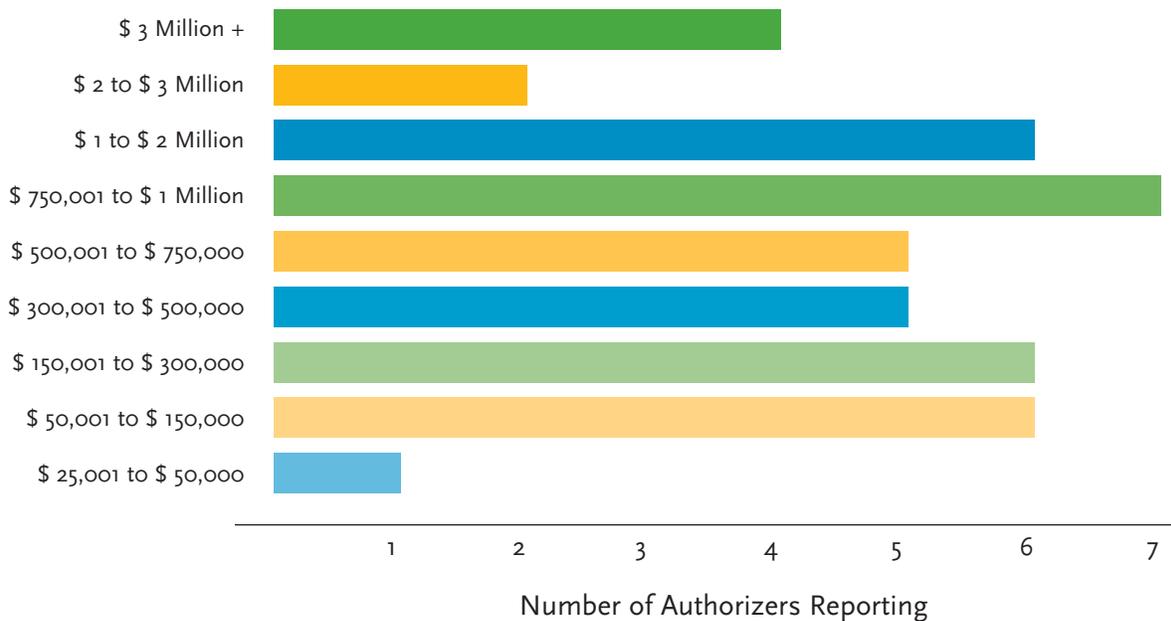
## The Cost of Authorizing

What level of resources is required for an authorizer to perform its duties? The available data do not point to a clear consensus, or even a clear understanding of what is happening across the country.

NACSA's survey of the fifty largest authorizers produced an extreme range of answers, from less than \$50,000 per year in one case, to more than \$3 million dollars per year in others. Part of this variation can be explained by differences in the actual amount of resources allocated to authorizing. Yet, it is also certain that part of the variation is due to differences in how those resources are reported by different organizations. A school district, for example, may not capture the costs of the staff that work on charter school issues in other departments (e.g. legal, special education, and financial services) while an independent chartering board would include such costs. In other cases, one authorizer may include the cost of support services that are sold to schools and another authorizer might not.

In short, the extreme range of costs reflects multiple factors: differing numbers of schools, differing staff levels, differing cost allocation practices, and differing services. This topic requires further data collection and analysis.

