

Authorizer Standards Draft

Standards and Practices for Authorizers of Multi-District Online Schools*

It is recommended that the following standards and practices provide the foundation for the Colorado Department of Education's evaluation and certification of authorizers of multi-district online schools.

Evaluation & Certification of Authorizers

Standards & Practices

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Agency Commitment and Capacity

- a. Mission inclusive of multi-district online schools
- b. Sufficient human resource expertise

Application Process and Decision Making

- a. Transparency
- b. Rigorous approval criteria
- c. Rigorous decision making practices

Performance Contracting (*for charter, charter with an ESP, traditional/district with or without an ESP, and contract schools*)

- a. Defines material terms
- b. States the rights and responsibilities of both parties
- c. Defines performance standards aligned to state accreditation
- d. Incorporates best practice recommendations for educational service provider contracts*

Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

- a. Annual review based on, but not limited to, comprehensive performance outcome data
- b. Transparent compliance monitoring procedures

Renewal, Intervention, and Revocation Decision Making (*for charter, charter with an ESP, traditional/district with or without an ESP, and contract schools*)

- a. Includes transparent and clearly communicated procedures for review.
- b. Bases all renewal and/or intervention decisions on thorough analyses of comprehensive body of evidence.
- c. Provides comprehensive reports to schools in advance of renewal or intervention decision making.
- d. Grants renewals only for schools meeting expectations of performance.

Public Reporting

- a) Produces clear and concise annual public reports on the performance of the multi-district online schools it authorizes

*Based largely on NACSA Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing

System & Process Elements for Authorizers of Multi-District Online Schools

CDE Review and Certification Criteria

It is recommended that the following system and process elements serve as the basis for the Colorado Department of Education’s review and certification of authorizer’s of multi-district online schools.

Evidence according to each standard/area should be utilized as the foundation for evaluation and decision-making regarding authorizer capacity to successfully authorize multi-district online schools.

Evaluation

Standard / Area	Evidence
Agency Commitment and Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Statement of assumption of responsibility for holding schools accountable for their performance b. Demonstration of prior performance, if available c. Personnel & qualifications d. Staff time devoted to authorization activities (proportionate to # of schools/students) e. Professional development plan f. Financial resources devoted to authorization g. Plan for evaluation of its authorizing practice against national standards for quality authorizing and recognized effective practices and development of improvement plans, as needed
Application Process and Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Description of the application and review process the authorizer will use to make decisions regarding the granting of multi-district online schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Define the sources of financial data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, grounded in professional standards for sound financial operations and sustainability b. Define the sources of organizational data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, focusing on fulfillment of legal obligations, fiduciary duties, and sound public stewardship b. Evidence that performance outcomes serve as the primary basis for decision making. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Define clear, measurable, and attainable academic, financial, and organizational performance standards and targets that the school must meet as a condition of renewal, including but not limited to state and federal measures

Standard / Area	Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Define the sources of academic data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, including state-mandated and other standardized assessments, student academic growth measures, internal assessments, qualitative reviews, and performance comparisons with other public schools in the district and state c. Evidence that application, evaluation and decision-making procedures are transparent and consistent. d. For non-charter online schools, evidence that training and supports for school staff are sufficiently provided by the district.
Performance Contracting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Description of the contracting process for multi-district online schools. b. Description of the evidence of material terms, rights and responsibilities of parties, performance standards reliant on objective, verifiable, and state aligned data sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Description of services appropriate for all students, including those with disabilities and English learners. b. Description of on- and off-ramp programs for all students
Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Description of the annual review process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Description of the activities of the annual review process, including site visits (physical and/or virtual), types of outcomes used, financial audits, and annual report creation b. Description of how the annual review will be used in decision making. c. Description of compliance monitoring and procedures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provides clear technical guidance to schools as needed to ensure timely compliance with applicable rules and regulations d. Assurance that monitoring will be minimally invasive and in line with school autonomy. e. Refrains from directing or participating in educational decisions or choices that are appropriately within a school’s purview, including school reassignment of students
Renewal, Intervention and Revocation (charter specific) Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Description of procedures for review, renewal, intervention and revocation. b. Description of renewal and/or intervention decision making and analytic processes. c. Description of school report communication

Standard / Area	Evidence
Public Reporting	<p>procedures.</p> <p>Produces an annual public report that provides clear, accurate performance data for the multi-district online schools it authorizes, reporting on individual school and overall portfolio performance.</p>

Further Recommendations

1. Review and certification of all authorizer’s currently overseeing multi-district online schools be completed on or before January 1, 2016.
2. Ongoing reviews of all authorizers of multi-district schools occur every 5 years.
3. The CDE is charged with clarifying the effect on a multi-district on-line school if the school's authorizer loses certification, including but not limited to establishing and making known to schools the types of actions and consequences that they may.
 - a. Any State Board Decisions to remove authorizing capacity from a district, BOCES or CSI as of July 1 of any year must be made by July 20 of the prior year.

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