NACSA
National Association of Charter School Authorizers

# WELCOME

Welcome to the 2004 Annual Conference of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). The past year has been a time of dynamic growth for NACSA, as our membership increases and our services are used by more and more authorizers throughout the country. It is fair to say that NACSA has never been stronger.

Membership in NACSA has grown by more than two-thirds in the past year, and we extend special words of welcome to new members and newcomers to our Annual Conference. We are once again greeted with record-breaking attendance as we gather in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

This two-day meeting carries on NACSA's tradition for strong interactivity, deep content, and highly-relevant topics. We offer the only venue of its kind for authorizers to gather nationally to discuss leading reforms, explore the special challenges we all face in charter schooling, and to guide authorizer practices to ensure that the autonomy of charter schools is honored and that charter schools are held accountable for high student achievement.

This year's conference is organized around the themes that we articulated in the *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, which were adopted by the membership this spring. The session strands align with these principles and standards, which address our roles and responsibilities, our capacity and infrastructure, and major authorizer functions related to the application process, performance contracting, ongoing oversight and evaluation, and renewal decisionmaking.

As you move through the schedule, you will have the opportunity to select from 33 highly-interactive and practice-oriented concurrent sessions. On top of this, our plenary sessions are highly topical and permit us to look critically at whether charter schools are achieving the results intended and are we, as authorizers, carrying out our oversight mission responsibly. Our keynote speaker, Goeffrey Canada of Harlem Children's Zone, is full of the passion for reform and results that motivate many of us in the charter community and he will illuminate the promise of chartering informed by his own efforts at building up community and an educated citizenry.

What makes our approach to conference program content work so well is the blend of careful forethought and planning on the part of more than 100 session leaders with the active participation of those in the audience who are equally vested in sharing knowledge, challenging assumptions and gaining new insights. This annual gathering goes to the heart of our mission as an association—to nurture the professional relationships and build the body of authorizer knowledge that serve to promote quality charter schools.

Thanks for joining us and best wishes for a most eventful conference experience.

Greg Richmond
President

Mark Cannon
Executive Director

# CONCURRENT SESSION STRANDS

| Authorizer Roles and Responsibilities | Session Block |
|---|---|
| Quality Authorizing and Quality Charter Schools: What's the Connection? | A |
| Federal Legislative Issues | B |
| NYT, AFT, RAND, Hoxby—What the Heck is Going On With Charter School Research and What Do Authorizers Need to Know? | C |
| Working with Education Service Providers | E |
| Research 101: The Basics Authorizers Need to Know About Research Techniques and Terms | E |
| The SEA and Authorizers: A Partnership in Promoting Quality Charter Schools | F |

## Authorizer Capacity and Infrastructure

| | |
|---|---|
| Capacity for Quality Authorizing | A |
| Why School Districts Choose to Charter | B |
| Authorizers Under the Microscope | C |
| Authorizers and the Facilities Challenge | D |
| Media Relations/ Crisis Management | E |
| Alternative Authorizing Models | F |

## Application Process

| | |
|---|---|
| Stimulating the Supply of Quality Charter Schools | A |
| Evaluating the Capacity of the Plan AND the People Behind It | B |
| Specialty Chartering: Considerations for Single Sex, Special Education, and Other Targeted Population Schools | D |
| Charter Schools Serving English Language Learners: The Authorizer's Role | E |
| Encouraging Diversity in Charter School Populations | F |

## Performance Contracting

| | |
|---|---|
| Authorizer and Charter School Relationships: A Model for Public School Governance? | A |
| Performance-Based Contracts: What Are They? Why Have Them? And, How Do You Use Them To Raise Standards? | B |
| Cyber Schools: Contracting Without Classrooms | D |
| Performance-Based Accountability and NCLB | D |

## Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

| | |
|---|---|
| Measuring Success Part I: Academic Performance | A |
| Special Education and Charter Schools: The Authorizer's Role | A |
| Righting the Boat Mid-Stream: Responding to Underperformance | C |
| Legal Foundations for Understanding Authorizer Oversight | C |
| Authorizers and Charter school Boards: Supporting Good Governance | C |
| Measuring Success Part II: Organizational and Fiscal Performance | D |
| Driving School Improvement Through Onsite Reviews | D |
| Converting to Quality: Restructuring to Charter School Status | E |

## Renewal Decisionmaking

| | |
|---|---|
| Two Thumbs Up—or Down?: A Renewal Decisionmaking Simulation | B |
| Nonrenewal and Revocation: the Nuts and Bolts to a School Closure | C |
| Parental Choice and Public Accountability | D |
| Renewal Decisionmaking: Lessons, Conundrums and Practices | F |

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE & SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2004

**State Association Meeting (ICW)**
**Salon 10**
**11:00 am – 8:00 pm**

**NACSA Board Meeting**
**(Location TBA)**
**4:30 pm – 5:30 pm**

**"Taste of Philly"**
**Member Appreciation Social**
***by invitation only***
**Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts**
**6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**
**(Sponsored by Edison Schools, Mosaica Education, National Heritage Academies and White Hat Management)**

Enjoy an open bar as well as an assortment of genuine Philadelphia cuisine offered at three buffet stations representing Little Italy, Chinatown, and the famous cheese steaks of South Philly.

## MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2004

**Continental Breakfast**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the**
**Conference Center Ballroom**
**7:30 am – 8:30 am**

**WELCOME AND OPENING PLENARY**
**Conference Center Ballroom**
**8:30 am – 10:00 am**

**Charter Schools and Results: No Excuses, Some Excuses or Status Quo?**

***Moderator***

*Andrew Rotherham (21 Century Schools Project, Progressive Policy Institute)*

***Panelists***

*John Chubb (Edison Schools)*

*Anita Nelam (Harte Crossroads Public Schools)*

*Representative Dwight Evans (Pennsylvania House of Representatives)*

*James Merriman (Charter Schools Institute, State University of New York)*

The charter school concept was built on the premise that autonomous schools with control over budgets, hiring practices, and education programs could deliver education better and for less. A dozen years into the charter school movement, charter school performance, viewed nationally, appears to be a mixed bag. Charter proponents can always explain why results are less than stellar whenever that's the case: charter schools receive less money, don't have facilities handed to them, attract students already far behind, etc. Yet charters—even ones with abysmal student results—are almost always making their parents happy. So when it comes to charter school performance, what should authorizers expect and what do parents and students deserve?

**Break**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the**
**Conference Center Ballroom**
**10:00 am – 10:15 am**

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS A**
**10:15 am – 11:45 am**

**Capacity for Quality Authorizing (Salon 3)**

The term "authorizer" conveys an imposing sense of size and authority. Yet most authorizing offices operate within larger, non-charter institutions ranging from local school districts to universities, state education agencies, and private nonprofits. Often the authorizer is a small-scale office or even a single employee for whom chartering is just one among many responsibilities. And although the charter enterprise may be a small slice of a larger bureaucracy, it demands a range of capacities. This session will examine three capacity issues: the kinds of resources needed for effective authorizing; the challenges commonly encountered in securing these resources; and capacity-building strategies used by authorizers to meet the demands of this work.

*Rosylin Bessard (Fresno (CA) Unified School District)*

*Rochelle Hendricks (New Jersey Department of Education)*

*Kristen Jordison (Arizona State Board of Charter Schools)*

*Nelson Smith (New American Schools)*

**Stimulating the Supply of Quality Charter Schools (Salon 4)**

The charter school movement is at a crossroads. Though the number of schools continues to increase, many within the charter school community fear that growth is leveling off. And related to this is the fact that more doesn't mean better, for quantity should by no means compromise quality. This leaves charter proponents scratching their heads as to how to increase the number of quality of charter schools. This session will examine what authorizers specifically should and should not do to increase the supply of quality charter schools, and it will discuss the authorizer's responsibility to uphold quality as the charter school movement expands.

*Joseph Feldman (New York City Department of Education)*

*Jonathan Gyurko (United Federation of Teachers)*

*Cathy Lund (Walton Family Foundation)*

*James Peyser (New Schools Venture Fund)*

**Authorizer and Charter School Relationships: A Model for Public School Governance? (Salon 5)**

Charter laws across the country charge these schools with developing innovative, replicable models for public education. Many believe that the relationship between authorizer and individual charter schools is the true innovation of charter schools. Participants will discuss their experiences and share what they've learned about how to foster authorizer/school relationships that balance the authorizer's role in supporting individual school successes and overseeing school-specific accountability obligations. Can these models have a more far-reaching impact on the public education system?

*June Brown (Laboratory Charter School of Language and Communication)*

*Sonia Esposito (Osceola (FL) School District)*

*Alice Heller (School District of Philadelphia)*

*Paul Herdman (Rodel Foundation)*

**Special Education and Charter Schools: The Authorizer's Role (Salon 6)**

Special education is an area of potential vulnerability for charter schools—yet the role of authorizers in promoting and ensuring high-quality services for students with disabilities is often poorly defined. This session will investigate the role of authorizers in improving special education compliance and program quality in the charter schools they oversee.

*Preston Green (Pennsylvania State University)*

*Paul Haubrich (University of Wisconsin, Parkside)*

*Paul O'Neill (Edison Schools)*

*Lauren Morando Rhim (University of Maryland)*

**Quality Authorizing and Quality Charter Schools: What's the Connection? (Philadelphia Ballroom North)**

This interactive session presents an opportunity to explore how the quality and quantity of charter schools is affected by how authorizers fulfill important responsibilities to approve, oversee, and evaluate the performance of charter schools. Using NACSA's *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing* as a backdrop, participants will engage in practice-based discussions around the authorizer's role in creating and upholding high expectations for the schools they charter. These discussions will focus on four core responsibilities of charter school authorizing: the application process, performance contracting, ongoing oversight and evaluation, and renewal decisionmaking.

