




**Colorado Charter Schools  
Annual Conference**

February 25-27, 2026  
Denver Marriott Tech Center

**FORWARD  
TOGETHER**   
**2026**

*"If you want to go fast, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go together."  
— African proverb*



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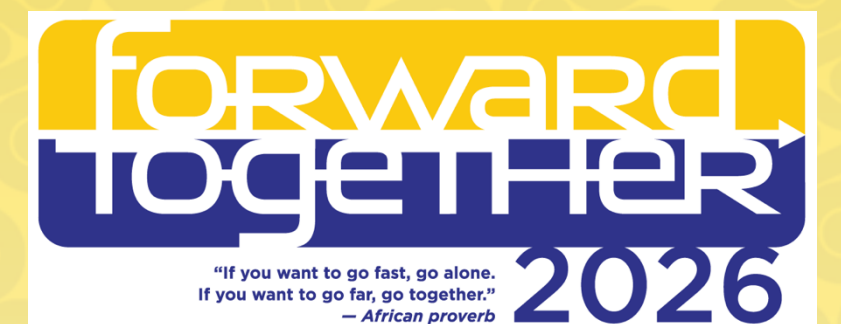


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# (83) The Authorizer Self-Reflection Tool & Welcome Kit

Mackenzie Khan, Executive Director  
CACSA

Longs Peak  
February 27, 2026 | 11:00-12:00PM  
Authorizers



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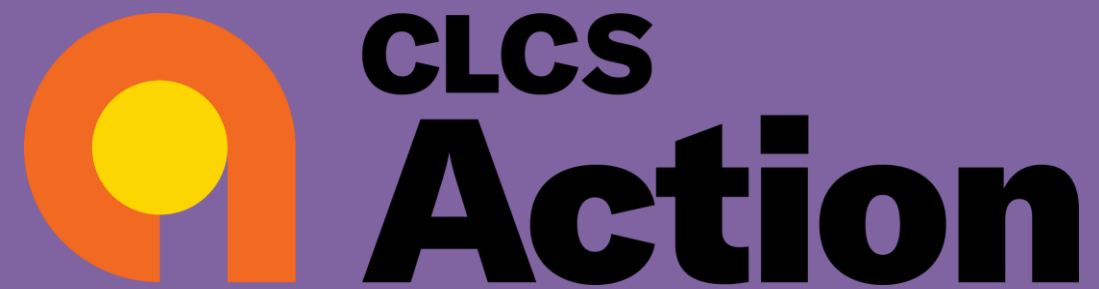




We make it our priority to advocate for high-quality public charter schools across Colorado.



Be a part of the action.

