



INDEX *of* ESSENTIAL
PRACTICES

Hi Gina Post,

We are pleased to share that Maine Charter School Commission scored 12 of 12 points on this year's *Index of Essential Practices*. For a breakdown of your score, as well as how you compare to other authorizers in the nation, click on the button below.

Each year, NACSA releases the *Index*, our analysis of how well authorizers across the nation are implementing the 12 practices that are critical to fulfilling the responsibilities of being an authorizer.

We all know that decisions in authorizing aren't black or white, but these fundamentals establish a foundation of practice that paves the way for great educational options for our children.

Share your experiences in adopting these practices with your peers through one of NACSA's Communities or by volunteering to present at the 2016 NACSA Leadership Conference in Atlanta. Consider ways you can continue to strengthen your practices by exploring NACSA's tools and resources for authorizers.

The complete *Index of Essential Practices*, along with authorizers' scores from around the country, is now available on our website. Also look for our *State of Charter School Authorizing* report, an analysis of trends in authorizing that will be released mid-February.

Thank you for participating in our annual survey and keep up the great work.

Sincerely,
M. Karega Rausch, Ph.D.



National Association of Charter School Authorizers

105 West Adams Street

Suite 1900

Chicago, IL 60603

12 Essential Practices

Since the start of the charter movement, authorizing practices have evolved. We know what practices are critical to fostering high-performing charter schools. We recognize our duties to ensure the autonomy of the schools we oversee, to protect the rights of students and the public, and to close schools that are not living up to our expectations.

Authorizers play a vital role within the charter school community. By implementing these 12 Essential Practices, they help pave the way for every charter to be a great educational option for children.

1

MISSION

Have a published and available mission for quality authorizing.

2

STAFF

Have staff assigned to authorizing within the organization or by contract.

3

CONTRACTS

Sign a contract with each school.

4

APPLICATION CRITERIA

Have established, documented criteria for the evaluation of charter applications.

5

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Publish application timelines and materials.

6

APPLICATION INTERVIEW

Interview all qualified charter applicants.

7

EXTERNAL EXPERT PANEL

Use expert panels that include external members to review charter applications.

8

5-YEAR TERM LENGTH

Grant initial charter terms of five years only.

9

FINANCIAL AUDIT

Require and/or examine annual, independent financial audits of its charter schools.

10

RENEWAL CRITERIA

Have established renewal criteria.

11

REVOCAION CRITERIA

Have established revocation criteria.

12

ANNUAL REPORT

Provide an annual report to each school on its performance.

The cornerstone of these practices is NACSA's Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, first published in 2004 and regularly updated as the field evolves. This is the foundational text for authorizers, who are charged with promoting school quality through flexibility over inputs and accountability for outcomes. Increasingly, Principles & Standards (P&S) has also become a guidepost for education advocates and lawmakers who craft and revise state charter school laws and policies.

http://www.qualitycharters.org/for-authorizers/12-essential-practices/?utm_source=NACSA%27s+Master+List&utm_campaign=f601dc9700-PACERrequest_RE_IndexScoreAuthsAbove9090_OneAs&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9db2bde88f-f601dc9700-102593973

<http://www.qualitycharters.org/research-policies/archive/index-of-essential-practices/>