



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 18, 2014

Contact: Jobi Cates, 312.376.2328
jobic@qualitycharters.org

Massachusetts Audit Obscures Successful Charter School Outcomes

The audit released today by the Massachusetts State Auditor of the administration of the charter school program by the Board of and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE and DESE) misses the forest for the trees.

No one questions the need for confidence in the state's handling of school data, but administrative issues should not obscure successful outcomes. The Massachusetts charter office oversees one of the most vibrant and high-performing charter sectors in the nation. This is due in large part to its record of rigorous application processes, comprehensive oversight, and prudent decisions on renewal and revocation of charter school contracts.

It's troubling that the report raises concerns about charter renewal based on questionable priorities such as "sharing of innovative programs." The law and DESE's renewal frameworks properly put the emphasis on student achievement and the accomplishment of charter goals.

Over the years, this office has been a source of innovation and exemplar of strong authorizing practice. As the issues raised today are resolved, we fully expect Massachusetts to retain and enhance its leadership role among charter authorizers.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is committed to advancing excellence and accountability in the charter school sector and to increasing the number of high-quality charter schools across the nation. To accomplish this mission, NACSA works to improve the policies and practices of authorizers—the organizations designated to approve, monitor, renew, and, if necessary, close charter schools. NACSA provides training, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers. It also advocates for laws and policies that raise the bar for excellence among authorizers and the schools they charter. Visit <http://www.qualitycharters.org>

###