*Rebecca Cass (NACSA)*

*Jennifer Rippner (Georgia Department of Education)*

*Carlo Rodriguez (Miami-Dade County (FL) Public Schools)*

**Measuring Success Part I: Academic Performance (Philadelphia Ballroom South)**

The "Adequate Yearly Progress" requirements of No Child Left Behind signal the increasing importance of standardized testing in public education and have set a standard for performance that all public schools, including charter schools, must achieve. And while the overall goal of AYP is worthy, many educational experts and members of the charter school community alike have argued that AYP alone does not accurately measure academic performance. In fact, many leading authorizers have developed accountability systems that consider multiple measures for evaluating the academic performance of charter schools.

This session will provide practical guidance on the variety of ways for evaluating a school's academic performance. It will also introduce more accurate ways of using and reporting test results, including "value-added" strategies that provide finely-honed conclusions about school performance built on student-level data.

*David Harris (Indianapolis (IN) Mayor's Office)*

*Richard Wenning (Colorado League of Charter Schools)*

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**LUNCHEON AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS**
**Conference Center Ballroom**
**11:45 am – 1:15 pm**

**Federal Update**

***Nina Shokraii Rees,*** *Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement, United States Department of Education*

Nina Shokraii Rees leads the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) at the U.S. Department of Education, overseeing the administration of approximately 28 grant programs. The office supports education innovation, broadly disseminates the lessons learned from these programs and helps to make strategic investments in promising educational practices. It also provides leadership for efforts in the areas of parental options, information and rights.

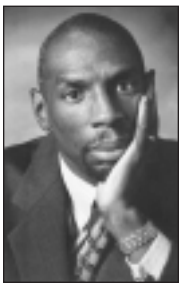
Working with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Rees also coordinates the implementation of the public school choice and supplemental services provisions of the president's *No Child Left Behind Act*.

Prior to joining the U.S. Department of Education, Rees was a deputy assistant for domestic policy in the office of Vice President Cheney and served as an education adviser to the Bush presidential campaign and helped draft the *No Child Left Behind* education blueprint for the Bush-Cheney transition team.

**LUNCHEON KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**The Promise of Charter Schools**

*Geoffrey Canada, President/ CEO, Harlem Children's Zone*



Geoffrey Canada, who grew up in the South Bronx, has dedicated his life to helping children, who are growing up in conditions similar to those faced by his family, secure both educational and economic opportunities. An acclaimed author and much sought-after public speaker, Canada enjoys a national reputation as both an advocate for and expert on issues concerning violence, children and community redevelopment. Prominent among his many efforts is the Harlem Children's Zone Project, a multi-year comprehensive community building initiative that will create significant, positive opportunities for all children living in a 60-block area of Central Harlem by helping parents, residents, teachers and other stakeholders create a safe learning environment for youth.

Approved in February 2004, the Promise Academy Charter School is one of HCZ's newest initiatives. Promise Academy opened this fall with 100 kindergartners and 100 sixth-graders. Adding two grades each year, Promise Academy will run from kindergarten through 12th grade and have an enrollment of 1,300 students when it reaches full capacity in the 2010-2011 school year.

**Break**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the Conference Center Ballroom**
**1:15 pm – 1:30 pm**

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS – B**
**1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

**Evaluating the Capacity of the Plan AND the People Behind It (Salon 3)**

A proposal to start a charter school often includes an impressive stack of paper conveying lofty aspirations for academic and personal student achievement. Perhaps the most difficult challenge an authorizer faces at the application stage is determining whether the applicants are likely to make the plan a reality. First, the authorizer must determine whether the proposal hangs together as a coherent whole. Second, the authorizer must determine whether the individuals behind the proposal have the capacity to pull it off. In this session participants will have the opportunity to learn about and discuss strategies for making these determinations. We will use the perspectives of an experienced authorizer, a lender, and a leadership development expert as our springboard for discussion and analysis.

*Linda Brown (Building Excellent Schools)*

*Jim Ford (National Council of La Raza)*

*William Haft (NACSA)*

*Genita Robinson (Chicago Public Schools)*

**Performance-Based Contracts: What Are They? Why Have Them? And How Do You Use Them To Raise Standards? (Salon 4)**

Performance-based contracts empower schools to set their own definitions of success, as well as determine how success will be measured, that can extend beyond the minimum state, district, and federal accountability requirements. How does this work? Do authorizers have a responsibility to ensure that schools do not set their bar too low or too high? This session will explore the various strategies employed by authorizers in creating and implementing performance-based contracts. Participants will discuss techniques for developing model contracts that fulfill accountability requirements while preserving the mission-driven essence of the charter school contract.

*Kathleen Clarke (Chicago Public Schools)*

*Martin Dezelan (Ball State University)*

*Ledyard McFadden (SchoolWorks)*

**Cyber Schools: Contracting Without Classrooms (Salon 5)**

What is a non-classroom-based charter school? Why do "cyber charters," though relatively few in number, draw disproportionate attention and publicity? In this session participants will learn about and discuss trends and track records of cyber and non-classroom-based charter schools in various states. Discussion topics may include non-classroom-based educational programs, cyber-charter funding, oversight challenges, variations in state policy, and the challenge that performance-based evaluation of such schools presents for authorizers.

