

IMPROVING NEW MEXICO'S CHARTER AND AUTHORIZER ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

PRESENTATION TO THE LESC

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**NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC CHARTER
SCHOOLS**



nacsa
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR
**PUBLIC
CHARTER
SCHOOLS**

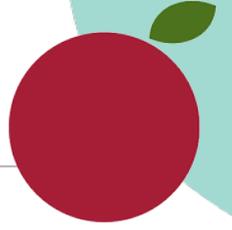
THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE IS THE LEADING NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION FOCUSED ON INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT BY FOSTERING A STRONG CHARTER SCHOOL SECTOR.

OUR WORK FOCUSES ON FOUR AREAS:

**FEDERAL POLICY
STATE POLICY
COMMUNICATIONS
RESEARCH AND DATA**



AGENDA



- New Mexico's National Charter School Law Ranking
- Strengths and Room for Improvement in the Law
- Policy Recommendations for Increased Accountability for Charter Schools
- Policy Recommendations for Increased Accountability for Authorizers

THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE'S CHARTER SCHOOL MODEL LAW IS A TEMPLATE FOR STATES TO WRITE LAWS THAT ENCOURAGE THE CREATION AND GROWTH OF HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS WHILE HOLDING UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS AND AUTHORIZERS ACCOUNTABLE.

EACH YEAR WE RANK STATES BASED ON HOW WELL THEIR CHARTER SCHOOL LAWS ALIGN TO 21 COMPONENTS IN THE MODEL LAW.



NEW MEXICO'S CHARTER LAW



- In 2011, the law ranked #20 (out of 43)
- In 2012, the law ranked #4 (out of 43)
- In 2014, the law ranked #12 (out of 44)
- In 2018, the law ranked #25 (out of 45)

NEW MEXICO'S CHARTER LAW RANKING



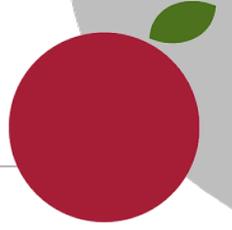
- Other states over the years have been more innovative and aggressive in making updates.
- These updates include creating other types of authorizers (like an independent statewide charter commission), assuring all funding flows to charter schools, and strengthening accountability measures.

STRENGTHS

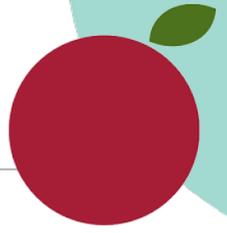


- Allows for two types of authorizers
- Authorizers must follow national best practices
- Strong school accountability via a charter contract and performance framework
- Independent and autonomous charter school governing councils
- Clear reporting requirements for schools and authorizers
- Authorizers must provide yearly reports on their use authorizer fees

NM'S CHARTER LAW ALSO HAS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



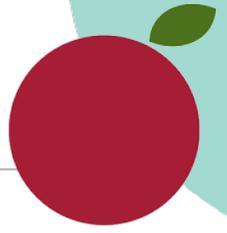
- Renewal Standard & Default Closure
 - NM's law is vague on renewal standards: schools must make “substantial progress” toward academic goals
 - There is no minimum threshold for closure, aka default closure
- Authorizer Evaluations
 - There is no requirement for authorizers to be evaluated on their adherence to standards
- Authorizer Sanctions
 - There are no laws that require consequences for authorizers that do not follow standards



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Be more clear in the law about what is meant by “substantial progress” and require authorizers to close chronically low-performing charter schools unless exceptional circumstances exist

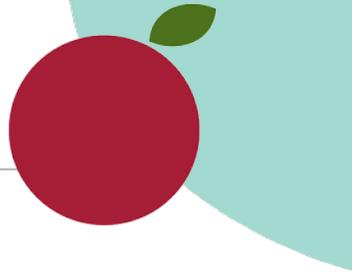
- All authorizers, charter schools, and other stakeholders should have opportunity to engage in process to determine how best to define substantial progress and what the default closure threshold should be
- Not every authorizer would have to use same performance framework for its charters, but would have to include certain “non-negotiable” indicators of progress
- Would cut down on authorizer shopping and provide more clarity to schools and the public



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- (2) Establish a statewide entity that holds authorizers accountable for abiding by principles and standards, and maintaining a high-performing portfolio of schools**
- Just as charter schools should be held accountable, so should authorizers
 - All authorizers should have to register with the statewide entity and agree to abide by national principles, standards, and best practices
 - The evaluation entity should annually collect and report on the performance of every authorizer
 - If an authorizer isn't meeting the standards or has a chronically low-performing portfolio of charter schools, the evaluation entity should issue consequences

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



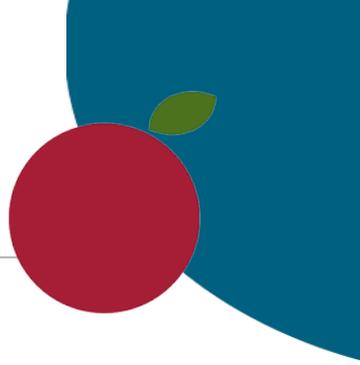
(3) Give a new statewide authorizer entity the ability to sanction poor-performing authorizers

- The entity would have the authority to sanction an authorizer for poor performance, including suspending an authorizer's authority to approve new schools
- It would also conduct periodic formal evaluations of overall state charter school program and outcomes and publish a report
- This would also help cut down on authorizer shopping

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement existing statutes:
 - Annual Report Submitted by the PED (22-8B-17.1)
 - Annual Reports submitted by every chartering authority to the PED (22-8B-12 G)
 - Use of authorizing fees (22-8B-9)
 - Assure federal program funds flow to charter schools (22-8B-13 B)
 - Facility funding (22-8B-4 H)
- Charter schools with a “D” or “F” school grade for two consecutive years should be allowed to change authorizers only if both authorizers agree.
- Statutorily allow for replication and expansion of high-performing schools.
- Require annual authorizer trainings aligned with national best practices (along with the mandatory training course developed by the PED per 22-8B-5.1).
- Enact statutes that apply only to full time virtual schools.

KEEP IN TOUCH



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