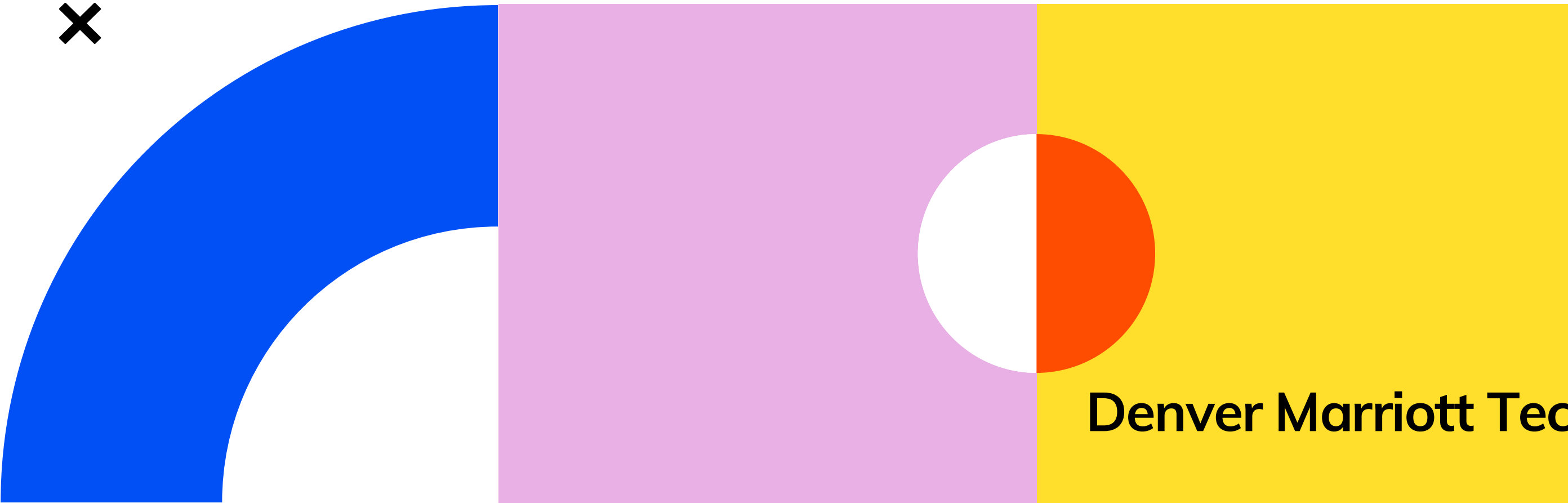




*Tools That Strengthen Authorizer Quality*

# **The Authorizer Self-Reflection Tool & Welcome Kit**

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**February 26, 2026**

**Denver Marriott Tech Center - Longs Peak**

**Room**

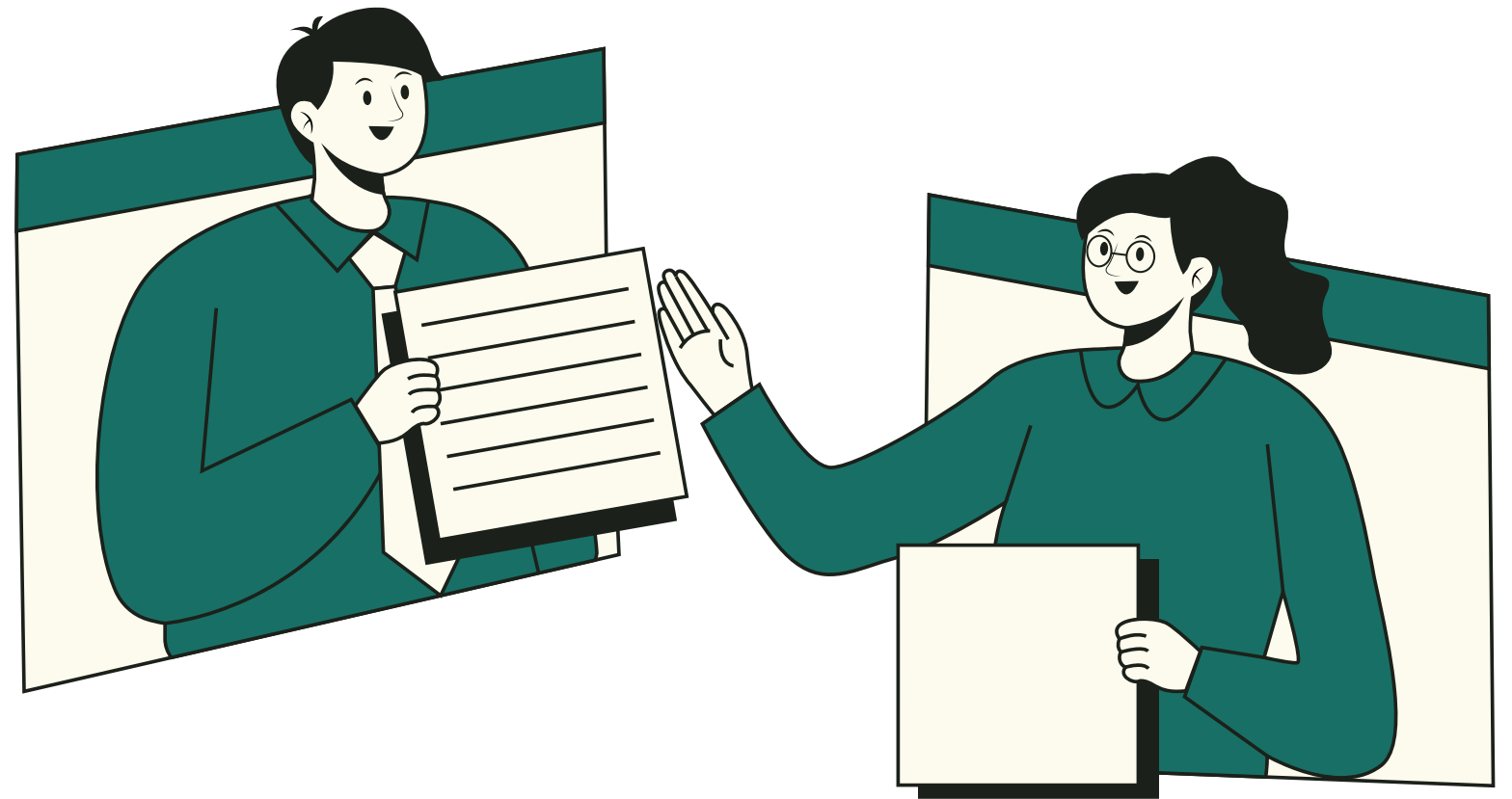
# Session Purpose



Introduce two CACSA resources that help districts strengthen consistency, transparency, and shared expectations in charter school authorizing.

Participants will:

- Understand the purpose and structure of the Authorizer Self-Reflection Tool and Year 1 Authorizer Welcome Kit
- See how the tools align to Colorado and national authorizing best practices
- Learn how each resource supports strong authorizing across the charter lifecycle
- Consider how one or both tools could be adapted within their local context



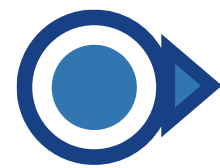
# Why these tools exist



- Authorizing is complex and high-stakes
- Many districts lack dedicated authorizing systems or onboarding
- Need for shared standards and continuous improvement
- Support alignment to Colorado and national best practices

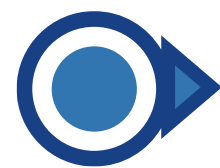


# What Strong Authorizing Requires



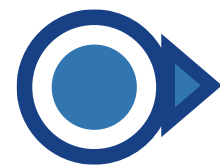
## **Clear policies**

Do our charter policies clearly define expectations and decision criteria?



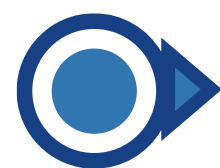
## **Consistent processes**

Are our authorizing processes applied the same way across schools and over time?



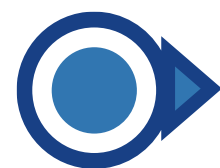
## **Defined roles**

Are board and staff responsibilities in authorizing clearly understood?



## **Evidence-based decisions**

Do charter decisions consistently rely on defined evidence rather than opinion?



## **Lifecycle alignment**

Do our policies and practices connect coherently across the charter lifecycle?

# Common Challenges

- Inconsistent processes
- Unclear oversight expectations
- Renewal confusion
- Contract variability
- Board/staff role ambiguity
- Insufficient internal capacity



# CACSA Response: Two Complementary Tools



The Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers (CACSA) gratefully acknowledges the partnership and support of the Colorado League of Charter Schools in developing these resources, which were created as part of a grant-funded initiative to strengthen authorizing practices across the state.

**Authorizer Welcome Kit → builds systems**

**Authorizer Self-Evaluation → evaluates systems**

**Together → continuous improvement**

# Authorizer Welcome Kit

## What is it?

A practical onboarding and reference resource that helps new and developing authorizers understand their role and establish strong systems and practices across the charter school lifecycle.