*Elizabeth Becker (Pennsylvania Department of Education)*

*Barbara Dreyer (Connections Academy)*

*Allison Perz (Ohio Council of Community Schools)*

*Mark Thimmig (White Hat Management)*

**Two Thumbs Up – or Down?: A Renewal Decisionmaking Simulation (Salon 6)**

As charter schools come up for renewal, authorizers confront the challenge of deciding whether each school has fulfilled the terms of its charter. This decision is all the more difficult when a school's performance terms or data are unclear, conflicting or incomplete. This simulation is a completely interactive case study of a charter school coming up for its renewal decision in the age of No Child Left Behind. Participants will gain an understanding of the types of data and processes needed to make this high-stakes decision.

*Paul Herdman (Rodel Foundation)*

**Federal Legislative Issues (Philadelphia Ballroom North)**

Public education is often viewed as the quintessential "local" political matter. Yet there are a host of federal policy and financial issues that affect charter schools and authorizers including No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), special education law (both IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act), the federal Charter Schools Grant Program, and related facilities finance initiatives. In some respects, charter schools are square pegs trying to fit into policy holes that were cut with the traditional school system in mind. In other respects, charter schools and authorizers are serving as public education role models for the concept of performance-based accountability and are generating focused federal support in recognition of their potential to have a broader impact on public education. This session will highlight and discuss key federal policy and funding issues and their significance for charter schools and authorizers.

*Jeff Jacobs (Office of Senator John Kerry) [invited]*

*Melanie Looney (United States House of Representative's Committee on Education & the Workforce)*

*Nina Shokraii Rees (United States Department of Education)*

*Jon Schroeder (Education/Evolving)*

*Andrew Smarick (Charter School Leadership Council)*

**Why School Districts Choose to Charter (Philadelphia Ballroom South)**

Framed by NACSA's Issue Brief "*Why Districts Choose to Charter",* this session will explore the benefits of district chartering as part of a larger scale reform effort. The panelists will provide profiles of three districts that have thoughtfully and deliberately chosen to charter and highlight the challenges confronted, solutions created, and results attained through their overall school improvement efforts. This session will provide participants a chance to learn about and discuss the benefits and obstacles to using chartering as a means to support and strengthen other district-initiated reform strategies.

*William Andrekopoulos (Milwaukee Public Schools)*

*Linda Dawson (Appleton (WI) School District)*

*Dennis Doyle (Chula Vista (CA) Elementary School District)*

*Robin Lake (University of Washington)*

**Break**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the Conference Center Ballroom**
**3:00 pm – 3:15 pm**

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS – C**
**3:15 pm – 4:45 pm**

**Nonrenewal and Revocation: The Nuts and Bolts to a School Closure (Salon 3)**

In this session, participants will have the chance to delve into real-world issues that challenge authorizers when implementing a school closure once a nonrenewal or charter revocation decision has been made. What kind of legal issues remain? What happens to public assets? How can you work in a responsible, constructive way with parents, school employees and the community impacted by the closure of the school? In this presentation a panel of authorizers will provide their perspective from real experience.

*Martin Dezelan (Ball State University)*

*Larry Gabbert (Delaware Department of Education)*

*Daniel Quisenberry (Michigan Association of Public School Academies)*

*LaRhonda Steward (Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee)*

**Righting the Boat Mid-Stream: Responding to Underperformance (Salon 4)**

By design, charter schools are judged at renewal time and are expected to operate with significant independence until then. But what happens when an authorizer sees a school in trouble midway through its charter term? Some authorizers have taken proactive steps to facilitate school improvement at this stage—subtle in some cases, overtly interventionist in others. This session will present and discuss a spectrum of approaches that various authorizers—representing markedly contrasting philosophies toward providing "technical assistance"—have taken to help troubled schools right themselves before the charter clock runs down.

*Yvette Jenkins (Oakland University, MI)*

*Jessie Kilgore (Plymouth Educational Center)*

*Margaret Lin (NACSA)*

*Mark Weinberg (Central Michigan University)*

**Authorizers and Charter School Boards: Supporting Good Governance (Salon 5)**

Like sound educational programming and funding, effective governance and management is necessary for the success of any charter school. The capacity of a founding group to provide effective governance and management is central to authorizers' decisions at the charter-granting stage and becomes even more critical once schools are operating. This session will explore authorizers' varying approaches to overseeing and supporting strong governance and management. Specifically, the discussion will focus on how authorizers can encourage strong charter school boards that work well with their school administration. What types of guidance, policies, requirements, and assistance have authorizers

developed to support good governance? What policies have authorizers established regarding intervention in governance matters? This session will also discuss which kinds of interventions have worked, and which have not.