**Graph 10: Dollars Devoted to Authorizing**



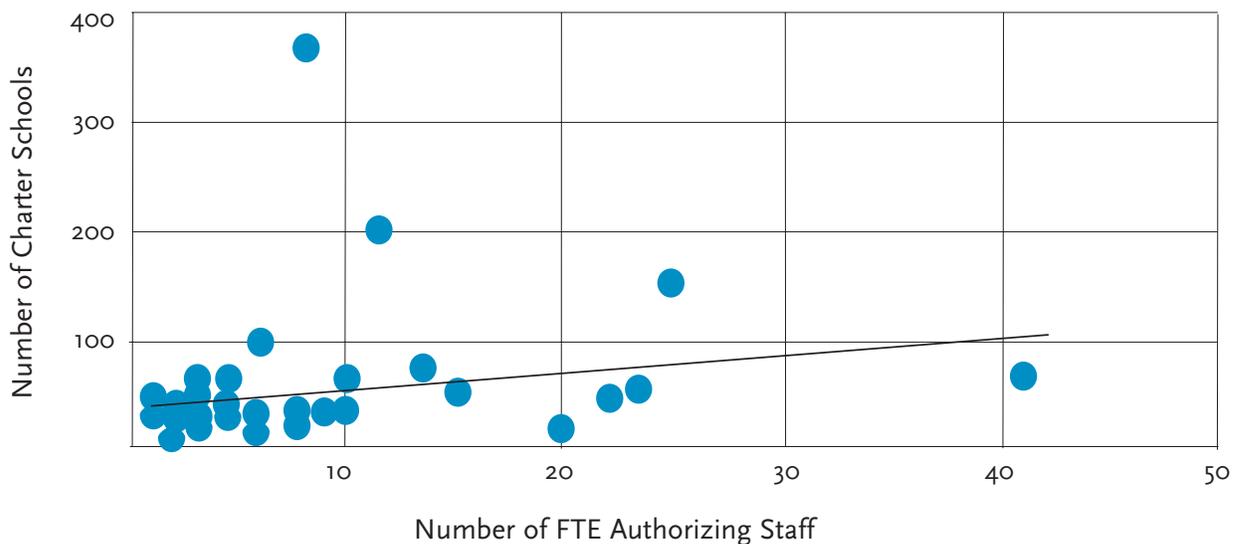
## Building a Staff Infrastructure

New and growing authorizing offices often ask, “What is best ratio for number of staff to number of schools authorized?” Too many staff in an authorizing office can be counterproductive, duplicative, and rife with opportunities for overregulation. Too few staff can be a problem as well. Authorizers must have the appropriate systems and staff to oversee the school’s they sponsor without building parallels to existing bureaucracies.

While the data alone does not tell us what number of staff is “best,” it does reveal meaningful trends. The largest of the large authorizers (100+ schools) have fewer staff per school than the smaller authorizers. In our 2008 survey, the largest fifty authorizers reported a wide range of full-time staff members appointed directly to authorizing duties. Full-time staff counts range from a high of forty-one to a low of one. For the three largest authorizers with over one hundred charter schools, the average ratio is 0.06 full-time equivalents (FTEs) for every school, or roughly one staff person for every 16 schools. Those that oversee between fifty and ninety-nine schools have an average staff to school ratio of 0.2:1, or one staff person for every five schools. Those that oversee between ten and forty-nine schools have an average staff to school ratio of 0.17:1, or one staff person for every six schools.

Graph 11 plots full-time equivalent authorizing staff positions against the total number of charters each of the largest fifty authorizers oversees. Most of the largest fifty authorizers work with fewer than ten full-time staff members; the average of all reported FTE staff for the largest fifty authorizers is 5.2. Only 11 report more than 10 FTE staff. The regression line in Graph 11 plots what could be considered a typical ratio of staff to schools. Those points that are on the line are typical while those that are below the line have more staff per school and those that are above the line have more schools per staff person.

**Graph 11: Largest 50 Authorizers – Number of Staff vs. Number of Charter Schools**



## Conclusion

NACSA's 2008 Survey of Authorizer Practice has given us the basic answers about the facts and figures of authorizing as well as the types and number of active authorizers across the country. Highlights of this initial survey include:

- A relatively small number (66) of authorizers hold oversight responsibility for schools attended by 77% of all children choosing charters.
- The majority of the largest fifty authorizers reports alignment with NACSA's *Principles and Standards* through the release of an RFP for new charter applications every year (76%), the requirement for a charter contract (90%), or the publication of renewal guidelines (76%).
- Authorizing revenue support varies widely, and the authorizer staff to school ratio decreases as the number of schools authorized increases.

Despite these confirmations, many questions remain:

- Is the number of authorizers increasing significantly or simply the number of schools each authorizer oversees? Do we see evidence of small authorizers growing to scale, or simply large authorizers getting larger?
- Is the new application approval rate truly constricting? If so, is there a resulting change in school performance? Are there differences in approval (and renewal) rates for schools started by charter management organizations compared to those that are not?
- Can we extrapolate to estimate the number of authorizers with more than 20 schools in the next five years? The next ten?
- To what extent are states and school districts using chartering as an intervention strategy for low-performing traditional schools? Is authorizing different in these situations? Are the charter schools themselves different?
- How do authorizers' practices change as they grow? Are larger authorizers more likely maintain appropriate professional practices or more likely to become bureaucratic and regulatory?

NACSA will continue to collect and analyze data to answer these questions and more. That data can then serve as the foundation for informed discussions, planning and decisions throughout the entire charter school sector.

As the charter school sector continues to grow and evolve, the role of authorizers also evolves – as quality control agents, supporters of replication, and strategists for proactive reform. The collection and analysis of data on authorizer characteristics and practices will empower the entire charter sector to develop and improve.

