

What is a Charter Authorizer?

Charter schools are accountable to their charter authorizer for meeting the local, state, and federal requirements. An authorizer is an entity approved by the state legislature to 1) open new charter schools 2) monitor the performance of existing charter schools, and 3) close failing schools.

Fundamental principles of charter authorizing include:



Access to high-quality school options for all students

Autonomy for schools to offer educational models that best meet the needs of their students

Accountability for schools in meeting high expectations and fulfilling obligations to students, parents, and taxpayers

Colorado Charter Authorizers

In Colorado, charter schools can be authorized by school districts or the Charter School Institute (CSI), which is the only statewide authorizer in Colorado.

Exclusive Chartering Authority

CSI authorizes charter schools in districts:

- 1) that do not retain exclusive chartering authority (ECA), and
- 2) in districts that retain ECA but release an applicant to apply directly to CSI.

178 school districts exist in Colorado

172 school districts retain exclusive chartering authority

45 school districts authorize one or more charter schools

The CSI Portfolio of Schools

CSI considers applications for new schools, existing charters seeking to transfer authorization to CSI, as well as expansions, replications, and renewals of existing CSI schools.

Applicants with the option to apply to CSI undergo a rigorous application review process.

~50%

of new school applications are approved by the CSI Board and open

High-Quality Authorizing

The CSI approach to authorizing charter schools balances autonomy and accountability. CSI offers its schools the flexibility to choose the educational models and methods that best meet the unique needs of their students and communities and holds its schools accountable to clear expectations for academic, financial, and organizational performance.