

National Association of Charter School Authorizers
Strengthening Charter Authorizing Nationally Project

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Since its inception in 2000, the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) has been dedicated to improving the quality of our nation’s charter schools and outcomes for students by improving the quality of charter school authorizing. Eighteen years later, the organization remains committed to the idea that better authorizing leads to better charter schools and better lives for the children who attend them. This belief forms the basis for the theory of action underlying this proposal, the Strengthening Charter Authorizing Nationally (SCAN) Project.

I. ABSOLUTE PRIORITY AND COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY

The SCAN Project addresses **Absolute Priority 1 – Strengthening Charter School Authorizing Oversight**. It is designed to develop, identify, expand, and disseminate information on best practices in authorizing and the oversight of charter schools by public chartering agencies in the following areas:

- Promoting and monitoring the compliance of charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies with Federal, State, or local academic, financial, operational, and other applicable requirements (iii);
- Facilitating the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools (v); and
- Closing persistently underperforming charter schools (vii).

In addition, the Project addresses the following **Competitive Preference Priority: Building Capacity in the Authorizing Process for Educational Agencies with the Most Need**. As described further in the Quality of Project Design section, the SCAN Project proposes to build the capacity of authorizers in states that have enacted laws in the last five years and authorizers with fewer than 10 charter schools.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers believes all children should have access to public schools that prepare them for success in life. It is our mission to increase and improve quality educational opportunities for children by strengthening charter school authorizing throughout the United States.

In that spirit, we submit this National Dissemination Grant proposal to support the charter school sector and increase the number of high-quality charter schools by disseminating best practices in charter schools and authorizing. The SCAN Project develops, identifies, and expands upon best practices through four initiatives, each aligned with four priority areas of the grant:

1. promoting and monitoring the compliance of charter schools,
2. facilitating replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools,
3. closing persistently underperforming charter schools, and
4. building capacity of authorizers with the most need.

The Project will produce more than 40 deliverables that will be disseminated nationally through more than 30 dissemination activities to every authorizer in the country. The Project represents the single largest effort to develop and nationally disseminate authorizing best practices ever.

From years of experience working with charter schools and authorizers, NACSA knows that every community and authorizer is unique. Each state's charter school statute, history, and performance are distinctive as well. The capacity and needs of a well-staffed authorizing office with dozens or hundreds of schools under their purview is different than the capacity and needs of an office with just a few schools or a small staff. Any organization seeking to broadly improve

authorizing must understand these differences and successfully produce resources that speak to a variety of contexts and delivery methods.

In addition, any effort that seeks to improve authorizing must also understand that people working in authorizing offices are also unique, with their own strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and expertise. One person may learn best through online resources while a colleague in the same office may learn best through in-person gatherings. Anyone seeking to broadly improve authorizing must understand these learning differences and address them successfully.

NACSA has built an organization of professionals who understand different authorizing contexts and individual learning styles. In our 18-year history, we have helped countless authorizers translate national best practices into their local context, build their own authorizing capacity, and improve their system of charter schools and authorizing. Empowered by these experiences and skills, the SCAN Project is truly significant and poised for success.

1) Potential for Generalizing from the Findings and Results of the Project

As the nation's foremost authority on charter school authorizing practices, NACSA is uniquely qualified to undertake this work and produce findings and results that can be generalized for use throughout the nation. We impact all types of chartering agencies: local and county school boards and districts; state boards and departments of education; universities and colleges; municipal agencies; independent or special-purpose chartering bodies; and private nonprofit organizations. In the past year alone, NACSA has provided resources—including downloadable templates, resource guides, webinars, membership services, sessions at our annual conference, and in-person workshops—to more than 125 authorizing agencies in 38 states, leading to strengthened oversight of 5,182 charter schools. That is nearly 74 percent of all charters schools across the country – in just the past year.

The most powerful mechanism to generalize and disseminate authorizer best practices is NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing (Principles & Standards)* (Appendix E). First established in 2004 and updated periodically thereafter, *Principles & Standards* reflects national best practices of quality authorizers that lead to good charter schools for students and the public. It has been carefully crafted and maintained to be specific enough to provide clear guidance and general enough to be used in any state, by any authorizer.

Our *Principles & Standards* publication is the most frequently accessed resource on NACSA's website; it is used by authorizers of all sizes and types throughout the nation, and referenced in numerous state statutes.

The SCAN Project contains four initiatives, each of which will lead to modifications of *Principles & Standards*. Because of the exceptional reach of *Principles & Standards* to all sizes and types of authorizers, the findings and results of the SCAN Project will be generalized and disseminated to the maximum extent possible.

In addition to *Principles & Standards*, the SCAN Project will generalize and disseminate its findings to every type of authorizer through a variety of established, successful programs and initiatives, including our annual leadership conference, prestigious Leaders Program, peer-to-peer learning, and online tools and resources. In each of these activities, NACSA has years of experience translating specific research findings and field experiences into generalized resources.

Through tested tools, such as *Principles & Standards* and a variety of established and respected programs, NACSA stands alone in its capacity to positively impact charter school authorizing and oversight.

2) Dissemination for Use by Others

For the 18 years of our existence, NACSA has done more than maintain a set of *Principles & Standards* and an online library of resources. We have actively disseminated our knowledge of best practices through three types of channels that allow individual users to select the medium that meets their personal learning style and needs:

- **In-Person Learning**, which brings people together in conference sessions: our Leaders Program, Leaders Alumni Program, and regional workshops;
- **Virtual Learning Sessions**, which bring people together via technology platforms such as webinars and teleconferences; and
- **Digital Learning**, which allows people to access information at a time, place, and pace of their own choosing through website content, online learning management system courses, digital downloads, and videos.

By maintaining multiple channels of dissemination that speak to individuals' unique needs and learning styles, the SCAN Project will reach the broadest possible national audience of authorizers and other stakeholders. A prime target audience for dissemination, but not the only target, will be NACSA's members. Currently, through membership and other services, we serve 154 authorizers representing 5,137 charter schools – nearly 75 percent of all charter schools in existence. These are authorizers who have actively chosen to join NACSA, which includes paying membership dues. Membership represents a real interest and commitment to improving authorizing. No other entity has this influence among authorizers.

We reach not only authorizers who oversee most charter schools but also a diverse cross-section of authorizers. We are engaged with 24 of the 25 largest authorizers in the country and count among our members every institutional type of authorizer: school districts, state education

agencies, universities, independent charter boards, nonprofits, and municipalities. NACSA's dissemination audience is nationwide, diverse, varied, and unequalled.

3) Potential for Systemic Change and Improvement

NACSA not only produces generalizable findings and resources, and disseminates them widely, we also have a proven track record of creating systemic change and improvement among authorizers. For example, in 2012, when we first published our 12 Essential Practices – practices that are so important that we believe every authorizer should implement all of them – only 23 percent of surveyed authorizers were implementing them. By 2017, after years of dissemination activities such as those proposed in this proposal, that rate had more than tripled to 78 percent.

That is tremendous progress and yet there is still more work to do. The activities and outputs proposed in this Project will add to NACSA's knowledge base and result in continual nationwide authorizer improvement strategies. The SCAN Project has the potential to produce levels of systemic change similar to the tripling the implementation of the Essential Practices.

Systemic change occurs when three factors come together. First, there is a problem or challenge. Second, information is available that addresses the problem or challenge. Third, an organization is willing and able to make a change. Each of the SCAN Project's four initiatives of will result in system change by:

1. targeting a current problem or opportunity: compliance monitoring, authorizers with the most needs, replication and expansion, and closure;
2. generating new knowledge and then widely disseminating best-practice tools and resources based on that knowledge; and
3. implementing results by authorizers of all sizes and types, each with the ability to create systemic changes.

As a result, the SCAN Project will drive systemic change and improvement throughout the nation in four areas of importance.

Systemic change can also occur through state and federal charter school policy. While this proposal does not include or seek support for activities related to improving policies, the findings and best practices from this proposal will be available to inform policies in the future. In recent years, we have seen considerable interest in authorizing among state policymakers and we expect that interest to continue. Since 2012, 23 states have enacted or adopted one or more charter school authorizing and accountability policy improvements that were aligned with NACSA's *Principles & Standards* or policy recommendations. NACSA's advice is also valued at the federal level on both sides of the aisle. NACSA CEO Greg Richmond has testified before Congress on charter school and authorizing issues as recently as June 2018. We anticipate that findings and best practices from this proposal will also be of interest among federal policymakers, creating even greater opportunity for systemic change.

4) Potential to Build Local Capacity to Improve Authorizing

NACSA's organizational mission is "to increase and improve quality educational opportunities for children by strengthening charter school authorizing" and is directly aligned with the National Dissemination Grant's criteria to "build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population." Through this proposal and in keeping with our mission and our many years of experience working with authorizers, we seek to continue to develop, identify, expand, and disseminate best practices that result in continual improvement in the capacity of authorizers. NACSA's track record of working directly with authorizers to build their capacity is exemplified in the following:

- Beginning in 2006, in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, NACSA helped the Louisiana Recovery School District (RSD) establish and build its charter school authorizing functions from scratch.
- Starting in 2017 and continuing to the present, as the Louisiana RSD's authorizing functions transferred to the Orleans Parish School Board, the Board contracted with NACSA to provide technical assistance to build its capacity.
- In recent years, NACSA provided technical assistance to new authorizers in Alabama, Maine, Mississippi, and Washington to launch their new authorizing offices.
- From 2011 to 2015, under contract with the State of Hawaii, NACSA helped redesign and rebuild the functions of the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission.

