Authorizer Support Action Plan

August 2019

Background

The information provided in the "Background" portion of this report is equally shared among all three states that comprise the Tri-State Alliance: Californian, Colorado, and Florida; in order to provide continuity and above all transparency in the overall intent of this project.

The California Charter Authorizing Professionals (CCAP) is part of the Tri-State Alliance to Improve District-Led Charter Authorizing (Alliance). The Alliance is supported by a three-year, $2.6 million National Dissemination grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Charter School Program. The primary goal of this grant in California is to improve authorizing practices by school districts. This document, the *CCAP Authorizing Support Action Plan*, outlines proposed steps CCAP will pursue, independently and in partnership with other groups, to advance this goal in the second and third years of the project. Additional project goals that address student equity, increasing CCAP membership by small and rural districts, and support similar efforts in other states are addressed in separate documents.

This grant supports three years of work by CCAP. The first year of work required CCAP to study authorizers' needs and to plan for work to support authorizers during year 2 and 3 of the grant. According to the grant, the plan is to identify four model materials that will be created and four professional learning opportunities that will be provided during these years. The first year of work is wrapping up on September 30, 2019, and this Action Plan addresses steps to be taken between October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2021.

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This plan is based on the CCAP *Authorizer Needs Assessment* that was produced in the spring and summer of 2019. The *Needs Assessment* was produced under contract by Margaret Lin and included analysis of data from a CCAP created survey of California authorizers, interviews with authorizer representatives, and an analysis of resources that are currently available. The *Needs Assessment* was shared with CCAP members who provided electronic feedback via two social collaboration platforms. At the working sessions, the findings of the *Needs Assessment* were discussed and considerations for the creation of the primary documents were addressed. Comments on the *Catalogue of Available Resources* were solicited online, and input was accommodated into the final *Needs Assessment*. The *Needs Assessment*, a *Catalogue of Available Resources*, and session recordings are available.

The remainder of the document first presents the model materials that will be produced. It describes the models, or "tools", includes the timeline for their creation, potential partners and strategies to create and vet each, as well as considerations about each tool that were raised in the needs assessment process. This section will include a description of potential partnerships that may allow CCAP to support the creation of additional materials, beyond the expected four documents, without CCAP needing to take primary responsibility for creating such materials. The following sections will then address the learning opportunities, including both those convened by CCAP, as well as those hosted by other organizations that may be useful. It will also outline the major topics to be addressed, forums, and potential partners.

1) **Model Materials**

Objective 1.1c: *By the end of year 2, each state will 2 or more new highest-need resources.*
Objective 1.1d: *By the end of year 3, each state will have created a total of 4 more new highest-need resources.*

Through this grant, CCAP will create four "model materials/tools. In the year-two grant, CCAP is required to produce two model materials, with two additional model materials/ tools produced in year-three. Sin the Needs Assessment identified related materials, there are opportunities to combine materials into a package, or "toolkit" addressing a single theme. Because most authorizer use similar tools to address regular tasks, there are also opportunities to collaborate with the other states in the Alliance; as well as opportunities to work with other charter-related agencies or higher education partner, such as local state or authorizer, model materials can be crated with better-served authorizers in California and in the other states.

Based on the *Needs Assessment,* the recommended materials are listed in order of priority below:

1). *Annual Evaluation Rubric and Report*

2). *Charter petition template*

3). *MOU*

4). *Templates and Samples Addressing Non-Compliance Issues*

Along with the mentioned above materials, authorizers requested that other similar set of materials be easily consolidated into a "package" with common themes.

A. **Annual Evaluation Rubric and Report**
As the highest-ranked item, CCAP will complete this item first. There are multiple goals that an annual report must address. Clarifying these goals will be a first step in the development process. Some authorizers asked for a brief but substantive report that informs charter schools about their overall status. Other requested a more comprehensive report, with a longer format and a more

robust structure that includes text and a variety of performance measures (rubric). To fulfill the more comprehensive report, this source will need to be bundled and presented as a "toolkit". Authorizers also asked that this source be applicable to the support both "new" and "veteran" authorizers. The sources will also incorporate language addressing English learners and students with disabilities. This "toolkit" will also consider key issue to charter schools and authorizers that summarizes the charter school's operational effectiveness, fiscal health, and academic performance. The performance measure (rubric) will include criteria identified in several areas and including an analysis of best practices for operating and overseeing the effectiveness of a school.

