



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS AND ASSURANCES

## Recognized Best Practices

### Regulatory Framework

[MCL 380.502](#) states “An authorizing body shall oversee... each public school academy operating under a contract issued by the authorizing body. The authorizing body is responsible for overseeing compliance by the board of directors with the contract and all applicable law.”

MCCSA has adopted Principles and Standards (Standards) that guide authorizers as they develop strong authorizing practices. See [Advancing Excellence: Michigan’s Model for Authorizer Accountability](#) on the MCCSA’s website for more detail. Focusing on performance and accountability ensures that student success remains paramount to authorizing decisions.

### MCCSA Guiding Principles

Believing in the transformative power of education, the members of MCCSA aspire to ensure all families have access to quality educational options for their children. In order to continue to strengthen and improve Michigan’s constitutional and legislative system of free public schools and advance quality practices for the establishment, oversight and support of charter public schools, the following principles and priorities were adopted.

#### Principle 1: Focus on Performance & Accountability

Strengthening public education requires collaboration and alignment between multiple agencies such as authorizers, intermediate school districts, and the Michigan Department of Education. Working together, these organizations can share data and insights and use multi-dimensional analyses of performance to measure and evaluate quality.

#### Principle 2: Ensure Equitable Access & Funding

As part of Michigan’s constitutional system of public education, charter public schools and the students they serve deserve a fair and stable operating environment, access to local, state and federal programs and supports, and equitable funding.

#### Principle 3: Encourage Innovation & Excellence

The ability to explore new approaches is the hallmark of chartering. Fostering a culture of innovation and excellence through a robust system of multiple authorizers is a more effective way to advance student growth and achievement than prescriptive rules and regulations.

## Principle 4: Provide Options for Families, Educators & Communities

One size does not fit all. Parents have the fundamental right and are in the best position to choose their children's school. Educators also deserve options. And communities should no longer be restricted to only one provider of public education.

## MCCSA Standards

Michigan's charter public schools require nothing less than high-quality, efficient, and effective authorization and oversight. To support these essential goals, MCCSA has adopted the following standards. While the standards are universal and align with MCCSA's guiding principles, individual authorizers have the responsibility to implement their own systems in a manner that is supported by the standards.

### Authorizing Commitment & Capacity

Excellence in authorizing means ensuring commitment and capacity by developing practices and organizational structures to conduct authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.

### Authorizing a Charter Public School

Excellence in authorizing means understanding the importance of a comprehensive, fair application process, coupled with a strong charter performance contract. Authorizers grant charters only to applicants that demonstrate a strong capacity to establish and operate a quality charter public school. See the Charter Application for Charter Public Schools best practice guide for additional information.

### Overseeing & Evaluating a Charter Public School

Excellence in authorizing means understanding the responsibility of establishing a comprehensive system that monitors and evaluates school performance and compliance. This system should provide the necessary information to oversee, evaluate and periodically report the performance of the charter public school. An authorizer's oversight system should preserve and protect the autonomy of the school while minimizing its compliance burden. See the Overseeing and Evaluating Charter Public Schools best practices guide for additional information.

### Reauthorizing a Charter Public School

Excellence in authorizing means establishing and implementing a consistent and comprehensive charter reauthorization process, guided by the following core questions:

- Is the charter public school achieving its academic goals as stated in the charter contract?
- Is the charter public school organizationally, educationally, and financially viable?
- Is the charter public school demonstrating good faith compliance in following the terms of its charter contract and applicable law?

See the Reauthorization of Charter Public Schools best practice guide for additional information.

## Reflective Questions

How is your organization living up to MCCSA's Principles and Standards?

What might your organization do to ensure you are developing strong authorizing practices?