- Onboarding and reference resource for authorizers
- Best-practice guidance across the charter life cycle
- Narrative explanations + links to model documents
- Designed especially for new or transitioning authorizers



# What's Included?

## AUTHORIZER WELCOME KIT



- 1 Role of the authorizer
- 2 Colorado legal and policy context
- 3 Setting up an authorizer office
- 4 Applications, oversight, renewal, and closure
- 5 Templates, tools, and resources

# What Authorizers Gain from the Welcome Kit

- Clarity of authorizing roles and responsibilities
- Lifecycle-aligned processes and expectations
- Foundational structures for consistent practice
- Alignment to state and national standards



# Discussion: New to Authorizing

- When someone new takes on authorizing responsibilities in your district, how do they learn what to do across the charter lifecycle?
- Which stage of authorizing (application, contracting, oversight, renewal, closure) feels least clearly defined or documented in your district?



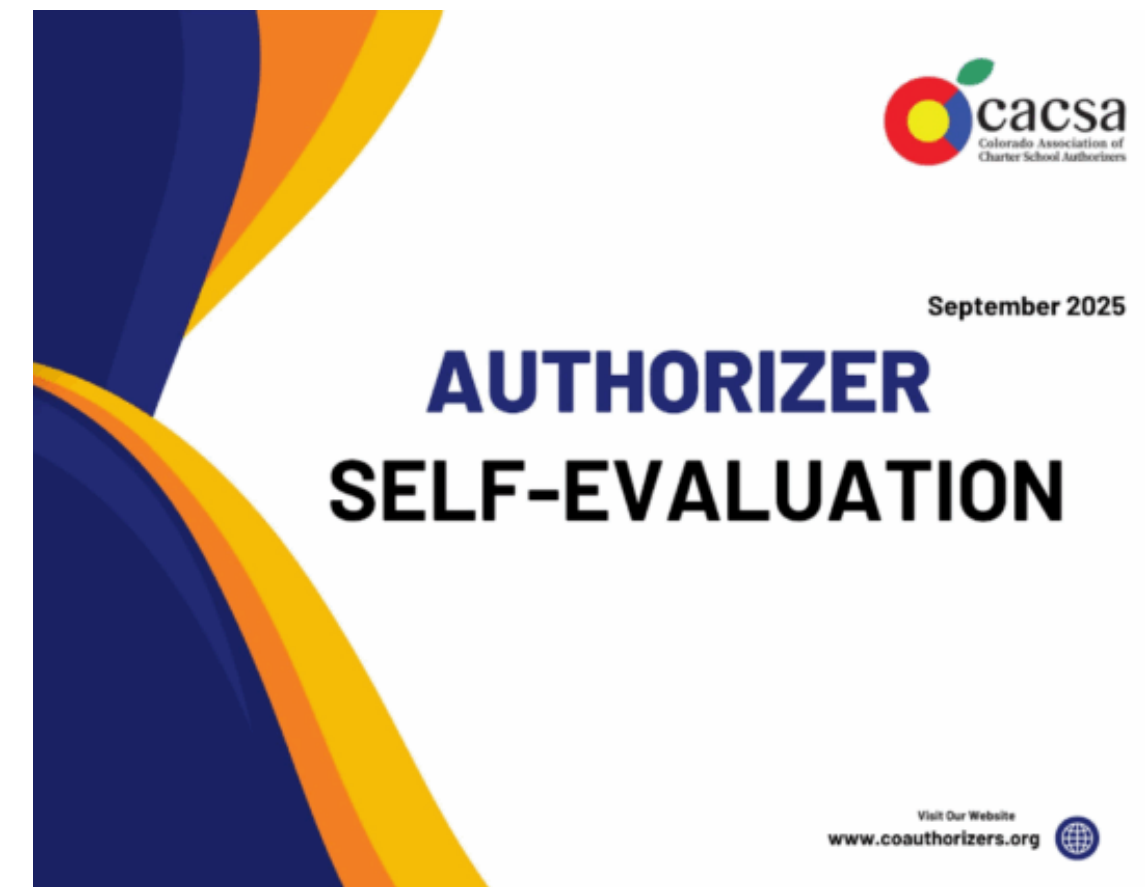
# Authorizer Self-Evaluation

## What is it?



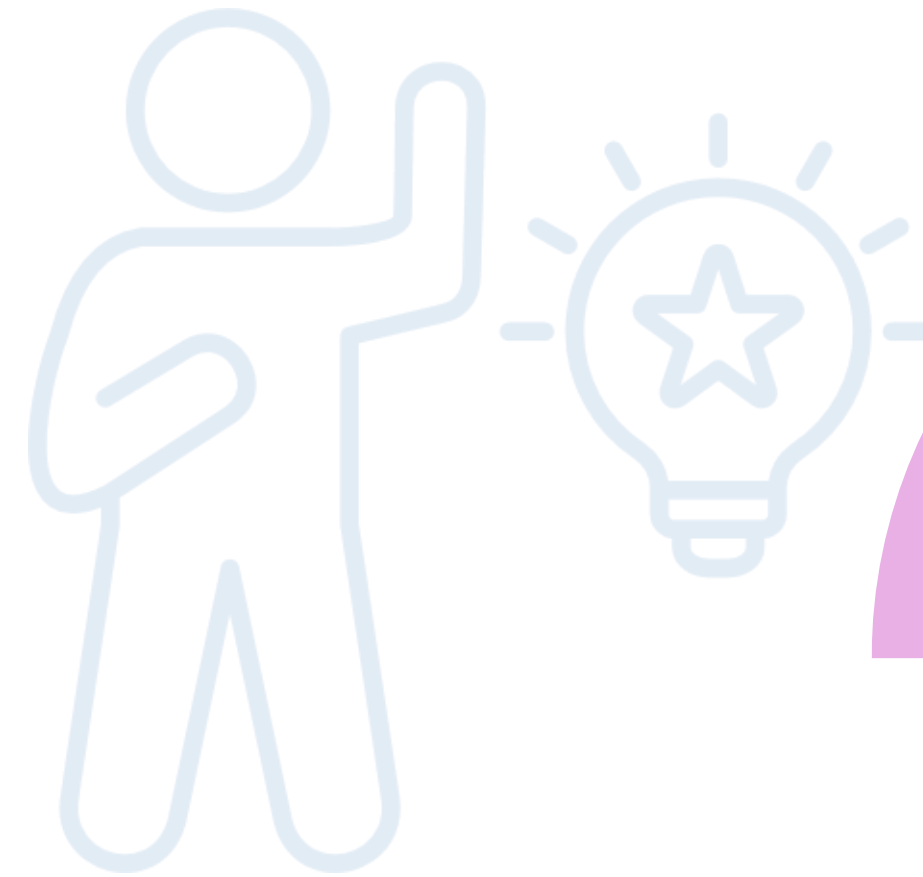
**Supports authorizers to reflect on current practices, identify strengths and gaps, and guide improvement planning.**

- Structured self-assessment of authorizing practices
- Aligned to NACSA Principles & Standards and Colorado Authorizer Standards
- Five domains across the charter life cycle
- Scoring + evidence + reflection + improvement planning



# How to Use

## AUTHORIZER SELF-EVALUATION TOOL



1

Rate current practices

2

Collect evidence

3

Discuss strengths and gaps as a team

4

Prioritize improvements

5

Track growth over time

# What Authorizers Gain from Self-Reflection

- Clarity of practice
- Shared understanding
- Prioritized improvements
- Alignment to standards