*Angelete Melhado (Melhado Consulting)*

*Connie Sutton (National Charter Schools Institute)*

*Justin Testerman (Volunteers of America, MN)*

*Charles Toulmin (Massachusetts Department of Education)*

**Legal Foundations for Understanding Authorizer Oversight (Salon 6)**

Charter schools and authorizers are creatures of state law and relatively new ones at that. Any new law undergoes interpretation and testing as theory turns into practice. In the case of charter authorizing, the legal challenge of fulfilling a new role in public education is compounded by the variety of types of authorizers—from local school boards to private non-profits, to public colleges and universities to state boards of education. So what are the legal responsibilities and liabilities of authorizers related to charter school oversight? Can a school sue its authorizer under the charter? Is the authorizer legally responsible for a school's compliance with special education requirements? What about for a school's (mis)management of funds?

In the world of law, the answer usually begins, "It depends…" In this session, participants will discuss how that sentence might be completed in the context of authorizer oversight based on legal considerations and developments in various states.

*Kristin McIntosh (Massachusetts Department of Education)*

*Terry Ryan (Fordham Institute)*

*Leonard Wolfe (Dykema Gosset PLLC)*

**Authorizers Under the Microscope (Philadelphia Ballroom North)**

In the charter school world, the way charter schools are held accountable is common knowledge – parents and children decide whether to attend the school and authorizers decide whether to renew the charter. How, though, are authorizers held accountable and what are they accountable for and to whom? The scrutiny on authorizers is increasing, whether in the form of research, fallout from individual school problems, or state audits of authorizer practices. Such scrutiny typically delivers a mixed bag of valuable criticism and highly political posturing. In this session, participants will discuss how to prepare for and respond to the growing interest in what authorizers do and how they are (or ought to be) doing it.

*Brian Bennett (San Diego Unified School District)*

*Jim Goenner (Central Michigan University)*

*Kristen Jordison (Arizona State Board of Charter Schools)*

*Todd Ziebarth (Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc.)*

**NYT, AFT, RAND, Hoxby—What the Heck is Going On With Charter School Research and What Do Authorizers Need to Know? (Philadelphia Ballroom South)**

Over the last year, a flurry of research on charter schools has made front page headlines. Panelists will present a recap, current highlights, and sneak preview of research of particular interest to authorizers. Participants will discuss what authorizers can take away and *should* learn from this research in order to 1) improve their practice, 2) translate in an informed, savvy way findings to the "public", and 3) understand the political repercussions of large-scale charter studies.

*Bryan Hassel (Public Impact)*

*Robin Lake (University of Washington)*

*Lauren Morando Rhim (University of Maryland)*

*Andrew Rotherham (Progressive Policy Institute)*

**Reception**
**Horizons Rooftop Ballroom**
**5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**
**(Sponsored by White Hat Management)**

## Tuesday, October 26, 2004

**Continental Breakfast**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the Conference Center Ballroom**
**7:45 am – 8:45 am**

**Member Meeting**
**Salon 10**
**8:00 am – 8:45 am**

**Break**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the Conference Center Ballroom**
**8:45 am – 9:00 am**

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS – D**
**9:00 am – 10:30 am**

**Specialty Chartering: Considerations for Single Sex, Special Education, and Other Targeted Population Schools (Salon 3)**

Chartering schools for specific populations or with very specialized educational programs is an innovative, but very complicated, opportunity for authorizers. Participants will gain an understanding of the particular legal and oversight issues from authorizers who have chartered "specialty schools". Are these models successful? Are they evaluated differently? Do they bring out the best or the worst in the freedom for accountability hallmark of the charter school movement?

*Josephine Baker (DC Public Charter School Board)*

*Paul O'Neill (Edison Schools)*

*Jennifer Sneed (State University of New York, Charter Schools Institute)*

**Performance-Based Accountability and NCLB (Salon 4)**

At its initial passage three years ago, there was much speculation on how NCLB would impact the ability of authorizers to hold charter schools accountable. Informed by a survey conducted by NACSA in Spring 2004, the impact of NCLB on charter school authorizers is becoming more clear. Those who thought that No Child Left Behind signaled the death of charter schools should take heart: It appears that authorizers are finding ways to integrate the requirements of the law into their existing accountability processes. On the other hand, those who thought charters could fly forever under the radar are in for a rude awakening. NCLB accountability has proven to be as real for charter schools as for other public schools.

Using the findings from this survey as a backdrop, participants will discuss the responsibilities of authorizers in implementing NCLB accountability, practical strategies authorizers are employing to fulfill these responsibilities, and how NCLB is impacting authorizing practices in holding schools accountable to school-specific performance contracts.

*Brian Bennett (San Diego Unified School District)*

*Joe Jacovino (SchoolWorks)*

*Nelson Smith (New American Schools)*

**Driving School Improvement Through Onsite Reviews (Salon 5)**

Using NACSA's Issue Brief, "The Value of Quality Onsite Reviews: Seeing is Believing" as a backdrop, session participants will work in small groups to discuss the fundamental challenges that authorizers face in conducting onsite reviews and solutions for meeting these challenges. This interactive session will be framed by an overarching question: "How do authorizers implement onsite reviews so that they encourage/ensure high performance, rather than prevent low performance in schools?" Potential issues for exploration include defining and communicating the purpose of site visits to schools, the potential conflict between carrying out oversight duties and offering technical assistance to schools, defining the criteria to determine whether the teaching, learning, and organizational behavior observed during an onsite review is "good enough", and what role schools should play in defining the terms by which they will be evaluated.