We are hands-on experts at providing evidence-informed authorizer tools that are easy to use and can be customized locally. In this Project, we are targeting authorizers with significant need, including the 890 authorizers with fewer than 10 schools, and authorizers in states with newly enacted charter school laws. Currently, those states are Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Washington. NACSA has relationships in each state and has already provided technical assistance to authorizers in Alabama, Mississippi, and Washington. These authorizers offer significant opportunities to build capacity and expand/improve their services. Our activities and outputs were designed for just this purpose.

Building the capacity of authorizers is the north star of our business model. The breadth and depth of our experience to successfully execute outcomes in this arena going forward is unmatched.

III. QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

(1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale

Each of the four initiatives (also referred to as “Objectives”) proposed in the SCAN Project comprehensively address **Absolute Priority 1—Strengthening Charter School Authorizing and Oversight**. Objectives 1, 3, and 4 address areas identified within Absolute Priority 1. Objective 2 addresses both Absolute Priority 1 and a Competitive Preference Priority.

- Objective 1: **Develop, Identify, Expand, and Disseminate Best Practices in Monitoring Compliance** addresses area (iii) “Promoting and monitoring the compliance of charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies with Federal, State, or local academic, financial, operational, or other applicable requirements.”
- Objective 2: **Capacity Building for Authorizers with the Most Need** addresses the Absolute Priority 1, areas (i) through (vii), and the Competitive Preference Priority “Building Capacity in the Authorizing Process for Educational Agencies with the Most Need.”
- Objective 3: **Identify and Disseminate Best Practices for Replication and Expansion** addresses area (v) “Facilitating the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools.”
- Objective 4: **Develop, Identify, Expand, and Disseminate Best Practices in Closure**, which address area (vii) “Closing persistently underperforming charter schools.”

NACSA chose these four objectives because they represent a significant, comprehensive approach to addressing authorizing challenges in the charter school sector. The objectives work together to mutually strengthen and reinforce charter school authorizing and oversight. The objectives are structured and organized to address the stages of the life cycle of a charter school, from creation/opening, through years of daily operations, to a decision on renewal or closure. By covering the complete life cycle of a charter school, the SCAN Project addresses the complete

spectrum of authorizing challenges and opportunities. SCAN Objectives 1, 3, and 4 each target one phase of a charter school life cycle and Objective 2 addresses challenges experienced by authorizers with the most need.

The Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR 77.1(c)) states that “*Demonstrates a rationale*’ means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.” The SCAN Project meets this requirement and demonstrates a rationale in the following way.

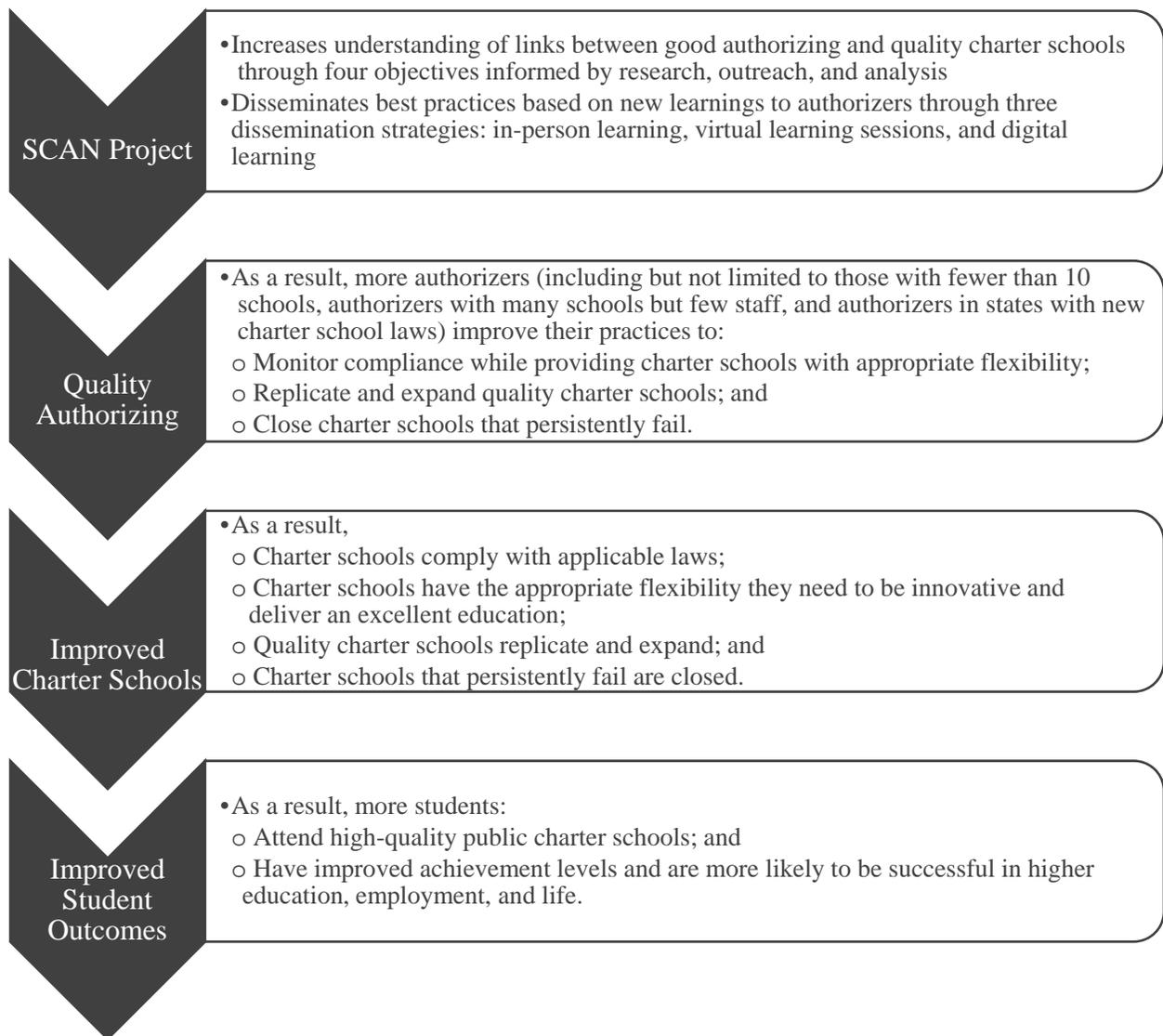
First, NACSA has a history of taking actions to improve authorizing, as verified by evaluation findings – actions similar to those proposed in this Project. Most significantly, from 2012 through 2017, implemented activities that more than tripled the proportion of authorizers that are implementing NACSA’s 12 Essential Practices, increasing from 23 percent in 2012 to 78 percent in 2017.

Second, improved authorizing leads to improved charter schools. In its “National Charter School Study 2013,” the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University found that quality authorizing is a critical component of the ecosystem of laws and practices that lead to quality charter schools. The report stated, “More focus is required of authorizers and charter school governing boards to set high performance and accountability standards and hold charter schools to them.” The single biggest driver of improved functioning of the charter school sector over the study period was closure of persistently failing schools.

Third, improved charter school quality leads to better outcomes for students. The same CREDO study found that if authorizers closed charter schools that performed significantly lower

than comparable traditional public schools, students would experience approximately 58 extra days of learning in reading each year.

This sequence is presented graphically in the following logic model of the SCAN Project. It presents key components of the Project and illustrates how they work together to strengthen charter school authorizing nationally. As a result, charter schools will improve and, because of the existence of a greater number of quality charter schools, more students will have access to high-quality charter schools that provide them with better educational, career, and life outcomes.



The following section outlines each of the Project’s four objectives, providing the rationale, project activities, project outputs, and dissemination mechanisms and plan.

Objective 1: Develop, Identify, Expand, and Disseminate Best Practices in Monitoring Compliance

This objective addresses Absolute Priority 1 area (iii) “Promoting and monitoring the compliance of charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies with Federal, State, or local academic, financial, operational, or other applicable requirements.”

Outcome Measures: NACSA disseminates compliance monitoring resources to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more schools; 80 percent access resources; 80 percent report satisfaction.

(See Evaluation Plan for additional measures and details.)

Objective 1 Rationale

Based on data and experience in the field, NACSA knows that when compliance monitoring is done correctly, it satisfies two critical needs: it ensures students, families, and the public that charter schools are well-run and complying with applicable laws; and it provides charter schools the flexibility they need to improve their academic, financial, and operational performance.

For years, smart monitoring of compliance has been one of the most significant challenges authorizers face. When compliance is optimized, students benefit from a well-managed school and school operators have flexibility and autonomy. When monitoring is too lax, it erodes public trust. When it is too regulatory, it inhibits the flexibility schools need to excel.

Evidence of poor monitoring of compliance can be found in numerous reports, studies, and news accounts over past years. One of the most significant was the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Inspector General report, “Nationwide Assessment of Charter and Education Management Organizations” (September 2016). It found that among charter schools that utilize management organizations, the “relationships with charter management organizations (CMOs) posed a significant risk to Department program objectives.” The report highlighted three categories of compliance failures, including:

- (1) financial risk, which is the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse;
- (2) lack of accountability over Federal funds; and
- (3) performance risk, which is the risk that the charter school stakeholders may not have sufficient assurance that charter schools are implementing Federal programs in accordance with Federal requirements.

Objective 1 will develop, identify, expand, and disseminate best practices in Monitoring Compliance to address the types of compliance concerns raised in the Inspector General’s report and elsewhere. Data from the results will add to NACSA’s body of knowledge on this topic and be shared with authorizers nationwide.

Activities for Objective 1

The activities of Objective 1 are divided into two phases. Phase 1 continues and expands NACSA’s current federally funded Charter School Program project that concludes in the fall of 2018. In this work, NACSA has been conducting interviews and focus-group discussions with charter school operators around the country to better understand the flexibilities that are important to the success of their schools and how authorizers can support that flexibility while monitoring school compliance.