B. **Charter Petition Template**

The second priority is the development of the charter petition template which varies in format from district to district. Clarifying the purpose for just template, whether its intent is for a charter or a template for the review of a charter will be dissed in the first meeting. Moreover, discussing the different types of school program needs, including attention to supports for English learners and students with IEPs; as well as consideration for the different types of size authorizers have in their portfolio, will be discussed in the first few meetings. The development intent is the same, assessing elements of design, management, and operational in order to successfully run a quality charter school that is consistent with California law.

C. **MOU**

The third priority is the development of an MOU template that can address charter school terms and conditions that may not otherwise be reflected in the standard charter school petition. The focus could be explored and determined for its intent. A possible intent for the MOU could be the review of charter school's pupil educational program and sssessment components, however further discussion will be required, as the academic components are normally included in the charter petition. Either way, an MOU will need to be annotated and will require legal review for language, by a counsel with charter law expertise. The model MOU will also be based on recent MOUs from member districts. It will be integrated with other CCAP products and priorities, including goals for handling issues related to English learners and special education. The system of annotation, similar to that used for model Annual Evaluation Rubric and Report to Charter Schools, Charter petition template and Non-Compliance Document, will be used to note where the various considerations and decision-points for authorizers can be address such as:

- Recruitment and Enrollment
  - o Admission and Enrollment
    - General pupil recruitment and enrollment
    - Pupils with Special Needs
    - Age, Grade Range, and Number of Pupils
    - Pupil-Teacher Ratio
    - Tuition
  - o Information Regarding Pupil Enrollment and Admission
    - Description of outreach and recruitment activities
    - Procedures for application, enrollment and admissions and random drawing

- ▪ A copy of any application and enrollment forms and information provided to prospective pupil
  - ▪ Documentation that start-up enrollment is consistent with the enrollment in charter
- Instruction and Pupil Attendance
  - o School Day and Hours of Operation
  - o Classroom-Based Instruction
  - o Independent Study
  - o Nonclassroom-Based Instruction
  - o Attendance Reporting
  - o Educational Performance
    - ▪ Verify the charter school has clearly measurable outcomes and data that supports how well students are doing in meeting outcomes
    - ▪ Verify charter schools is meeting state targets (based on California's accountability and continuous improvement system—"California School Dashboard"
    - ▪ Verify that student achievement data is regularly reported to staff and parents
  - o Instructional Materials and Tools and Professional Development
    - ▪ Verify that the charter school has adopted (and is following) a curricular and instructional plan (set of plans or like documents)
    - ▪ Evaluate the positive impact on student learning
    - ▪ If charter school serves high school students, verified parents are informed about transferability of courses to other public high schools an eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements
  - o Effective classrooms (Topic is subjective and will require a full discussion prior to making a decision to include in this type of MOU)
    - ▪ Content (aligned to one or more California Content Standards
      - Incorporates one or more 21st century skills
      - Uses a topic that is generative
      - Is culturally sensitive and relevant to the lives of students
    - ▪ Instructional Practices (Topic will need to be explored for intent. The question of whether its intent will be for academic results as primary or characteristics of the classroom and instructional practices if/hen the academic results are not satisfactory)
      - Lesson differentiation based on student needs
        - o Frequent lessons adaptation to meet the learning needs of students especially EL students
        - o Use of specific instructional strategies that address the learning needs of specific EL students
        - o Provides opportunity for the production of high-quality student performance and products
    - ▪ Assessment Practices

- Are frequent throughout the lesson and provide just in time opportunities to check for all student understanding of important ideas and 21st-century skills
- Involve students in the development and use of assessments as well as the assessment results
- Special Education
  - Requirements Applicable to Charter School that is Deemed Public School of Authorizer for Special Education Purposes
    - Relationship between XX County SELPA, Authorizer, County Superintendent, and Charter Schools
  - Policies and Procedures
  - Authorizer Responsibilities
  - County Superintendent Responsibilities
  - Requirements Applicable to Charter School that is Deemed LEA for Special Education Purposes
    - Relationship between Authorizer, County Superintendent, SELPA, and Charter School
    - Policies and Procedures
    - Authorizer Responsibilities
    - County Superintendent Responsibilities
  - Change of Status for Special Education Purposes
  - Compliance with Applicable Laws
  - Provision of Special Education Services to Pupils
    - Charter School Responsibilities
      - Condition and Authorizer and SELPA
      - Eligibility Determination
    - Student Study Team Process
    - Education (FAPE)
  - Discipline
  - Assessments
  - Complaints and Due Process Claims
  - Contract for non-severe-disability Special Education Services
  - Special Education Services for Severally Disabled Pupils
  - Responsibility for and allocation of funding sources for Special Education
  - Responsibility for and Allocation of Cost for Special Education
    - Charter School Cost Responsibility
    - Allocation of Cost from XXX County SELPA Where Charter School is Public School of Authorizer
    - Allocation of Cost from SELPA where Charter School is LEA
  - Special Education Records
- Standards and Pupil Assessment
- Discipline, Welfare, and Safety
- Pupil Records
- Consultation with and Notice to Parent and Guardians

- Teacher Credentials and Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements

D. Templates and Samples Addressing Non-Compliance Issues

The fourth priority is a document that addresses a specific non-compliance issue. The issue could be from areas of compliance like academic performance, finance, operations, or a compliance issue that is specific to the delivery of services for English learners or students with IEPs. Authorizers spoke to the need for templates that promote greater consistency and quality of oversight statewide.

