

# Prospectus

The work of public charter school authorizers matters. It matters in the quality of California’s public charter schools and in making sure that every child in our state has access to a great education. To execute this important work, our state needs strong professionals skilled in authorizing to ensure that students and the public are being served well. It is now the time for the individuals tasked with this important role to come together to form an association of authorizing professionals to provide resources, training, and other supports to advance quality in California’s charter school authorizing sector.

The public charter school landscape has expanded and evolved rapidly—and continues to do so. California currently has more than 1,130 public charter schools serving more than half a million students in 51 of 58 counties. They range from small, traditional schools to large, high-tech learning environments. The quality of the education in these schools is impacted by the quality of the oversight and monitoring provided by their authorizing agencies.

Public charter schools are authorized by hundreds of individual agencies, from small single-school districts to large urban ones. More than 90 percent of these agencies authorize fewer than six public charter schools. Charter law provides limited funding to support authorizing activities and often the individuals tasked with this important responsibility are balancing other duties and require additional training, tools, and resources to do it well. As this oversight challenge grows, the need for immediate support becomes increasingly critical to foster quality in the field.

In this context, the quality of public charter school authorizing and monitoring depends on the ability of authorizing professionals to employ the most effective and efficient practices.

As with any profession, staff responsible for charter oversight and monitoring must build professional capacity and expertise to respond to this changing environment. Charter authorizing professionals formally coming together to share their knowledge and experience is an effective way to meet this challenge.

Recently, a group of authorizing professionals from around the state began exploring ideas to establish a more organized and formal support network to address this need. This founding group has developed a framework for an organization of public charter school authorizing professionals with the following mission:

**331** districts and COEs currently oversee public charter schools in California

**92%** of public charter school authorizing agencies oversee **fewer than 6 schools**

**47%** of authorizers oversee only **1 or 2 schools**

## *Mission Statement*

Members of the California Charter Authorizing Professionals (CCAP) advance quality public education for all students by providing charter school authorizing professionals with the support, resources, and collective voice necessary to foster high-performing, fiscally sound, autonomous, and accountable charter schools.

# California Charter Authorizing Professionals

To accomplish this profound and important mission, authorizing professionals will collaborate with education organizations, public charter schools, researchers and policymakers to build a community that will:

- Identify promising practices in the core areas of an authorizing office, including charter school authorization and reauthorization, oversight, governance, accountability and autonomy.
- Develop a library of useful tools and information for authorizing professionals.
- Convene regional and statewide gatherings of authorizing professionals to disseminate promising practices (in authorizing and charter school performance).
- Gather, analyze and disseminate information on charter school authorizing practices to inform research and policymaking in the field.
- Serve as a unifying voice for authorizing professionals and high quality authorizing in California.
- Represent California authorizers at national professional charter authorizing events.

CCAP will be an independent, non-profit association of individual authorizing professionals, authorizing agencies, and stakeholders outside of the field interested in supporting quality authorizing in California's charter school sector. The majority of the board of directors will be made up of active charter authorizing professionals affiliated with California educational agencies. The founding directors represent different sectors, including large and small authorizing school districts, county offices of education, and technical advisors such as consultants and academics.

For more information, or to become a founding member of this organization, please contact us at [ggreely@acoe.org](mailto:ggreely@acoe.org).

CCAP will serve as an independent voice and will collaborate with other organizations that share a demonstrated commitment to advancing California charter school quality, including:

- Association of California School Administrators
- California Charter School Association
- California County Superintendents Educational Services Association
- California School Boards Association
- Charter School Development Center

***CCAP is especially grateful for the on-going support of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, which has facilitated the formation of this independent voice for quality charter authorizing in California.***