In Phase 1 of the SCAN Project, NACSA will further collect, aggregate, and analyze the findings from this data collection and share the lessons learned through a series of in-person convenings with authorizers.

These lessons learned will then be used to implement Phase 2 of Objective 1, a research project that will delve deeply into the opportunities and challenges of improving compliance monitoring by five authorizers. Phase 2 will use the same highly successful research methodology that NACSA used in its federally funded Quality Practice Project released in February 2018. That project identified five sample authorizers with high-quality portfolios of schools and examined, in depth, the practices they implemented to achieve those results.

In Phase 2 of Objective 1, NACSA will recruit five authorizers that represent a spectrum of compliance activities and institutional types. With each authorizer, NACSA will develop an action research plan that identifies how the authorizer plans to improve its monitoring of compliance. Staff will conduct site visits, interviews, and document reviews to identify best practices in monitoring compliance. Staff will also curate samples of authorizer best-practice materials, identify barriers to compliance, and partner with each member of the cohort to create strategies for overcoming those barriers.

Staff will evaluate the collected practices and, with input from NACSA's Board of Directors and National Advisory Board (Appendix E), determine which practices are the most promising. These best practices will then serve as the foundation for the development of resources that will be disseminated nationally.

Outputs for Objective 1

- Create **“Lessons Learned” document** that paints a detailed picture of what smart monitoring and good compliance looks like. In addition to the practices themselves, it

will focus on how authorizers can work with both internal (i.e., other staff within their agency) and external stakeholders (e.g., charter schools themselves) to overcome obstacles that often create barriers to smart compliance monitoring.

- Add at least five **tools and resources** to its existing library of best practices, hosted in the organization’s online Knowledge Core library. Tools are documents that are ready-to-use or nearly ready-to-use by authorizers, such as a model application, a pre-opening checklist, or renewal criteria. Resources are documents that provide instruction, explain processes, explore issues, or describe promising exemplars.
- Produce a “**Lessons Learned**” **online course** as part of its Learning Management System (LMS). This platform, which monitors and tracks learner engagement, is tailored to each participant based upon user choices and immediate feedback. The Lessons Learned course will become part of NACSA’s robust online course catalog.
- Develop a **75-minute class** based upon findings to be presented at NACSA’s annual conference and in other in-person settings.
- Provide **best-practice resources** to participants in NACSA’s **Leaders and Leaders Alumni Programs**. The Leaders Program is the nation’s only professional development opportunity for current and upcoming leaders in charter school authorizing offices. The **Leaders Alumni Program** is newly created to continue to engage the more than 80 graduates of the Leaders Program. Alumni will share ideas, dialog on best practices, and foster peer learning about field experiences in a cohort of 15 – 20 that meets regularly each year.
- Produce **five “How To” videos** spotlighting authorizers who will offer peer-led solutions to the most commonly identified compliance monitoring barriers.

- Modify NACSA’s *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*. NACSA’s *Principles & Standards* (Appendix E) reflects national best practices of experienced authorizers and identifies core authorizer responsibilities. It also describes how the principles are upheld within each responsibility. This foundational resource, used to guide authorizing practices across the country, is referenced in numerous state statutes.

Dissemination Mechanisms and Plan for Objective 1

NACSA uses a three-prong dissemination strategy to maximize its reach and impact. This allows us to address the different learning modalities of our multiple authorizer audiences. The mechanisms cover both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning is a session, class, etc., that is presented at a predetermined time and viewed by all participants simultaneously, whether online or in person. Asynchronous learning can happen at any time and place and is driven by the pace of the learner. It could also be thought of as “on demand” learning. The following three mechanisms allow us to reach vastly more people than a single channel would and respects different learners’ styles:

- In-Person Learning—including conference sessions, Leaders Program, Leaders Alumni Program, and regional events
- Virtual Learning Sessions—webinars and teleconferences
- Digital Learning—website content, online Knowledge Core, online learning management system (LMS) courses, and videos

The outputs for Objective 1 will be available and disseminated to the audiences listed below, through multiple channels, and have tremendous reach.

- All authorizers through online courses in NACSA’s Learning Management System
 - 1,001 authorizers

- 44 states/jurisdictions
- 100 percent of all charter schools
- 100 percent of authorizers and charter schools in states with new charter laws
- Special focus on the 187 authorizers that have more than five schools
 - Oversee 82 percent of all charter schools
 - Come from 43 states
- Annual Conference
 - Each year, the conference serves hundreds of authorizing staff members.
 - For example, the 2017 Annual Conference reached more than 400 authorizing staff members and 102 unique authorizing institutions representing 3,144 schools (or 46 percent of all charter schools). Attendees came from 36 states, including all states with new charter laws.
- Leaders Program
 - 12 authorizers per cohort
 - Each cohort represents a dramatic impact on charter schools and students throughout the country. For example, the current cohort includes leaders from nine states who oversee 1,140 schools, which represents 17 percent of all charter schools in the country.
- Leaders Alumni Program
 - 80 alumni; 45 of whom are still in authorizing, plus others who now hold other positions of educational leadership
 - Those still in authorizing oversee 2,350 schools, which represents 34 percent of all charter schools in the country

- Represent 28 states
- Represent three of the four states with new charter laws

NACSA’s Project partners will also help disseminate Project resources to their members. Through meetings and the website of the National Association of State Boards of Education, we will disseminate resources to the 42 state boards of education that broadly oversee charter schools and authorizers as part of their states’ educational landscapes. This includes 15 state boards that act as authorizing agencies and 24 boards that oversee authorizing agencies. Through meetings and the website of Chiefs for Change, the Project will disseminate resources to school system leaders who serve 7.2 million students and 14,000 schools.

Objective 2: Capacity Building for Authorizers with the Most Need

This objective addresses both Absolute Priority 1 and the Competitive Preference Priority “Building Capacity in the Authorizing Process for Educational Agencies with the Most Need.”

Outcome Measures: NACSA disseminates resources for authorizers with the most need to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more schools and those with low staff-to-school ratios; 80 percent access resources; 80 percent report satisfaction. (See Evaluation Plan for additional measures and details.)

Objective 2 Rationale

For the purposes of this Project, NACSA defines agencies with the most need in three ways that maximize our ability to help authorizers build capacity. The first two directly respond to and directly align with the Competitive Preference Priority. The third is an additional type of need that we have identified and are serving:

- 1) small authorizers with fewer than 10 schools in their portfolio;

- 2) authorizers in states that have enacted charter laws within the past five years; and
- 3) authorizers with a low staff-to-school ratio.

There are more than 1,000 authorizers in the U.S. and 89 percent oversee fewer than 10 schools. We know from our fieldwork that small authorizers face serious capacity challenges. They almost never have more than one person overseeing the charter schools in their portfolio. Many allocate only a portion of one person's time to this work. These staff have many demands upon their time and monitoring charter schools is only one of them. This objective addresses those unique needs by providing easy-to-use tools and solutions to their common problems.

The needs of authorizers in states with new charter school laws are very similar to the needs of authorizers with fewer than 10 schools. When they first start authorizing, they start with zero schools and need to build a new and complete set of practices from scratch.

There is another group of authorizers in the country that faces this same type of challenge even though they authorize more than 10 schools. These are large authorizers (those with 10 or more schools) that have small staffs. The average staff-to-school ratio of all large authorizers in the country is 1:12. However, authorizers with small staffs (which we define as those in the lowest quartile of all authorizers) have a staff-to-school ratio of 1:30.

We have chosen to expand our definition of those with the most need to include authorizers with low staff-to-school ratio because those authorizers face the same types of challenges as small authorizers. The demands on them often exceed their capacity. For example, while the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and the Texas Education Agency each have more than 500 school in their portfolios, only about a dozen staff work in each office. This gives them each a staff-to-school ratio lower than 1:40.

While there are a relatively small number of these low-capacity authorizers, they oversee a significant number of schools: roughly 40 percent of all charter schools in the country. As the following table shows, by meeting the needs of authorizers with fewer than 10 schools and the needs of low-capacity authorizers, this Project will have tremendous reach.

Authorizers	# of Authorizers	% of All Authorizers	# of Charter Schools	% of All Charter Schools
With < 10 Schools	890	89.0%	1,763	25.4%
With low staff-to-school ratio	27	2.7%	2,776	40.0%
Reach of Objective 2 of SCAN Project	917	91.7%	4,539	65.4%
All Authorizers and Schools	1,001	100%	6,941	100%

Activities for Objective 2

The activities of Objective 2 focus on identifying how tools and resources can be best tailored to meet the needs of small, new, and low-staff authorizers; creating new tools and resources, or modifying the existing ones, to maximize their utility; and disseminating the tools and resources digitally in ways that minimize demands on staff time. These staff are more likely to download a ready-to-use tool than they are to read a 40-page “how-to” manual. They are more likely to watch an online course from their offices than they are to attend a national conference.

We will identify and interview 12 small authorizers to gather data on their specific needs. Eight will have fewer than 10 schools and four will have low staff-to-school ratios. These interviews will draw on the methods and findings from our previous Quality Practice Project. The input obtained from the interviews will be used to determine which resources and tools will be most useful to small, new and low staff-to-school ratio authorizers. We will then create resources and tools in our online library to be useful to these types of authorizers specifically.

The activities in this objective are structured purposely to take advantage of and build upon the resources and tools in our library currently, and to produce and disseminate best-practice resources quickly.

Outputs for Objective 2

- Create a **Tool Kit** composed of multiple resources (at least five) that can be downloaded and customized easily. These may include sample applications, application criteria and process, pre-opening checklists, contracts, compliance checklists and tools, and renewal criteria and processes. The tool kit will be available in NACSA's online digital library.
- Produce **Online Courses** that accompany the tools in the Tool Kit, when such courses would be helpful for fully utilizing the tools.
- Modify NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

Dissemination Mechanisms and Plan for Objective 2

A critical need of this group is for streamlined information that can be accessed quickly and easily. For that reason, our dissemination strategy is focused on digital learning exclusively. It allows authorizers to seek out targeted information for their specific challenges and access it immediately. It addresses the extreme shortages of time that small and low-staffed authorizers experience routinely.