Table 1. Model Materials to be created by CCAP

Item	*Timeline*	*Format*	*Notes*
Annual Evaluation Rubric and Report to Charter Schools	*Year 2, first product*	Annotated format Language supporting English learners	• Consider previous California models: • Reference Model-Part III: Annual Report Template, NASCA Authorizer toolkit: annual report made easy (2016) • Reference model material: Charter School Annual Oversight Checklist, FCMAT • Consider national collaboration
Charter Petition Template	*Year 2, second product*	Package including rubric and report Language supporting English learners	• Consider previous California models: SB 126 Transparency and Conflict of Interest Rules; AB 1507 Outside boundaries for specified instances; non-classroom based/establish one resource center within the jurisdiction • *Reference other model material such as: Model Charter School Application: Evaluation*

			Rubric, A resource for Missouri Charter Public School Sponsors • *DC, Colorado, and Indianapolis- Have strong track record and will need to be explored* • Consider national collaboration
MOU	*Year 3, first product*	Language supporting English learners and Students with IEPs	• Consider previous California models: AB75 language prohibiting a charter school from discouraging a student from enrolling, more directly linked to state priorities • Alameda County Office of Education: Evaluation of Educational Performance of Charter Schools, as well as LACOE model, LAUSD model and others • Consider national collaboration
Templates and Samples Addressing Non-Compliance Issues	*Year 3, second product*	Language focused on monitoring, intervention, reporting, decision making to promote greater consistency and quality of oversight statewide Language supporting English learners	• Consider previous California models and materials: AB1505: charter authorization, appeals, and renewal • Reference model material: Core Performance • Framework and Guidance, NACSA • Consider national collaboration

2)   Addressing NACSA's 12 Essential Practices

Objective 1.3: By the end of the grant period, there will be a 5% increase in the number of districts in each of our states that either comply with 10 or more NACSA's 12 essential practices or, if a state-specific measuring tool is more appropriate, that comply by a similar proportion according to the state-specific metric.

CCAP recognizes that based on the Authorizer Survey results, the implementation of NACSA's 12 Essential Practices is low among all those who responded. Some of the low rates of implementation are predictable because the Essential Practices do not align with requirements in California's charter school law. Some of the work of implementing recommendations concerning the Essential Practices will require adapting them to California's statutory context.

California authorizers expressed interest in adapting materials that address their "on the job" needs but were not among the four most highly ranked items. To support authorizers' recommendation and request that new or improved model materials and resources be differentiated for their own "in-demand" needs, and to make progress on helping more authorizes adopt the essential practices, a series of additional materials will be helpful. To support the development of these materials, CCAP will need to leverage the expertise of its members and professional policy experts. This section describes materials that will advance the purposes of the grant, that could be produced primarily by outside partners that may be willing to incorporate input from CCAP and its members. By gathering district examples or resources these materials can be produced. These additional resources include:

A. Governance oversight tools
B. Financial oversight tools (revised and augmented through technology)
C. Technology Tools
D. Closure procedures
E. Streamlined tools and resources for small and rural authorizers
F. Facilities allocation protocol for Prop 39

A. **Governance Oversight Tools**
Authorizers agreed on the important need for stronger tools (accompanied by training) to oversee charter school governance. Authorizers need stronger tools, knowledge, and skills to assess governance capacity in petition review and to monitor and evaluate governance effectiveness for operating schools. Useful new or improved tools suggested by authorizers include: 1) aboard composition matrix to help authorizers assess strengths and areas of need on proposed and existing governing boards; 2) a tool/checklist and /or "Bylaws 101" training to assess the adequacy and quality of bylaws; 3) tools to oversee compliance with the new transparency and ethics requirements of AB126; 4) tools to oversee various governance/corporate structures in California charter school (including sole member corporations and LLCs).

B. **Financial Oversight Tools (Revised and Augmented through Technology)**
Authorizers expressed interest in revisiting and repackaging Leading Indicators' financial performance tools and updating the Excel-based fiscal evaluation tool.

