



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY,
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TO: P-12 Education Committee
FROM: John B. King, Jr.
SUBJECT: Charter School Office Strategic Planning Summary
DATE: June 7, 2011
AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Update on the progress of the Charter School Office strategic planning process and the grant from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For Information.

Background Information

In the Fall of 2010, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) received a grant from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to implement a strategic planning process for the Charter School Office (CSO). NYSED contracted with SchoolWorks, an educational consulting company with extensive charter school expertise, to facilitate the strategic planning process and draft the strategic plan. The strategic plan focuses the work and resources of the CSO to fulfill a newly-developed mission:

The mission of the New York State Education Department Charter School Office is to create and sustain excellent educational options for New York State families on behalf of the Board of Regents through high quality charter school authorizing, fair and transparent oversight of all charter schools, and the dissemination of innovative school designs and practices.

SchoolWorks gathered and analyzed feedback from internal and external stakeholders through focus group interviews and an online survey; facilitated a series of meetings with CSO staff members; and worked in conjunction with CSO leadership to discuss progress and to align efforts with other initiatives of NYSED's Office of School

Innovation (where the Charter School Office is housed). The CSO staff strategic planning process considered alignment of the Charter School Office's work with the Board of Regents Reform Agenda, mission and goals of the Office of School Innovation, and priorities outlined by the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant. CSO leaders and SchoolWorks consultants have also worked to ensure that CSO staff members have the core charter school oversight policies and protocols necessary to fulfill the mission, vision, and values articulated in the strategic plan. This protocol work, funded with generous support from the Tiger Foundation and completed with consultants affiliated with NACSA and SchoolWorks, includes:

- charter school application process and the granting of new charters;
- performance contracting;
- pre-opening procedures;
- annual reporting;
- performance monitoring; and
- renewal, non-renewal, revocation and school closure.

The goals and priorities identified within the CSO staff strategic plan focus the work of the staff in the CSO on closing the gap between areas identified as needing further attention and exemplar practices of high quality charter school authorizers. The plan for the CSO outlines the resources and professional development necessary to ensure that the CSO has the capacity and infrastructure necessary to fulfill its mission. Through the CSO staff strategic plan and the adoption and implementation of new policies and practices, it is our hope and expectation that the Board of Regents will become the authorizer of choice for charter school operators within New York State.

We are nearing the completion of the final CSO staff strategic plan. When finalized, the CSO staff plan will cover such components as: Core Elements (mission and vision statements, multi-year goals with measurable outcomes, defined and aligned personnel, agency capacity); Organizational Structures (BOR policies and decision-making rights, external influences on decision making); Human Resources (leadership, staffing structure, professional development); Financial Resources; Quality Authorizing Practices; and Appendices including policies and procedures, proposed office staff responsibilities, and proposed modifications to the Office budget.

Timetable for Implementation

The strategic planning process and the grant from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers will end at NACSA's annual conference in October 2011. Staff from the Charter School Office will attend the conference and present – along with the other seven grant recipients – the grant deliverables.