The outputs for Objective 2 will be digitally disseminated exclusively and targeted to the audiences listed below.

- Small authorizers (fewer than 10 schools)
 - 890 authorizers (89 percent of all authorizers)
 - Oversee 1,763 schools or about 25 percent of all charters in the country
 - Represent 36 states

- Large, low-capacity authorizers (defined as authorizers overseeing 10 or more schools but with staff-to-school ratios lower than 1:12)
 - 27 large authorizers
 - Oversee approximately 40 percent of all charters in the country
 - Located in approximately 20 states
- States with new charter laws
 - 100 percent from any new charter school state (currently Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Washington)

In addition, all 1,001 authorizers in the U.S. will have access to online courses in NACSA’s Learning Management System.

NACSA’s Project partners will also help disseminate Project resources to their members. Through meetings and the website of the National Association of State Boards of Education, we will disseminate resources to the 42 state boards of education that broadly oversee charter schools and authorizers as part of their states’ educational landscapes. This includes 15 state boards that act as authorizing agencies and 24 boards that oversee authorizing agencies. Through meetings and the website of Chiefs for Change, an association of local and state superintendents, the Project will disseminate resources to school system leaders who serve 7.2 million students and 14,000 schools.

Objective 3: Identify and Disseminate Best Practices for Replication and Expansion

This objective addresses Absolute Priority 1 focus (v) “Facilitating the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools.”

Outcome Measures: NACSA disseminates resources on replication and expansion to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more schools; 80 percent access resources; 80 percent report satisfaction. (See Evaluation Plan for additional measures and details.)

Objective 3 Rationale

While many educational advances have been made in the past two decades, there is still a significant need for quality education throughout the country. Schools often do not prepare students for careers or college and some students simply drop out and disconnect from the education system. All this points to the necessity of replicating and expanding high-quality charter schools to reach more students. NACSA defines replication and expansion thusly:

- Replication: when an existing charter school or network opens an entirely new school;
- Expansion: when an existing school expands enrollment by adding grade levels or increasing the overall size of the student body.

Creating an entirely new school is difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. Replicating and expanding existing high-quality charter schools, on the other hand, can offer better educational opportunities to a large number of students quickly and effectively.

Through years of experience, NACSA has learned that authorizers' criteria and the processes of replication and expansion can and should be different than criteria and processes for evaluating proposals from new schools. Yet too many authorizers treat replication and expansion the same as opening new schools. Through Objective 3, NACSA will remedy these shortcomings, improve authorizing practices, and ultimately provide more opportunity for students to attend high-quality charter schools.

Activities for Objective 3

Objective 3 begins with a high-profile **national call** to both authorizers and school operators for the identification of processes that support replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools. We will partner with the Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) to maximize the reach of this appeal. Through this objective, we will identify innovative authorizer practices and learn which practices are most effectively promote quality growth.

NACSA will interview authorizers and operators that respond to the call, review documents, collect exceptional processes, and evaluate and identify the most promising practices.

Staff will evaluate the collected practices and, with input from NACSA's Board of Directors and National Advisory Board (Appendix E), determine which practices are the most promising. These best practices will serve as the foundation for the development of resources that will be disseminated nationally.

NACSA and its partners will also host symposia in six locales to promote the adoption of these best practices to authorizers, school operators, and other stakeholders.

Outputs for Objective 3

- Produce a **report**, co-branded with CSGF, on the findings and best practices identified from the national call.
- Create **content** for NACSA's website and direct authorizers to topic areas that support their targeted expansion or replication needs.
- Generate a **Tool Kit** with at least five resources available to authorizers. Based on findings, this may include tools on differentiated oversight, differentiated renewal applications, templates, and/or samples of effective processes.

- Develop a **75-minute class** based upon findings to be presented at NACSA’s annual conference and in other in-person settings.
- Modify NACSA’s *Principles & Standards*.

Dissemination Mechanisms and Plan for Objective 3

The dissemination mechanisms for Objective 3 will be similar to those of Objective 1. NACSA uses a three-prong dissemination mechanism that allows us to address the different learning modalities of our multiple authorizer audiences.

- In-Person Learning—including conference sessions, Leaders Program, Leaders Alumni Program, and regional events
- Virtual Learning Sessions—webinars and teleconferences
- Digital Learning—website content, online Knowledge Core, online learning management system (LMS) courses, and videos

The outputs of Objective 3 be available and disseminated to the audiences listed below, through multiple dissemination channels. It will have tremendous reach.

- Available to all authorizers through online courses in NACSA’s Learning Management System
 - 1,001 authorizers
 - 44 states/jurisdictions
 - 100 percent of all charter schools
 - 100 percent of authorizers and charter schools in four states with new charter laws
- Six (6) city/regional events to encourage replication and expansion
 - 20 people per event
 - Combination of authorizers, operators, and other partners (will vary by city)

- Cities/regions will be selected based on the presence of authorizers, schools, and partners that provide strong opportunities to expand and replicate high-quality schools
- Annual Conference
 - Each year, the conference serves hundreds of authorizing staff members.
 - For example, the 2017 Annual Conference reached more than 400 authorizing staff members and 102 unique authorizing institutions, representing 3,144 schools (46 percent of all charter schools). Attendees came from 36 states, including all states with new charter laws.
- Leaders Program
 - 12 authorizers per cohort
 - Each cohort represents a dramatic impact on charter schools and students throughout the country. For example, our current cohort includes leaders from nine states who oversee 1,140 schools, which represents 17 percent of all charter schools.
- Leaders Alumni Program
 - 80 alumni; 45 of whom are still in authorizing, plus those who now hold other positions of educational leadership
 - Those still in authorizing oversee 2,350 schools, which represents 34 percent of all charters in the country
 - Come from 28 states
 - Represent three of the four states with new charter laws

NACSA's Project partners will also help disseminate Project resources to their members.

Through meetings and the website of the National Association of State Boards of Education, we will disseminate resources to the 42 state boards of education that broadly oversee charter

schools and authorizers as part of their states' educational landscapes. This includes 15 state boards that act as authorizing agencies and 24 boards that oversee authorizing agencies. Through meetings and the website of Chiefs for Change, the Project will disseminate resources to school system leaders who serve 7.2 million students and 14,000 schools.

Objective 4: Develop, Identify, Expand, and Disseminate Best Practices in Closure

This objective addresses Absolute Priority 1 focus (vii) "Closing persistently underperforming charter schools."

Outcome Measures: NACSA disseminates resources on closure to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more schools, 80 percent access resources; 80 percent report satisfaction. (See Evaluation Plan for additional measures and details.)

Objective 4 Rationale

Accountability is one of the pillars of the charter school philosophy. The ultimate manifestation of accountability is the closure of persistently underperforming schools. Without the possibility of closure, there is no accountability and without accountability, there are no true charter schools.

There is a measurable correlation between closure and overall charter school performance. A 2013 study by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes found that the single biggest driver of improved functioning of the charter school sector during the prior four years was closure of persistently failing schools. This finding underscores the critical importance of strong authorizer best practices that facilitate school closings when needed.

Yet closure is the most difficult component of the charter school philosophy to implement. The processes for considering school closure are often painful, chaotic, and disruptive to all involved. Some authorizers avoid closure as often as possible and/or do it

poorly. They fail to develop clear performance criteria and renewal processes. As a result, persistently failing schools may remain open and children may continue to receive an inadequate education.

To address these challenges, the SCAN Project will develop, identify, expand, and disseminate best-practices resources that will help authorizers base closure decisions on clear criteria and fair processes. As a result, closure decisions will be more likely to occur, when appropriate, and will be less difficult and disruptive to all involved, especially students and families.

NACSA's best-practices resources will be developed with deep input from a cohort of authorizers who have been brought together to examine the challenges of closing schools and opportunities for improvement. These authorizers share information, ideas, and successful strategies to deal with closure effectively. These shared lessons will be the foundation of the outputs of this objective.

Activities for Objective 4

Using the previously mentioned closure cohort, NACSA will develop and identify best practices on closure. NACSA staff also will review existing literature to identify additional promising practices. Staff will evaluate the collected practices and, with input from NACSA's Board of Directors and National Advisory Board (Appendix E), determine which practices are the most promising. These best practices will serve as the foundation for the development of resources that will be disseminated nationally.

Outputs for Objective 4

- Produce a **report on closure best practices** informed by the closure cohort and literature review.

- Aggregate **peer knowledge** from the closure cohort for immediate use in online Knowledge Core.
- Create **online course** of lessons learned from the closure cohort for use within the Learning Management System.
- Create a 75-minute **conference session** on closure best practices for presentation at NACSA's annual conference.
- Provide **best-practice resources on closure** to participants in the Leaders and Leaders Alumni Programs.
- Modify NACSA's *Principles & Standards*.

Dissemination Mechanisms and Plan for Objective 4

The dissemination mechanisms for Objective 4 will be similar to those of Objectives 1 and 3. NACSA uses a three-prong dissemination strategy to address the different learning modalities of our multiple authorizer audiences.

- In-Person Learning—including conference sessions, Leaders Program, Leaders Alumni Program, and regional events
- Virtual Learning Sessions—webinars and teleconferences
- Digital Learning—website content, online knowledge base, online learning management system (LMS) courses, and videos

Objective 4 outputs will be disseminated to the audiences listed below and have tremendous reach.