*Tamara Lumpkin (DC Public Charter School Board)*

*Anthony Siddall (Massachusetts Department of Education)*

*Richard Wenning (Colorado League of Charter Schools)*

**Parental Choice and Public Accountability (Salon 6)**

As the charter school movement has grown and matured, the inevitable task of closing schools for underperformance has become a reality. What role should parental choice and satisfaction play in an authorizers renewal decisionmaking process? What are the obligations of an authorizer to inform parents about how their child's school is doing? Session participants will explore the authorizer's role in informing the market about an individual school's performance. The session will also explore how the No Child Left Behind Act and the expectation of Adequate Yearly Progress change the landscape for parental choice and public accountability.

*Jeanne Allen (Center for Education Reform)*

*Susan Miller Barker (State University of New York)*

*Corrie Conner (Indianapolis (IN) Mayor's Office)*

*Lawrence Patrick (Black Alliance for Educational Options)*

**Measuring Success Part II: Organizational and Fiscal Performance (Salon 10)**

This session will look at how authorizers have defined organizational success and fiscal health for the schools they charter. What are the variables that matter most and how are they measured? What is effective governance and how is it created? Participants will discuss a variety of topics including how schools can evaluate and self-assess their organizational performance, how authorizers can evaluate and encourage healthy schools, and what authorizers and schools can learn from other industries about creating and replicating high-performing schools.

*Joey Gustafson (JM Consulting)*

*Paul Haubrich (University of Wisconsin, Parkside)*

*Bruno Manno (Annie E. Casey Foundation)*

*John Rothwell (Ohio Charter School Sponsors Institute)*

**Authorizers and the Facilities Challenge (Logan 2)**

One of the single biggest challenges for a charter school is securing financing for an adequate facility. Fortunately, there is a broad array of private lenders that are helping charter school operators overcome this challenge. Yet authorizers often do not recognize how they can indirectly and directly affect a school's ability to obtain financing necessary for a schoolhouse. This session will introduce participants to the different financing options available to charter school operators, and will provide a forum for discussing how authorizer practices and policies can assist and influence charter school lending decisions.

*Mark Medema (KIPP)*

*Tom Nida (DC Public Charter School Board)*

*Barbara Page (LISC)*

*Eva Rainer (NCB Development Corporation)*

*Jon Schroeder (Education/Evolving)*

**Break**
**Exhibitors Pavilion in the Conference Center Ballroom**
**10:30 am – 10:45 am**

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS- E**
**10:45 am – 12:15 pm**

**Research 101: The Basics Authorizers Need to Know About Research Techniques and Terms (Salon 3)**

Research on charter schools has evolved from a trickle to a torrent in recent years, and authorizers are being caught up in the flood. Yet most research is reported in sound bites and with little analysis of what the research actually shows (or doesn't show). Was it quantitative or qualitative? Was there causation or just a correlation? Are the results valid and reliable? And, most importantly, what does the research tell about *why* things turned out the way they did?

This session offers participants a research primer that will help you become more educated consumers of reports and studies that are increasingly common in the charter school world. Charter-related research will serve as a tool to explore research issues of fundamental and universal importance.

*Susan Miller Barker (State University of New York, Charter Schools Institute)*

*Lauren Morando Rhim (University of Maryland)*

**Working with Education Service Providers (Salon 4)**

The charter school movement has fostered a robust variety of education service providers (ESPs) that help build the capacities and success of charter schools at scale. This session will consider how authorizers can promote successful partnerships between charter schools and education service providers. Participants will discuss common questions that authorizers encounter in reviewing and overseeing these contractual relationships, and will evaluate a hypothetical term sheet for a charter school management contract. The session will also present a variety of resources and tools that can help build effective, lasting relationships between charter schools and ESPs.

*Jason Bentley (Central Michigan University)*

*Jon Hage (National Council of Education Providers and Charter Schools USA)*

*Margaret Lin (NACSA)*

*Michael Ronan (Lighthouse Academies)*

**Media Relations/Crisis Management (Salon 5)**

What happens when the media learns that a charter school employee turns out to have a criminal record? When a charter school implodes? When a school management organization goes under? Students and parents may be justifiably outraged; their education may be disrupted; and the media may have a field day.

What is the authorizer's role in all this? The authorizer may not be responsible for a school's problems, but it may certainly be responsible for knowing what is happening in schools it oversees and reacting promptly and appropriately. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss how to handle challenges like managing the media in times of charter school closures, and—as importantly—to work proactively with media regarding charter school issues.

