



2016 NACSA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Helping Kids and Staying Out of Authorizing Trouble: Getting Special Education Right

The data is in: A recent NACSA survey documented that many authorizers lack clarity around their special education obligations, deferring instead to their state education agency. However, authorizers must play a key role in ensuring that the charter schools they oversee are enrolling and providing quality programs to students with disabilities. In this session, you will review the authorizer's role and responsibilities in overseeing services to students with disabilities, including what strong authorizers do and what they avoid doing. Come learn about resources being developed by NACSA and the organizations leading this session that will help guide you in this work.

Session Title: Helping Kids and Staying Out of Authorizing Trouble: Getting Special Education Right

Session speakers: Paul O'Neill (National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools)
Lauren Morando Rhim (National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools)
Ellie Rounds Bloom (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Context: *(In what context was this information presented? Workshop? Panel discussion? What were the goals of the session?)*

The session format was a panel presentation followed by discussion/Q&A. The goals of the session were to build understanding of:

- The role of authorizers in ensuring charter schools fulfill their responsibilities to students with disabilities
- Strong policies and practices some authorizers are implementing in overseeing special education in charter schools
- How and where authorizers can learn more on building their capacity to oversee special education



Key Takeaways: *(Please provide 3 key takeaways from your session. What points do you want to reinforce with attendees? If they learned 3 things from the session, what should they be?)*

1. Authorizers play a critical role in overseeing special education in charter schools at every stage of a charter school's life, from pre-application to renewal.
2. Even where a charter school is its own LEA, the authorizer still is responsible for oversight, particularly: a) informing schools of their special education responsibilities; b) ensuring schools have the capacity to fulfill those responsibilities; and c) holding schools accountable for fulfilling them.
3. Take advantage of the resources available to help authorizers navigate their responsibilities in overseeing special education in charter schools. Check out the resources linked in the session Powerpoint and contact the presenters with any questions.

Additional Resources: *(Where can attendees receive additional information? Resources on the Knowledge Core? Other publications? NACSA consulting services or other member benefits? These will be published on the website alongside the PowerPoint and any handouts you send me, so no need to attach those resources. However, feel free to share links to pages on the NACSA website, contact information for speakers/facilitators, links to topical news articles or videos you may have shared, etc.)*

Links to many resources are included in the session Powerpoint.

Presenter contact info:

- **Lauren Morando Rhim**, Executive Director, National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools, lmrhim@ncsecs.org, (301) 655-1992, @NCSECS, www.ncsecs.org
- **Paul O'Neill**, Co-Founder and Senior Fellow, National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools, ptoneill@ncsecs.org, (914) 772-5528, www.ncsecs.org
- **Ellie Rounds Bloom**, Coordinator of Access and Equity, Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, erounds-bloom@doe.mass.edu, (781) 338-3227, www.doe.mass.edu/charter