- Available to all authorizers through online courses in NACSA's Learning Management System
 - 1,001 authorizers

- 44 states/jurisdictions
- 100 percent of all charter schools
- 100 percent of authorizers and charter schools in four states with new charter laws
- Special focus on 187 top authorizers with five or more schools
 - Oversee 82 percent of all charter schools
 - Represent 43 states
 - Authorizers from 100 percent of new charter law states
- Annual Conference
 - Each year, the conference serves hundreds of authorizing staff members.
 - For example, the 2017 Annual Conference reached more than 400 authorizing staff members and 102 unique authorizing institutions, representing 3,144 schools (46 percent of all charter schools). Attendees came from 36 states, including all states with new charter laws.
- Leaders Program
 - 12 authorizers per cohort
 - Each cohort represents a dramatic impact on charter schools and students throughout the country. For example, our current cohort includes leaders from nine states who oversee 1,140 schools, which represents 17 percent of all charter schools in the country.
- Leaders Alumni Program
 - 80 people; 45 of whom are still in authorizing, plus others who now hold other positions of educational leadership

- Those still in authorizing oversee 2,350 schools, which represents 34 percent of all charters in the country
- Come from 28 states
- Represent three of the four states with new charter laws

NACSA's Project partners will also help disseminate Project resources to their members. Through meetings and the website of the National Association of State Boards of Education, we will disseminate resources to the 42 state boards of education that broadly oversee charter schools and authorizers as part of their states' educational landscapes. This includes 15 state boards that act as authorizing agencies and 24 boards that oversee authorizing agencies. Through meetings and the website of Chiefs for Change, the Project will disseminate resources to school system leaders who serve 7.2 million students and 14,000 schools.

(2) Extent to which Project's Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes are Clearly Specified

The goals, objectives, and outcomes of the SCAN Project are clearly specified and measurable. The **goals** of the SCAN Project are synonymous with the projects priorities:

- to strengthen charter school authorizing and oversight; and
- to build capacity in the authorizing process for educational agencies with the most need.

The **objectives** of the SCAN Project are:

- to develop, identify, expand, and disseminate best practices in monitoring compliance;
- to build capacity for authorizers with the most need;
- to identify, expand, and disseminate best practices for replication and expansion; and
- to identify, expand, and disseminate best practices in closing persistently underperforming schools.

These objectives are the same as the four objectives outlined in the project plan presented in the preceding section and with the objectives presented in the evaluation plan.

The measurable **outputs** are presented in the following table:

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4
White Paper / Summary Report	1		1	1
Online tools and resources / Tool Kit	At least 5	At least 5	At least 5	At least 5
Online class	1	1	1	1
In-person class	1		1	1
Leaders & Leaders Alumni classes	1		1	1
How To videos	5			
Regional meetings			6	
Principles & Standards modification	1	1	1	1

The measurable **outcomes** for each objective are presented in the project plan described in the preceding section and in the evaluation plan. Because they are numerous, detailed, and lengthy, we are not repeating them here to keep the narrative brief. Please refer to those sections.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to priorities

The SCAN Project contains numerous components that compose a nationally unique and exceptional approach to the priorities of this proposal:

1. NACSA is the official keeper of the authorizing profession’s *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*. As a result, the findings from this Project can and will be incorporated into those *Principles & Standards*, producing an enduring impact that cannot be equaled.
2. NACSA’s Board of Directors and National Advisory Board are composed of exceptional professionals who broadly represent the authorizing profession and the charter school

sector. These bodies will provide important guidance, review, and, when appropriate, approval of the resources developed in the Project.

3. The Project will develop, identify, and expand on knowledge of authorizing best practices through carefully designed research and the collection of best practices from broadly representative authorizers across the country. The findings of the Project will, in turn, contribute to NACSA's already in-depth knowledge and data on authorizing.
4. NACSA maintains a professionally staffed Research & Evaluation division that will ensure all Project work is implemented to the highest standards.
5. The Project's reach will be national, relevant, and available to all sizes and types of authorizers: school districts, state education agencies, universities, independent charter boards, and more.
6. NACSA's three-pronged dissemination strategy understands and works with users' unique learning styles and preferences.
7. The Project's partnerships with the National Association of State Boards of Education, Chiefs for Change, and Charter School Growth Fund provide unique opportunities for building knowledge and disseminating best practices to additional audiences through established, recognized national partners.
8. The Project will be led by NACSA's exceptional staff, who possess broad, deep authorizing experience, as well as skills in communication, instructional design, digital media, project management, and federal grant administration.
9. The Project will create online courses available to all through a Learning Management System (LMS) that monitors and tracks learner engagement. The LMS is tailored to each participant based upon user choices and provides immediate learning feedback.

10. The Project will produce resources and tools available through NACSA's annual Leadership Conference, Leaders Program, and Leaders Alumni Program, each of which are unique and exceptional opportunities for in-person learning and professional development.

(4) The mechanisms to broadly disseminate information on the project

As noted in detail above, each Project Objective has a comprehensive dissemination plan that is national in scope and tailored to the relevant audiences. The findings and best practices of this Project will be broadly disseminated by NACSA and through our three national partners. Authorizers and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to learn both synchronously and asynchronously. The Project will have broad national reach, producing findings and best practices relevant to all types of authorizers of all sizes. Because NACSA's existence will continue beyond completion of this Project, any resultant findings and best practices will have a permanent home. Practitioners and researchers will be able to access and use the lessons from this Project for many years into the future.

IV. QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

To achieve the objectives of the Project, NACSA will implement a management plan that staffs the Project with highly experienced personnel and consultants, engages strong national partners who are uniquely qualified to disseminate outputs to key stakeholders, and expends resources efficiently and effectively. The plan aligns all activities and spending with the SCAN Project goals and objectives described in this proposal.

1) Adequacy of the management plan to achieve objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones

Responsibilities

Responsibility for managing the Project will rest with NACSA's Project management team, each of whom will have a clear role and defined responsibilities, described below. The skills, knowledge, and experiences of each member of the management team are described further in the Key Project Personnel section of this proposal. Each of the people identified below will fulfill their responsibilities not individually but by managing a team of employees, consultants, and/or partners. Collectively, the clear roles and responsibilities of the team will ensure that each component of the Project will be well-managed and the Project as a whole will be well-integrated with the work of the whole organization.

Project Director: Elisa Westapher, Senior Director of Authorizer Engagement & Advancement, will serve as Project Director of SCAN. She has years of successful experience managing NACSA's current federal subcontract with the National Charter School Resource Center. In addition, in 2011, Westapher was part of the lead consultant team responsible for coordinating and submitting the State of Illinois' successful \$42.8 million Race to the Top proposal. She will use those experiences to manage the day-to-day operations and implementation of all aspects of the grant, oversee the work of all partners and consultants, and act as their primary liaison to NACSA. Ms. Westapher will also manage all reporting requirements.

Coordination of the Project with NACSA Systems and Other Projects: Greg Richmond, President and CEO, will integrate the Project with NACSA's other work. NACSA's total budget is nearly 10 times larger than the budget of this proposal. This enables NACSA to maximize the effectiveness of this Project by leveraging a large staff with diverse skills and sophisticated management system. He will be assisted in that work by Kasey Miller, NACSA's Chief of Staff, who will ensure that the Project activities are

incorporated into the organization's existing project management systems, knowledge management systems, and employee performance management systems.

Development of Resources, In-Person, Virtual, and Digital Learning: Amy Ruck Kagan, Vice President of Authorizer Engagement & Advancement, will manage the work of a team of professionals to develop authorizer resources, tools, and courses. She will also manage the processes for using those resources in NACSA's in-person learning (e.g., conference, Leaders Program), virtual learning sessions (e.g., webinars), and digital learning (e.g., Learning Management System courses). She will also manage the process for modifying NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, as needed. Her team includes, among others, Heather Wendling, NACSA's Director of Learning and Leadership Development, and Morgan Powell, NACSA's instructional designer.

Dissemination, External Partners: Kristen Forbriger, Vice President of External Relations, will lead the digital media and mass dissemination functions of the Project by managing NACSA's communications staff and consultants, who are skilled in digital media, video production, and publication of written materials. She will also manage relationships with the Project's partners: the National Association of State Boards of Education, Chiefs for Change, and the Charter School Growth Fund.

Research, Program Evaluation, External Evaluation: Karega Rausch, Vice President of Research & Evaluation, will lead a team of professionals on all research and evaluation functions of the Project. This will include recruiting, selecting, interviewing, and evaluating authorizers in Objectives 1 and 2 and evaluating literature and proposed best practices in Objectives 3 and 4. He will supervise the staff and consultants who perform the internal and external evaluation components of the

Project, including Amanda DeVaul-Fetters, NACSA's Director of Program Evaluation, and Basis Policy Research, the Project's external evaluator.

Financial Management and Reporting: Michael Cernauskas, NACSA's Chief Financial Officer, is a Certified Public Accountant who manages a team of three additional professionals responsible for all financial management and reporting requirements.

This project management team will meet on a regular basis to update Project progress, share deliverables, and discuss implementation issues. NACSA's SCAN Project Director and other members of the team will communicate regularly with Project partners and consultants, individually and as a group, to ensure that the implementation is on schedule, within budget, and is being carried out in a manner consistent with the Project goals. NACSA will use existing document sharing and online meeting systems to facilitate this communication.

Timelines and milestones for achieving objectives

Project activities, milestones, and deliverables will be incorporated into NACSA's existing management systems that include regular monitoring and reporting on key Project metrics across the organization. The SCAN Project Director will meet with the Project evaluators twice each year to reflect on progress made and challenges faced.