**APPENDIX I:**  
**Largest 50 Authorizers Surveyed by NACSA Fall 2008**

Name of Authorizer / Number of Open Charter Schools Reported Fall 2008			
Arizona State Board for Charter Schools	366	Ball State University, IN	29
Texas Education Agency	205	Arkansas State Department of Education	26
Los Angeles Unified School District	145	Baltimore City Schools	26
North Carolina Department of Education	97	Hillsborough County Public Schools, FL	26
Lucas County Education Service Center, OH	72	Polk County Public Schools, FL	26
Utah State Board of Education	66	Education Resource Consultants of Ohio	25
Philadelphia City Schools	63	New York State Education Department Board of Regents	22
New Jersey Department of Education	62	Denver Public Schools	20
Massachusetts Department of Education	61	Orange County Public School District, FL	20
DC Public Charter School Board	60	Ferris State University, MI	18
Central Michigan University	58	Indianapolis Mayor's Office	17
Broward County Public Schools, FL	56	Lee County Public Schools, FL	17
Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education	51	Connecticut State Department of Education	16
Ohio Council of Community Schools	49	Volunteers of America, MN	15
State University of New York Charter Schools Institute	49	Delaware Department of Education	14
Milwaukee Public Schools, WI	44	Memphis City Schools	13
Bay Mills Community College, MI	39	Appleton Area School District in Appleton, WI	12
St. Aloysius Orphanage, OH	38	California State Board of Education	12
San Diego Unified School District	37	Colorado Charter Schools Institute	12
Albuquerque School District, NM	36	Fresno Unified School District, CA	11
Miami-Dade County, FL	36	Jefferson County Public Schools, CO	11
Palm Beach County, FL	34	Nevada State Board of Education	11
Oakland Unified School District, CA	32	Pennsylvania Department of Education	11
Hawaii Board of Education	31	State of New Mexico Public Education Commission	11
New York City Department of Education	31	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	11
Chicago Public Schools	30		

## APPENDIX II: Authorizing Fees By State

State	Type of Authorizer	Fee Structure
<b>California</b>	School districts, state education agency	1% of revenue or 3% if provided facility substantially rent free
<b>Colorado</b>	School districts, independent chartering board	Up to 5% of per-pupil
<b>Florida</b>	School districts	5% of revenue
<b>Hawaii</b>	State education agency	6.5% of federal grants and subsidies
<b>Indiana</b>	School districts, state universities, mayor of Indianapolis	3% of revenue
<b>Michigan</b>	School districts, intermediate school districts, state universities	3% of state revenue
<b>Minnesota</b>	School districts, state education agency, universities, nonprofit organizations	\$30/student not to exceed \$10,000 (years 1-3) and \$10/student not to exceed \$3,500 (years 4 – beyond)
<b>Missouri</b>	School districts, universities	1.5% of state and local funding not to exceed \$125,000 (adjusted for inflation)
<b>Nevada</b>	State education agency	2% of apportioned revenue (year 1) and 1% (year 2 and beyond)
<b>Oklahoma</b>	School districts, state education agency	5% of state revenue
<b>Ohio</b>	School districts, intermediate school districts, nonprofit organizations	3% of state revenue
<b>South Carolina</b>	School districts, independent chartering board	2% of gross revenue
<b>Washington, DC</b>	Independent chartering board	0.5% of annual budget

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>I</sup> For information on different types of authorizers, see Hassel, Bryan, Ziebarth, Todd and Steiner, Lucy “A State Policy Makers Guide to Alternative Authorizers of Charter Schools,” (September 2005). The Education Commission of the States [http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/1b/b9/33.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1b/b9/33.pdf)
- <sup>II</sup> NACSA identified the largest authorizers in the country as measured by number of open charter schools. NACSA contacted each of the largest fifty authorizers (several authorizers were, at the time, tied for 50th) attempted to acquire data via a sixteen-question telephone interview. We obtained complete data from 72% of the top fifty authorizers and partial data from 82% of the top fifty.
- <sup>III</sup> NACSA's *Principles & Standards of Quality Authorizing* are available at [www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/final\\_PS\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/final_PS_Brochure.pdf)
- <sup>IV</sup> Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, (May 2006). *Trends in Charter School Authorizing*, p. 18. [www.edexcellence.net/doc/Gau%20Charter%20AuthorizerV2%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.edexcellence.net/doc/Gau%20Charter%20AuthorizerV2%20(2).pdf)
- <sup>V</sup> Haft, William, “*Terms of the Deal: A Quality Charter School Contract Defined*” (February 2009). National Association of Charter School Authorizers [www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Issue\\_Brief\\_18\\_Authorizing\\_The\\_Deal\\_FIN.pdf](http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Issue_Brief_18_Authorizing_The_Deal_FIN.pdf)
- <sup>VI</sup> For information on why charter schools close, see The Center for Education Reform. (February 2006). *Charter Schools Today: Changing the Face of American Education Part 3: Charter School Closure*. Washington, DC: from the website; [www.edreform.com/\\_upload/closures.pdf](http://www.edreform.com/_upload/closures.pdf)





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