*Angela Irwin (Central Michigan University)*

*Caprice Young (California Charter School Association)*

**Charter Schools Serving English Language Learners: The Authorizer's Role (Salon 6)**

Like all public schools, charter schools must ensure that English language learners (ELLs) receive an appropriate education. There are rigorous requirements but also significant flexibility for charter schools in meeting these requirements. This interactive workshop will inform charter authorizers of federal requirements regarding ELLs and their implications for a school's academic program. The facilitators will present a brief overview of the second-language acquisition process and effective program models for ELLs. Participants will then have the opportunity to rate mock charter application plans for services to ELLs using model evaluation criteria. Participants will also receive a sample monitoring instrument for operational schools and a list of relevant resources.

*Ariana Quinones (DC Public Charter School Association)*

*Esther Monclova-Johnson (District of Columbia Public Schools, Office of Civil Rights and Multicultural Affairs)*

**Converting to Quality: Restructuring to Charter School Status (Salon 10)**

As the sanctions for schools failing to make Adequate Yearly Progress ratchet up, there is an increasing and urgent need for corrective actions that can effectively turn around underperforming schools. NCLB defines, and charter school proponents have long discussed, the conversion of low-performing schools to charter school status as one strategy for doing so. In this session, participants will learn about restructuring efforts taking place across the country and discuss the challenges associated with this school reform effort and strategies for making restructuring work well.

*Randy DeHoff (Colorado State Board of Education)*

*Bryan Hassel (Public Impact)*

*Iris Metts (Mosaica Education)*

*Todd Ziebarth (Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc.)*

**Encouraging Diversity in Charter School Populations (Logan 2)**

The charter school idea is based, in large part, on enabling parents and children to be decision-makers regarding the schools they attend. However, public education policy, in general, and charter school law,

in particular, often places value on diversity and on having a school population that broadly reflects the community in which the school is located. What role can and should authorizers play in encouraging charter schools to attract diverse populations?

This session will give participants a chance to learn about and discuss legal, political and educational considerations related to encouraging diversity in charter school populations.

*John Borkowski (Hogan & Hartson LLP)*

*William Haft (NACSA)*

*Victoria Li (San Francisco Unified School District)*

*Carlo Rodriguez (Miami-Dade County Public Schools)*

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**LUNCHEON PLENARY**
**Conference Center Ballroom**
**12:15 pm – 1:45 pm**

**Authorizers and Oversight: Where is the Line Between Effective Accountability and Intrusive Regulation? (Conference Center Ballroom)**

***Moderator***

*Jim Shelton (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation)*

***Panelists***

*Jeanne Allen (Center for Education Reform)*

*Brian Bennett (San Diego Unified School District)*

*Jim Goenner (Central Michigan University)*

*Otho Tucker (Mosaica Education)*

The basic charter school bargain—freedom in exchange for accountability—presents unique challenges to authorizers. Authorizers must walk a tightrope of sorts, respecting each charter school's independence and distinct mission, while holding every school accountable for educational results and public obligations. Overseeing charter schools is thus a delicate balancing act that most authorizers must navigate through trial, error and improvisation. At what point does effective oversight cross the line to overregulation, and how can authorizers stay on the right side of this line?

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**CONCURRENT SESSIONS – F**
**1:45 pm – 3:00 pm**

**Alternative Authorizing Models (Salon 3)**

Authorizing has moved well beyond the "traditional" model of a school district or state education agency approving and overseeing charter schools. Variations include not-for-profit organizations, institutions of higher learning, municipal offices, and special purpose chartering boards. This session offers a presentation of such models and opportunities to discuss these and other forward thinking, creative ideas and suggestions for making authorizing work well.

*Randy DeHoff (Colorado State Board of Education)*

*Quentin Messer (Fordham Institute)*

*Jimmie Rodgers (Ferris State University)*

**The SEA and Authorizers: A Partnership in Promoting Quality Charter Schools (Salon 4)**

State Education Agencies (SEAs) play a variety of roles in chartering. Some are the primary authorizers in their states, others can authorize on appeal or in limited circumstances, and many have no formal chartering role. Regardless of their statutory responsibility, SEAs can impact the climate and attitude towards chartering and many SEAs have done so by supporting authorizers in understanding and carrying out their responsibilities effectively. In this session, participants will learn about various SEA and authorizer partnership efforts and will discuss what role the SEA can (or ought to) play in promoting quality authorizing practices within their states.

*Rebecca Cass (NACSA)*

*Joni Gilles (Oregon Department of Education)*

*Dean Kern (United States Department of Education)*

*Jennifer Rippner (Georgia Department of Education)*

*Robert Wedl (Minnesota Charter School Sponsors Project)*

**Renewal Decisionmaking: Lessons, Conundrums and Practices (Salon 10)**

How good is good enough for a charter renewal? What kind of evidence do authorizers need to make a sound, defensible high-stakes charter decision? This session will present major findings and lessons learned from a recent national study of charter renewal and revocation decisions. The majority of the session will be devoted to guided discussion of real-life renewal decisionmaking challenges faced by session participants, applying lessons from the study and sharing experiences and decisionmaking practices among discussion participants.