NACSA possesses the proven organizational capacity not only to implement the Project on time and within budget but to do so in the same exemplary manner that has characterized its past work. The timeline of Project activities, milestones, and deliverables that will guide NACSA's grant accountability system are found in Appendix E. As shown on the timeline, beginning and end dates for each activity are clear, ensuring that research and knowledge precede the development of new resources, and that resource creation is aligned with the timing of resource dissemination. The timeline also clearly indicates responsibility

for each activity. Further, the timeline indicates how each activity is linked to outputs and outcomes in the evaluation plan.

Ability to achieve objectives on time and within budget

Throughout its 18-year history, NACSA has successfully managed several large federal grants and subcontracts. NACSA was the lead applicant and manager of three prior federal Charter School Program grants: “Building Excellence in Charter School Authorizing” (2003); “Performance Management, Replication, and Closure” (2010); and “Better Outcomes Through Quality Authorizing” (2014). NACSA has also been a subcontractor for the U.S. Department of Education’s National Charter School Resource Center since 2010, developing programs and services to benefit authorizers nationwide. As a grant recipient, the Department of Education has repeatedly invited NACSA to present on topics at charter school meetings and conferences that the Department has hosted.

NACSA’s capacity to manage and monitor the use of grant funds is further evidenced by the organization’s management of approximately \$7 million in private philanthropic funds, member dues, and consulting income each year. The management of these funds and the associated set of deliverables and responsibilities require the creation and maintenance of financial, project management, and reporting systems. NACSA uses these systems to provide regular and complete reporting to its staff, board, members, and funders. NACSA’s financial management systems are impeccable, receiving clean audits annually.

2) Extent to which costs are reasonable in relation to objectives, design, and significance

The costs of the SCAN Project are allocated among objectives and activities as follows:

Objective or Activity	3-Year Cost
Objective 1 – Monitoring Compliance	\$483,644

Objective 2 – Building Capacity	\$180,850
Objective 3 – Replication & Expansion	\$465,013
Objective 4 – Closure	\$216,811
Dissemination Activities Shared among All Objectives – Leaders, Leaders Alumni, Conference, Learning Management System, <i>Principles & Standards</i>	\$626,333
Project Evaluation	\$157,510
Project Management	\$269,253
Total	\$2,399,414

Because NACSA has a relatively large and diversely skilled staff, it can bring resources and expertise to the Project at a reasonable cost. The SCAN Project will draw on the expertise of numerous professionals with diverse authorizing experience, with instructional design skills, research and evaluation skills, digital media skills, project management skills, federal grant management skills, and complex financial management system skills. To ensure that NACSA is compensating its staff at a reasonable rate, every three years we retain an independent consultant to conduct a compensation study of the organization, aligning the salaries paid at NACSA with national averages for similar organizations.

In addition, because SCAN will represent approximately 10 percent of NACSA’s total budget, the Project can tap these diverse areas of expertise while paying for less than 100 percent of each person’s time. This provides a high level of efficiency, allowing SCAN to develop and disseminate best practices to many thousands of users at a fraction of the cost of a project or organization that did not already have this capacity, mission, and scope of work.

It is one thing to create a budget that projects certain costs, it is another for an organization to consistently manage its finances well. In addition to the relatively low cost of SCAN in relation to the scope of the project, NACSA also has a track record of managing its finances efficiently and effectively. For more than 10 years, NACSA has received the highest possible

audit opinions, with no material internal control weaknesses. In addition, NACSA's Single Audits under the government's stringent uniform standards revealed no findings or questioned costs. NACSA has not received a management letter in the past seven years. The excellence of NACSA's financial management practices has even led major national foundations to ask NACSA to serve as a fiscal agent on their behalf.

All told, NACSA has an exemplary track record of cost control and financial management.

3) Relevance and commitment of each partner

NACSA's Project partners are established, successful national organizations that are perfectly positioned to help accomplish the objectives of the Project.

The **National Association of State Boards of Education** (NASBE) is the professional membership organization of the agencies and individuals who establish state education policies. It has existed for more than 50 years. NACSA's partnership with NASBE on this project engages some of the most important and influential individuals throughout the nation. NASBE members and staff will provide both critical insights into authorizing challenges and a powerful national dissemination outlet. In 2017, NACSA and NASBE collaborated to identify the charter school and authorizing information needs of state boards of education and to develop plans to work together to meet their needs. SCAN is poised to build upon that work to deliver the information, resources, and tools they most need.

Chiefs for Change is a leadership organization of state and local school system executives pursuing some of the most promising and innovative improvement strategies in the country. They lead school systems serving 7.2 million students, 435,000 teachers, and 14,000 schools. NACSA has a long-standing relationship with Chiefs for Change, including two NACSA board members, Hanna Skandera and Steve Canavero, who are also Chiefs. NACSA and Chiefs for

Change share aligned beliefs on school accountability, as reflected in Chiefs for Change’s own belief statement on accountability: “Schools should be evaluated based on student learning, in unambiguous terms and according to standards benchmarked against those of high-performing states and countries. When these ratings show unacceptably low results for years at a time, state and district leaders must apply solutions that are proven to help students learn.”

Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) identifies high-quality charter schools throughout the country and supports their expansion to help more children receive a great education. NACSA and CSGF worked together in 2014 to produce the report “Replicating Quality: Policy Recommendations to Support the Replication and Growth of High-Performing Charter Schools and Networks.” CSGF’s partnership in SCAN provides yet another vehicle for national reach: its network includes 870 schools in 28 states. Its partnership also provides input from a constituency that is essential for any effort to improve the quality of charter schools: charter schools themselves.

Together, the personnel, skills, resources, and reach of NACSA, NASBE, Chiefs for Change, and the CSGF provide an exceptional capacity for SCAN to achieve its aggressive national goals and objectives with maximum possible efficiency and effectiveness.

V. QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

1) Extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented

NACSA encourages individuals of all ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, and other diverse backgrounds to apply for open positions. We are committed to maximizing the diversity of our organization and we seek to engage all those who can contribute to this effort. Specifically, we include the following characteristics in our organizational definition of “diversity”:

race/ethnicity; religion; persons with disabilities; gender; age; first-generation college student; free/reduced lunch; bilingual; LGBTQ; parent/guardian; English Language Learner; veteran; and charter school graduate/parent. NACSA proactively recruits a diverse candidate pool for each open position and implements a hiring process designed to value underrepresented populations.

NACSA's commitment to a diverse workforce is exemplified by our participation in the inaugural Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Accelerator cohort established by Promise54.

Promise54 helps nonprofit organizations address people-related opportunities and challenges through the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Accelerator is a multi-month program that provides learning, coaching, and action planning.

2) Qualifications of the Project Director

Elisa Westapher will serve as the Project Director. Currently, she is NACSA's Senior Director of Authorizer Engagement & Advancement. She manages NACSA's five-year, \$2 million federal subcontract to strengthen authorizer quality and practice across the United States through formative authorizer evaluations and technical assistance projects. She manages both "up" – to the U.S. Department of Education – and "down" – to the staff and consultants who work on the project. These evaluations have collectively impacted more than 60 percent of the nation's charter schools. In addition to the federal contract, Westapher provides direct advice and service to authorizing agencies throughout the country. Prior to joining NACSA, Westapher practiced law for six years at Holland & Knight LLP, where she was awarded the Chesterfield Smith Public Interest Fellowship, which allowed her to dedicate a year to working on policies and programs designed to close the achievement gap for low-income and minority students.

3) Qualifications of key project personnel

The highly experienced staffs of NACSA and its project partners (see résumés in Appendix A) are uniquely qualified to carry out the proposed project and achieve the defined project outcomes. The assembled team represents years of experience and expertise, along with a passion and belief that all children deserve high-quality schools. Following is a brief background on each organization and key staff member who will be significantly involved in disseminating best practices in charter school authorizing.

National Association of Charter School Authorizers—Applicant

NACSA works with authorizing agencies throughout the country to conduct rigorous application reviews, establish clear and consistent policies to hold charter schools accountable, and to hold charter schools accountable for complying with applicable laws. We do this by providing authorizers with professional development opportunities, guidance, and easy-to-use tools; shaping state charter policy; and building an evidence base to inform best practices among hundreds of authorizers nationwide.

As a result, we impact all of the types of chartering agencies that exist nationwide: local and county school boards and districts; state boards and departments of education; universities and colleges; municipal agencies; independent or special-purpose chartering bodies; and private nonprofit organizations. Many of these types of institutions are represented on NACSA's Board of Directors and National Advisory Board (Appendix E) and have expressed their support of this proposal (Appendix B).

NACSA's deep and broad expertise extends to federal grant management as well. Under its first federal grant, NACSA developed and published *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, which since its initial release in 2004 has become the industry touchstone for best practices. Most recently, NACSA was the recipient of a 2014 federal grant to

research key practices of authorizing agencies with high-quality charter school portfolios. As part of the grant, NACSA has disseminated these best practices to authorizing agencies throughout the country, thereby strengthening their ability to authorize high-quality charter schools that benefit millions of students.

Key Project Personnel

Greg Richmond is NACSA's President and CEO. For more than 20 years, he has developed broad and deep experience understanding the issues facing authorizers, the opportunities for authorizers to excel and serve students well, and the barriers to improvement. He has worked directly with authorizers in dozens of cities and states, from Maine to Hawaii. He has testified repeatedly on charter schools and authorizing to the U.S. Congress and numerous state legislatures. Before joining NACSA in 2005, he worked for 10 years in the central administration of the Chicago Public Schools, launching one of the largest charter school authorizing functions in the country. In 2011, he was appointed by the Governor to serve as the founding Chairman of the Illinois State Charter School Commission. He has travelled abroad to advise foreign governments on the creation of charter-like systems of schools in Abu Dhabi, England, and Chile. In 2017, he was inducted into the National Charter Schools Hall of Fame.