C. **Technology Tools**
Authorizers noted that very few small authorizers have benefited from any technology support to provide efficiency, transparency, and actionable data in charter oversight and renewal process. Tools such as Epicenter, which was made available to some California authorizers should be made available to all authorizers, especially small authorizers.

D. **Closure Procedures**
   Authorizers suggested that more guidance on closure procedures would be helpful, particularly on how to support families during a closure.
E. **Streamlined Tools and Resources for Small and Rural Authorizers**
   Small, rural authorizers request streamlined tools and materials that will enable their under-resourced authorizing offices to meet compliance requirements and carry out responsible oversight as simply and efficiently as possible, without extra layers of work.
F. **Facilities Allocation Protocol for Prop 39**
   District authorizers expressed a greater need for a protocol or process for allocating facilities under Prop. 39. In addition to a written resource, this would also be an in-demand topic for a training or forum.

Table 2. Leveraging Materials created by districts and experts in the field

Topic/Material	Partner or Leverage Strategy	CCAP Role
Governance Oversight Tools	Current district and county offices, NASCA model material	Solicit input from districts who have adopted a mission statement for quality authorizing
Financial Oversight Tools (Revised and Repackaged)	Current district and county offices, NASCA, CDE, FCMAT	Request documents and best practices from districts, county offices or CDE
Technology Tools	Current district and county offices, NASCA model material	Solicit outside technology companies with such capabilities
Closure Procedures	Current district and county offices, NASCA model material	Request documents and best practices from districts, county offices, CDE
Streamlined Tools and Resources for Small and Rural Authorizers	Current district and county offices, NASCA model material	Request documents and best practices from districts, county offices, CDE
Facilities Allocation Protocol for Prop 39	Current district and county offices, CDE	Solicit input from policymakers, request participation from CDE

3) Professional Learning Opportunities

Objective 1.2a: By the end of year 2, each state will have developed Professional Learning opportunities to share resources with districts and small and rural authorizers.

Objective 1.2a*: By the end of year 3, each state will have offered the Professional Learning opportunities 4 or more times to the target audience of districts and small/rural authorizers.*

The grant requires that each state develop and sponsor four professional learning opportunities by the end of year three. The professional trainings are designed to improve authorizer practices and target the involvement of small and rural authorizers. These trainings will provide opportunities to promote the materials that are created and described above. CCAP is confident that besides the four required learning opportunities set by the grant, we can hold many more professional learning opportunities that will be beneficial to all authorizers who are engaged in the next two years. The learning opportunities will also support the work required from Goal 2, improve access, services, and outcomes for disadvantaged students, including English learners.   The work on English learners will be featured in several of these forums.

1. **CCAP convened Meetings and Events**

Quarterly CCAP and EL-Expert-Organization meetings: CCAP will develop a partnership with an organization that is an expert in the field of English learners to allow two entities to hold quarterly meetings for authorizers. These meetings will promote face-to-face interactions and allow for authorizers to receive updates from the latest activities by both organizations, engage in workshops, and hold panels on a variety of topics quarterly. CCAP will continue these meetings and events throughout the project and will focus on including additional authorizers in rural and urban districts. Using a variety of formats, such as consultancies, workshops, and panels, all CCAP materials will be shared and participants will be able to deepen their understanding and ability to apply these tools through these events.

CCAP Workshops: CCAP will hold and deliver workshops on specific topics relating to the authorizers' needs, English learners, and students with IEPs, as well as priorities identified above. The format will be either a half-day or full-day event. CCAP members have expressed interest in having workshops in their local communities and CCAP will deliver via a "roadshow" format.

Regional Authorizer Meetings: In order to address the logistical barriers for districts outside the big cities in California, CCAP will hold regional meeting of authorizers. CCAP will leverage the relationship of local partner districts and other partners.

CCAP Webinars and Online Convenings: CCAP will not only provide in-person meetings but convene webinars to promote interaction within and outside California. The webinars will also create opportunities for the three states to work together at a low cost. The convenience of webinars and online convenings is that they serve to provide learning opportunities at a low cost while reducing the burden of travel for participation among isolated and rural authorizers.

CCAP Observations and Visits: CCAP members requested opportunities to visit their peers, and to observe their authorizing work. Based on the availability of host authorizers, other charter liaisons could observe their peers conduct a variety of activities, such as Capacity Interviews, Board Trainings, initial

meetings with potential charter applicants, or staff presentations to school boards on charter applications. CCAP could also support this peer-to-peer sharing by recording such events and uploading the video on the CCAP website. These learning opportunities could be supported by gathering materials form the exemplars on these practices, which would be distributed through the on-line archives.