*Bryan Hassel (Public Impact)*

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**Break**
**Exhibitors Pavilion**
**3:00 pm – 3:15 pm**

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**Membership Forum**
**Salon 10**
**3:15 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Open Discussion of Professional Issues & Concerns**

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# NACSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE – SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

## Sunday, October 24, 2004

| | |
|---|---|
| 11:00 pm-8:00 pm | **STATE ASSOCIATION MEETING** (ICW) [SALON 10] |
| 4:30 pm-5:30 pm | **NACSA BOARD MEETING** [LOCATION TBA] |
| 6:00 pm-8:00 pm | **"TASTE OF PHILLY" MEMBERS ONLY APPRECIATION SOCIAL** [PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS] Sponsored by Edison Schools, Mosaica Education, National Heritage Academies and White Hat Management |

## Monday, October 25, 2004

| | SALON 3 | SALON 4 | SALON 5 | SALON 6 | PHIL. BLRM N. | PHIL. BLRM S. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7:30 am-8:15 am | **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 8:30 am-10:00 am | **WELCOME AND OPENING PLENARY: Charter Schools and Results: No Excuses, Some Excuses or Status Quo?** [CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM] | | | | | |
| 10:00 am-10:15 am | **BREAK – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 10:15 am-11:45 am **A SESSIONS** | Capacity for Quality Authorizing | Stimulating the Supply of Quality Charter Schools | Authorizer and Charter School Relationships: A Model for Public School Governance? | Special Education and Charter Schools: The Authorizer's Role | Quality Authorizing and Quality Charter Schools: What's the Connection? | Measuring Success Part I: Academic Performance |
| | | | | | | |
| 11:45 am-1:15 pm | **LUNCHEON AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS**<br>**Federal Update** – Nina Shokraii Rees, U.S. Assistant Deputy Secretary of Education<br>**"The Promise of Charter Schools"** – Geoffrey Canada, CEO, Harlem Children's Zone<br>[CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM] | | | | | |
| 1:15 pm-1:30 pm | **BREAK – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 1:30 pm-3:00 pm **B SESSIONS** | Evaluating the Capacity of the Plan AND the People Behind It | Performance-Based Contracts: What Are They? Why Have Them? And How Do You Use Them To Raise Standards? | Cyber Schools: Contracting Without Classrooms | Two Thumbs Up – or Down?: A Renewal Decisionmaking Simulation | Federal Legislative Issues | Why School Districts Choose to Charter |
| 3:00 pm-3:15 pm | **BREAK – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 3:15 pm-4:45 pm **C SESSIONS** | Nonrenewal and Revocation: the Nuts and Bolts to a School Closure | Righting the Boat Mid-Stream: Responding to Under-performance | Authorizers and Charter School Boards: Supporting Good Governance | Legal Foundations for Understanding Authorizer Oversight | Authorizers Under the Microscope | NYT, AFT, RAND, Hoxby- What the Heck is Going On With Charter School Research and What Do Authorizers Need to Know? |
| | | | | | | |
| 5:00 pm-7:00 pm | **NACSA RECEPTION – Sponsored by White Hat Management** [HORIZONS ROOFTOP BALLROOM] | | | | | |

# NACSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE – SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

## Tuesday, October 26, 2004

| | SALON 3 | SALON 4 | SALON 5 | SALON 6 | SALON 10 | LOGAN 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7:45 am-8:45 am | **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 8:00 am-8:45 am | **2004 NACSA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, including Board of Directors Election** [CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM] | | | | | |
| 8:45 am-9:00 am | **BREAK – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 9:00 am-10:30 am<br>**D SESSIONS** | Specialty Chartering: Considerations for Single Sex, Special Education, and Other Targeted Population Schools | Performance-Based Accountability and NCLB | Driving School Improvement Through Onsite Reviews | Parental Choice and Public Accountability | Measuring Success Part II: Organizational and Fiscal Performance | Authorizers and the Facilities Challenge |
| 10:30 am-10:45 am | **BREAK – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 10:45 am-12:15 pm<br>**E SESSIONS** | Research 101: The Basics Authorizers Need to Know About Research Techniques and Terms | Working with Education Service Providers | Media Relations/ Crisis Management | Charter Schools Serving English Language Learners: The Authorizer's Role | Converting to Quality: Restructuring to Charter School Status | Encouraging Diversity in Charter School Populations |
| | | | | | | |
| 12:15 pm-1:45 pm | **LUNCH PLENARY: Authorizers and Oversight: Where is the Line Between Effective Accountability and Intrusive Regulation?** [CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM] | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 1:45 pm-3:00 pm<br>**F SESSIONS** | Alternative Authorizing Models | The SEA and Authorizers: A Partnership in Promoting Quality Charter Schools | | | Renewal Decisionmaking: Lessons, Conundrums and Practices | |
| 3:00 pm-3:15 pm | **BREAK – EXHIBITORS PAVILION IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER BALLROOM** (Visit with Exhibitors) | | | | | |
| 3:15 pm-4:00 pm | **NACSA MEMBERSHIP FORUM: Open Discussion of Professional Issues & Concerns** [SALON 10] | | | | | |

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