Mike Cernauskas is NACSA's Chief Financial Officer. He is a licensed CPA with more than 30 years of nonprofit financial management, accounting, and administration experience. Cernauskas has worked at NACSA for more than a decade and has a proven track record of building, implementing, and maintaining accounting and reporting systems; managing multiple federal contracts and grants; and receiving clean, "unmodified opinion" financial audits with no material internal control weaknesses noted. He previously served as Vice President of Finance

and Administration for a 26,000-member international nonprofit association with budgets in excess of \$20 million and 70 staff.

Amy Ruck Kagan is the Vice President of Authorizer Engagement & Advancement at NACSA. In this capacity, she works directly with agencies across the country to develop and disseminate best practices in charter school authorizing. Before joining NACSA, Kagan served in leadership roles within the charter community, including as the Deputy Commissioner of Innovation for the state of New Jersey, where she oversaw all things school choice for the Department of Education, including charter schools, inter-district public school choice, non-public schools, portfolio districts, and all related practices and policies. Kagan has experience building accountability and performance management systems, as well as finding areas of flexibility for quality operators. She began her career in public education as a teacher.

Karega Rausch, Ph.D., is NACSA's Vice President of Research & Evaluation. Rausch leads NACSA's work in developing and expanding a robust research base of quality authorizing practices and policies, enabling more evidence-informed decision-making among authorizers, policymakers, and other key stakeholders. Rausch is a former practitioner of charter school authorizing at the staff and board level; he led charter school authorizing activities for the Indianapolis Mayor's Office and was the board chairperson of Indiana's statewide authorizer. He also served on the leadership team of The Equity Project at Indiana University.

Kristen Forbriger is NACSA's Vice President of External Relations. She oversees NACSA's communications and policy work, including efforts to increase reach, engagement, and dissemination of resources to authorizing agencies throughout the county. She previously served as the Public Affairs Director for the Philadelphia School Partnership, an education reform organization that invests in the creation and expansion of quality schools where she led

communications and parent-engagement strategies. Her prior experience includes managing communications and development for YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School and media relations for private-sector companies.

Heather Wendling is NACSA's Director of Learning and Leadership Development. In this role, she leads resource development and dissemination for authorizing agencies that focus on the creation and oversight of high-quality charter schools. Prior to joining NACSA, she served as the Director for New Charters at the SUNY Charter Schools Institute, the nation's largest university-based authorizer, where she led the charter proposal review process. She also designed systems and strategies to support new schools and participated in the ongoing qualitative oversight and evaluation of schools seeking renewal.

Amanda DeVaul-Fetters is NACSA's Director of Program Evaluation. She leads NACSA's evaluation and assessment work, and has more than 10 years of experience in social science research, with expertise in turning research into action through evidence-based decision-making. She previously served as the program impact specialist for Kansas City's Choice Neighborhoods \$30 million HUD grant. In this role, she worked with district and charter schools to collect data in order to inform education strategies that improved outcomes for students and families served by the grant and strengthened local schools. She led data collection and analysis on a set of ongoing measures, prepared quarterly and annual reports to HUD, ensured compliance with the federal grant, and monitored implementation of grant strategies.

National Association of State Boards of Education—Project Partner

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) is the only national organization giving voice and adding value to the nation's State Boards of Education. NASBE serves its members and the entire education community by providing an array of services that

include professional development on education, board function—including a focus on authorizing for boards that function as authorizing agencies—and the policy-making process. Services and information are disseminated through a variety of channels, including task forces and commissions, annual conferences, webinars, conference calls, and social media.

Key Project Personnel

Kristen Amundson, NASBE’s President and CEO, brings more than two decades of experience as a policymaker. In her role, she leads all of the organization’s work with state boards—including 42 state boards that play a role in the public charter community, with 15 state boards acting as authorizing agencies and 24 boards serving in an oversight role for authorizing agencies. From 1999 to 2009, she represented the 44th House of Delegates District in the Virginia General Assembly. Before her election to the General Assembly, Amundson—a former teacher—served for nearly a decade on the Fairfax County (Virginia) School Board, including two years as its chairwoman.

Charter School Growth Fund—Project Partner

Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) is a national nonprofit that makes multi-year philanthropic investments in education entrepreneurs who are building networks of great schools. To date, CSGF has funded nearly 1,000 schools that serve more than 350,000 students in 28 states. The organization works specifically with school leaders to replicate and expand high-performing charter schools with a key focus on underserved communities that have limited access to high-quality school options.

Key Project Personnel

Kevin Hall has served as the CEO of CSGF since 2009. In this role, he leads the organization’s efforts to identify the country’s best charter schools, fund their growth, and

increase their impact. Through his leadership, CSGF has worked with the majority of portfolio members to replicate and expand their charter schools from one or two schools to five or more. Previously, he served as the Chief Operating Officer of The Broad Foundation. He also has worked as an educational investor, entrepreneur, and teacher.

Chiefs for Change—Project Partner

Chiefs for Change builds a diverse community of state and local education Chiefs and supports them in ways that maximize the success of their efforts: through communities of practice, sample resources, policy tools, and more. Currently, Chiefs for Change members lead education systems serving 7.2 million students, 435,000 educators, and 14,000 schools, making it an ideal partner for the dissemination of quality authorizing practices.

Key Project Personnel

Mike Magee is CEO of Chiefs for Change. In this role he represents a diverse community of the nation’s most prominent education systems leaders who collectively serve more than 7 million students. Prior to Chiefs for Change, Magee co-founded and was CEO of the Rhode Island Mayoral Academies (RIMA), founding a statewide network of mayor-governed, diverse-by-design public schools, while successfully advocating for changes in education policy to support equity.

Basis Policy Research—Project Evaluator

Basis Policy Research (Basis) is an independent research firm that conducts applied research, data analytics, and program evaluation for PK–20 education organizations across the United States. Notable partners of Basis include the Michigan Department of Education, the Maricopa County Educational Service Agency, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Missouri Charter Public School Commission, and The Thomas B. Fordham Institute. Basis

experts support these partners in the areas of measurement, benchmarking, program evaluation, research design, test and survey construction, data analysis, and reporting. The firm's current portfolio of work is focused on the design and implementation of educator performance evaluation and management systems, developing performance measure frameworks, research on early childhood interventions, design and implementation of early warning systems for identifying students at risk of dropping out, and measuring the effects of education advocacy organizations on state policy.

Key Project Personnel

Anna Nicotera, Ph.D., is a Senior Researcher at Basis. She focuses on the impact of macro-level policies, programs, and governance structures on student-level educational opportunities and outcomes. Nicotera has substantial charter school and school choice expertise, leading a multi-state study that used information gathered from charter school applications to predict future school performance. Prior to joining Basis, Nicotera was the senior director of research at the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools where she developed the Public Charter School Dashboard. She has also been an advisor to the U.S. Department of Education's Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program and the redesign of the Schools and Staffing Survey. From 2009 through 2016, Nicotera served on the board of a public charter school in Denver that enrolled a high percentage of English Language Learners.

Lauren Shaw is an Associate at Basis. Drawing on her skills in project management and data analysis, Shaw conducts quantitative and qualitative research to respond to partners' needs in areas ranging from identifying the aptitudes and predispositions of educators being considered for leadership roles to enhancing students' out-of-school learning opportunities. She also guides

the program evaluation and production of data dashboards for Michigan's Statewide System of Support for turnaround schools.

VI. QUALITY OF PROJECT EVALUATION

The SCAN Project uses objective performance measures that are clearly aligned to the outcomes of the Project. They also align with NACSA's long-term commitment to implement a research-based approach to improving outcomes for students through quality authorizing and its program goal to strengthen charter school authorizing and oversight. In addition to evaluating the results of the SCAN Project, this evaluation will build information and baseline data that NACSA will use beyond the timeline and the scope of the proposed work to study the impact of NACSA's recommended actions in strengthening charter school authorizing and oversight.

Basis, the Project's external evaluator, is prepared to conduct a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation of the implementation and impact of NACSA's SCAN Project. The evaluation will rely on data collected by NACSA and its project partners but the overall evaluation coordination and analysis will be led and conducted by Basis, an organization with strong experience in data analytics and strategy, policy research, program evaluation, and measurement design. Basis researchers have considerable experience in conducting large-scale program evaluations of federally funded education initiatives.

The evaluation plan has been designed specifically to determine and report on the extent to which program goals, objectives, and outcomes are met during the three years of the grant. For each of the four project objectives to be evaluated, we present the objective's process and outcome performance measures with measurable performance targets. Given that NACSA will develop and disseminate new resources during the grant period, the baseline for each of the performance measures is zero.

The performance targets identified in the performance measures are ambitious. NACSA is a national organization and all of its resources are available and relevant to all authorizers in the country and will be used by those overseeing a very large proportion of charter schools. Further, the ambitious outcome performance measures specify that authorizers overseeing significant percentages of charter schools across the country will:

1. be aware of the resources developed through the grant;
2. agree that the resources are relevant;
3. agree that the resources provide quality content; and
4. change policies, practices, and procedures based on the content of the resources.

The activities and outcomes of the Project scaffold upon themselves, one following and building upon the previous. The evaluation plan and the outcome measures presented below scaffold in the same way.

The following pages present the four objectives of the Project. For each objective, the plan first lists detailed output measures, both resource development and resource dissemination. After the output measures, the plan presents the outcome measures for each objective.

Objective 1: Develop, Identify, Expand, and Disseminate Best Practices in Monitoring Compliance

Output Measures

Resource Development

1. In Year One, NACSA analyzes findings from interviews and focus groups with a sample of high-performing charter school operators that provide information about opportunities and challenges associated with authorizer compliance monitoring and creates resources for dissemination.