Table 3 CCAP Professional Learning Opportunities

Event	Frequency /Number	Audience	Format
CCAP Quarterly Meetings	Quarterly	All authorizers statewide	All-day forum on broad agenda, including topical workshops and open forum discussions
CCAP Workshops	2/year	CCAP members and recruits	Half-day and full-day workshops on a single topic Roadshow format for in-person events
Regional Authorizer Meetings			
CCAP Webinars and Online convenings	6/year	All authorizers statewide, focus on topics of interest to small and rural authorizers (available to national partners)	Online forums, including interactive webinars
Observations and Authorizer Visits	Depending on exemplars' availability	Smaller groups of authorizers, including individual authorizers	Facilitating opportunities to observe work or meet with colleagues

2. Partner Forums

CCAP can further advance its cause by leveraging the meetings and events of other groups in California. CCAP members, especially small and rural authorizers, would benefit by having CCAP work with other groups that already convene these districts for other purposes to reduce the need to travel. CCAP and CCAP members that participate in these groups can help to promote materials and topics. CCAP can evaluate which partners are likely to accept proposals, based on other partnerships and conditions. It is unlikely and unviable to participate in all of these, but a subset can provide opportunities to extend CCAP's reach. Potential groups that could help share CCAP materials and address our topics include:
- CABE
- CASBO
- CARSNet & Boot Camps
- CCBE
- CSBA
- SSD
- CCEC

- SSC
- CALSA

CCAP can also leverage the meetings of the California Department of Education, county offices where CCAP members are currently serving as authorizing professionals. These may include:

- CDE: Special Programs, Charter School Division
- LACO: Charter School Division
- SBOS: Charter School Division
- RCOE: Charter School Division
- PCOE: Charter School Division

Outside California, CCAP members and other state associations can also convene. These groups include opportunities to learn from and share with stakeholders outside the usual groups of in-state peers. Potential groups and forums outside California include:

- NACSA
- NABE
- Florida Charter Conferences
- Colorado League of Charter Schools
- Education Board Partners
- U.S. Department of Education: Rural Outreach (GovDE)

CCAP can leverage the meetings or in some cases, co-lead the meetings in events sponsored by the organization listed above. As noted above, some organizations are outside California, but nevertheless, these organizations offer opportunities to learn from and share with stakeholders outside the usual group of in-state peers.

Table 4. Leveraged Group's Events (To which CCAP can propose sessions, full table to be researched)

Group	Forum	Audience	Date	Proposal Submission
California Stakeholder Groups				
1. CABE				
2. CASBO				
3. CARSNet & Boot Camps				
4. CCBE				
5. CSBA				
6. SSD				
7. CCEC				
8. SSC				
9. CALSA				
CDE/County Offices of Education				

1.	CDE: Special Programs, Charter School Division			
2.	LACO: Charter School Division			
3.	SBOS: Charter School Division			
4.	RCOE: Charter School Division			
5.	PCOE: Charter School Division			
National Forums				
1.	NACSA			
2.	NABE			
3.	Florida Charter Conferences			
4.	Colorado League of Charter Schools			
5.	Education Board Partners (formerly Charter Board Partners)			
6.	U.S. Department of Education: Rural Outreach (USDE)			

Appendix 1: A complete List of Potential Organizations that could serve as opportunities for CCAP to present

1.	Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)
2.	California Association for Bilingual Educators (CABE)
3.	California Association of Latino Superintendent and Administrators (CALSA)
4.	California Association of Resource and Special Educators (CARSE) (aka CARSplus)
5.	California Charter School Association (CCSA)
6.	California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)
7.	California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)
8.	California Council for Exceptional Children (CCEC)
9.	California County Boards of Education (CCBE)
10.	California Department of Education -Specialized Program: Charter School (CDE)
11.	California School Boards Association (CSBA)
12.	California School Business Organization (CASBO)
13.	Californians Together (CT)
14.	Charter Accountability Resources and Support Network (CARSNet)
15.	Civil Rights Solutions, LLC
16.	Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers (CACSA)
17.	Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)
18.	Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS)
19.	Charter School Development Center
20.	Education Board Partners (formerly Charter Board Partners)
21.	Florida Association of Charter School Authorizers (FACSA)
22.	National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools
23.	National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
24.	National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)
25.	Small School District Association (SSDA)
26.	University of Denver, School of Public Affairs (U of Denver)

27. U.S. Department of Education: Rural Outreach (USDE)
28. WestEd
29. Western Association of Schools and Colleges -Accrediting Commission for School (WASC)