2. In Year One, NACSA identifies and secures work with five authorizers—representing the types and diversity of authorizing institutions and contexts—that will engage in action research as a Monitoring Compliance Cohort to identify implementation barriers and improve their practices specific to charter school monitoring and compliance oversight.
3. In Year One, in collaboration with participating sites, NACSA develops monitoring and compliance action research plans for 100 percent of the authorizers in the Monitoring Compliance Cohort within six months of selection.
4. In Year Two, NACSA delivers customized project progress analysis, based on intended goals of the action research plans, to 100 percent of the Monitoring Compliance Cohort.
5. In Year Three, NACSA completes a paper describing commonalities in authorizer practices, attitudes, organizational structures, and cultures that produce or impede effective monitoring and compliance.
6. In Years Two and Three, NACSA contributes to a best-practice resource library on effective monitoring and compliance, including written documents, an online course, and five how-to videos.
7. By Year Three, NACSA modifies its *Principles & Standards* to reflect national best practices on monitoring and compliance.

Dissemination

8. In Years One and Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources on monitoring and compliance to 100 percent of authorizers that participate in the Leaders Alumni Program.
9. In Year Two, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources on monitoring and compliance to 100 percent of authorizers that participate in-person in the Leaders Program.

10. By Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources on monitoring and compliance virtually through an online course accessed by at least 50 unique authorizers.
11. In Years Two and Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources on monitoring and compliance in a minimum of one conference session at NACSA's annual leadership conference.
12. By Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources on monitoring and compliance to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more charter schools in their portfolios through email, web content, social media, and external partner networks.

Outcome Measures

1. By Year Three, 80 percent of those authorizers with five or more charter schools to whom NACSA disseminated resources are aware of NACSA's resources on monitoring and compliance.
2. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers that access resources on monitoring and compliance report that they agree that the resources are relevant to an issue currently facing their organizations.
3. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers that access resources on monitoring and compliance report that they are satisfied with the overall quality of the content provided in the resources.
4. By Year Three, 50 percent of authorizers that engage with resources on monitoring and compliance through the Monitoring and Compliance Cohort, Leaders Alumni Program, and Leaders Program report changes or plans to change authorizer practices, policies, or procedures related to the content of the resources.

Objective 2: Capacity Building for Authorizers with the Most Need

Output Measures

Resource Development

1. In Year One, NACSA identifies eight small authorizers with fewer than 10 schools in their portfolios and four authorizers with more than 10 schools that have small staffs relative to their portfolio of schools (i.e., a staff-to-school ratio of at least 1:12) for participation in the Building Capacity Project.
2. In Year One, NACSA collects data through interviews, document reviews, and member checking from 100 percent of the Building Capacity Project authorizers.
3. In each Year, NACSA modifies its existing library of online resources to create tools to meet needs of small authorizers as identified through the Building Capacity Project.
4. By Year Three, NACSA modifies its *Principles & Standards* to reflect national best practices for small authorizers.

Dissemination

5. In each Year, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources for small authorizers virtually through an on-demand online course accessed by at least 33 percent of unique authorizers with five to 10 schools in their portfolios and 33 percent of low staff-to-school ratio authorizers with more than 10 schools in their portfolios.
6. By Year 3, NACSA disseminates best practices for small authorizers to 90 percent of authorizers with five to 10 schools in their portfolios and 90 percent of low staff-to-school ratio authorizers with more than 10 schools in their portfolios through email, web content, social media, and external partner networks.

Outcome Measures

1. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers with five to 10 schools and 80 percent of low staff-to-school ratio authorizers with more than 10 schools to whom NACSA disseminated resources are aware of NACSA's resources for small authorizers.
2. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers with five to 10 schools in their portfolios and 80 percent of low staff-to-school ratio authorizers with more than 10 schools in their portfolios that access resources for small authorizers report that they agree that the resources are relevant to an issue currently facing their organizations.
3. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers with five to 10 schools in their portfolios and 80 percent of low staff-to-school ratio authorizers with more than 10 schools in their portfolios that access resources for small authorizers report that they are satisfied with the overall quality of the content provided in the resources.
4. By Year Three, 50 percent of authorizers with five to 10 schools in their portfolios and 50 percent of low staff-to-school ratio authorizers with more than 10 schools in their portfolios that engage with resources for small authorizers through their work with NACSA as small authorizers report changes or plans to change authorizer practices, policies, or procedures related to the content of the resources.

Objective 3: Identify and Disseminate Best Practices for Replication and Expansion

Output Measures

Resource Development

1. In Year One, NACSA extends a call to the field requesting information from authorizers and charter school operators regarding identification of authorizer practices that support the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools.

2. In Year One, NACSA catalogs effective practices that support the replication and expansion from the call to the field through conversations with authorizers and school operators, document reviews, and sample collection.
3. By Year Two, NACSA collaborates with an external expert in replication and expansion to complete a written resource based on identified best practices that support replication and expansion.
4. By Year Three, NACSA contributes to a best-practice resource library for replication and expansion, including written documents, online courses, and a tool kit on differentiated renewal, replication, and expansion.
5. By Year Three, NACSA modifies its *Principles & Standards*, as needed, to reflect national best practices for replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools.

Dissemination

6. In Year Two, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources that support replication and expansion to 100 percent of authorizers that participate in-person in the Leaders Program.
7. By Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources that support replication and expansion virtually through an online course accessed by at least 50 unique authorizers.
8. In Years Two and Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources that support replication and expansion in a minimum of one conference session at NACSA's annual leadership conference.
9. In Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources that support replication and expansion to 100 percent of authorizers that participate in the Leaders Alumni Program.

10. By Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources that support replication and expansion to 100 percent of authorizers that attend in-person regional meetings in six cities.
11. By Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources that support replication and expansion to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more charter schools in their portfolios in the country through email, web content, social media, and external partner networks.

Outcome Measures

1. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers with five or more charter schools to whom NACSA disseminated resources are aware of NACSA's resources that support replication and expansion.
2. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers that access resources that support replication and expansion report that they agree that the resources are relevant to an issue currently facing their organization.
3. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers that access resources that support replication and expansion report that they are satisfied with the overall quality of the content provided in the resources.
4. By Year Three, 50 percent of authorizers that engage with resources that support replication and expansion through the Leaders Alumni Program, Leaders Program, and regional meetings report changes or plans to change authorizer practices, policies, or procedures related to the content of the resources.

Objective 4: Develop, Identify, Expand, and Disseminate Best Practices in Closure

Output Measures

Resource Development

1. In Year One, NACSA conducts interviews with the 14 authorizers who participated in a Closure Cohort to identify best practices for school closure.
2. In Year One, NACSA completes a key findings report describing commonalities in practices, attitudes, organizational structures, and cultures that produce or impede school closure based on findings from the Closure Cohorts.
3. In Year One, NACSA contributes to a best-practice resource library for closure, including written documents.
4. By Year Three, NACSA modifies its *Principles & Standards*, as needed, to reflect national best practices for closure.

Dissemination

5. In Years One and Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources for closure to 100 percent of authorizers that participate in-person in the Leaders Alumni Program.
6. In Year Two, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources for closure to 100 percent of authorizers that participate in-person in the Leaders Program.
7. In each Year, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources for closure in a minimum of one conference session at NACSA's annual leadership conference.
8. By Year Three, NACSA disseminates best-practice resources for closure to 90 percent of authorizers with five or more charter schools in their portfolios in the country through email, web content, social media, and external partner networks.

Outcome Measures

1. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers with five or more charter schools to whom NACSA disseminated resources are aware of NACSA's resources for closure.

2. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers that access closure resources report that they agree that the resources are relevant to an issue currently facing their organization.
3. By Year Three, 80 percent of authorizers that access closure resources report that they are satisfied with the overall quality of the content provided in the resources.
4. By Year Three, 50 percent of authorizers that engage with closure resources through the Closure Cohort, Leaders Alumni Program, and Leaders Program report changes or plans to change authorizer practices, policies, or procedures related to the content of the resources.

Evaluation Methods

Data Collection

NACSA will collect data on the process performance measures from interviews with NACSA staff and partners involved in the development and dissemination of resources and the review of materials, deliverables, and online content generated by NACSA staff and partners.

NACSA will collect data on the outcome performance measures from resource access data, including email open rates, email click rates, and email bounce rates; website page views, website click rates on links, website time stayed on page, and website downloads; content sharing; surveys of individuals who access resources online and surveys of individuals who participate in in-person learning that share the resources; and interviews and document reviews with targeted authorizers to determine if changes in policies and practices were made or planned to be made.

Data Analysis

To evaluate the process and outcome performance measures in the four objectives, Basis will use mixed methods consisting of qualitative analyses of interviews and resource materials,

and quantitative analysis of resource access and survey data. The primary source of information for determining whether process performance measures were met will come from interviews with NACSA staff and document review of materials NACSA develops through each objective. The qualitative analyses will look for evidence that NACSA systematically developed resources on best practices in each of the four areas addressed by the objectives and disseminated through multiple channels to the target audiences.

A variety of information will be used to determine whether outcome performance measures were met. For Outcome 1, authorizer awareness will be measured as the percent of unique authorizers with five or more charter schools in their portfolios where at least one staff member received the resource through NACSA's dissemination strategies and did at least one of the following: clicked through an email link to a webpage devoted to resources; clicked through an email link to a commentary; downloaded resources from NACSA's webpage; accessed an on-demand online course; or attended an in-person convening. For Outcomes 2 and 3, authorizers who access resources on the objective's topic area will be given a short survey asking about the relevance and quality of the resources. For Outcome 4, a variety of methods will be used to determine whether target authorizers change policies or practices in the objective's topic area, including interviews and document review to assess and analyze changes.

VII. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Page 60 of the Application document presents a set of application requirements that each proposal must address. This proposal addresses all of those requirements in the preceding narrative. For convenience, we also provide, in Appendix E, a table that identifies where each requirement can be found in the narrative.