*Coming Soon!*



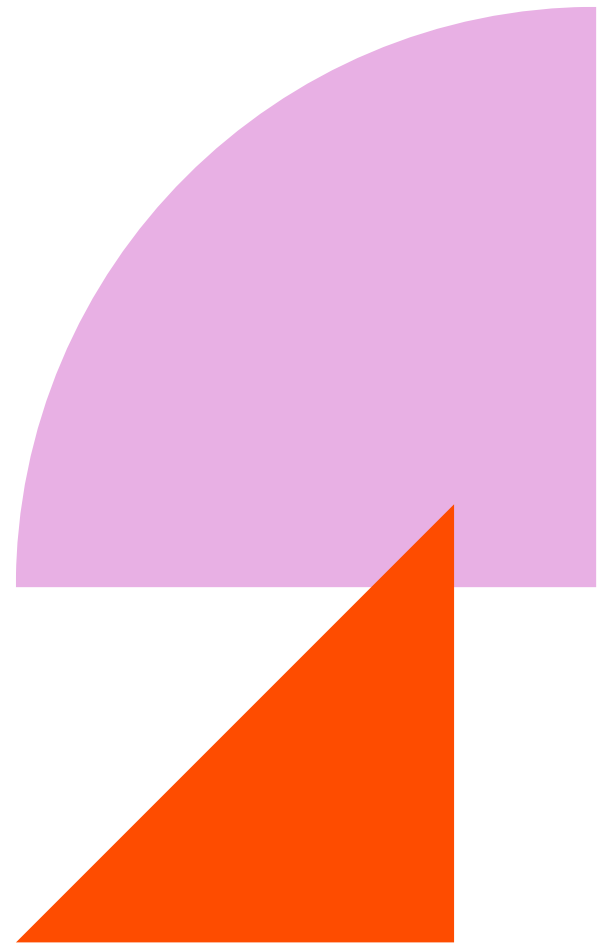
# Using These Tools Together

Example flow:

1. Map systems with Welcome Kit
2. Reflect using Self-Evaluation
3. Identify gaps or focus areas
4. Update policies/processes
5. Repeat over time



x



**Which tool would be most useful in your context?**

**Where could it strengthen your system?**

# CACSA About Us



## Who We Are

CACSA is Colorado's statewide nonprofit supporting high-quality charter school authorizing. We help authorizers strengthen their systems, adopt best practices, and align oversight with Colorado's policies and culture of local control. Our members include authorizing professionals, Superintendents, and school board members from school districts in Colorado as well as the Colorado Charter School Institute.

## What We Do



Authorizer  
Training & PD



Model Tools &  
Resources



Statewide  
Authorizer  
Network



Technical  
Assistance



**“Our school district is now in an excellent position thanks to the guidance, service, and support of CACSA.”**

*-Boulder Valley School District*

## What CACSA Offers School Districts

Tools - Training - Networks - Support

**“I highly recommend CACSA to any district or organization seeking a knowledgeable, principled, and professional partner in charter school authorizing. They are an exceptional resource in a complex and high-stakes space.”**

*-Mesa County Valley School District 51*

## Authorizer Support Services



### Application & Approval

Expert external reviewers for charter applications, capacity interviews, and quality evaluations that support clear, evidence-based board decisions.



### Monitoring & Oversight

Site visit tools, annual performance reviews, and actionable data analysis to support schools throughout the charter term.



### Contracting & Performance Frameworks

Clear, compliant contracts and performance metrics that define academic, financial, and operational expectations from the start.



### Renewal, Intervention & Closure

Structured processes for renewal decisions, intervention planning, and orderly, student-centered closure when necessary.

## How to Engage with CACSA



**Become a CACSA Member**



**Request district-specific support**



**Join monthly meetings**



**Invite CACSA to train your board**



**Access statewide tools + templates**



**Scan to connect with CACSA or request district support.**

## Contact

**Mackenzie Khan, Ed.D.**

Executive Director

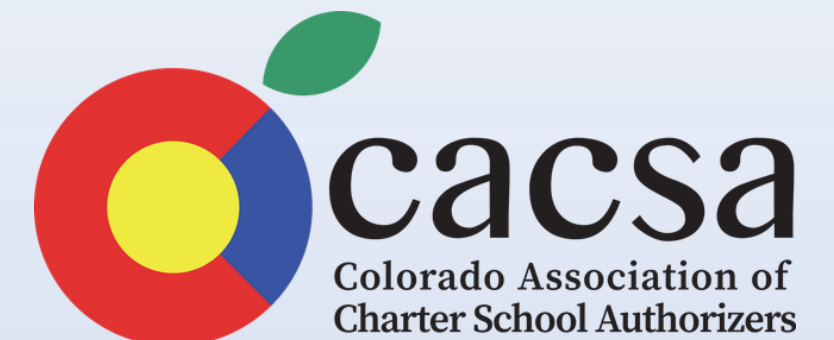
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**“  
Your  
feedback  
helps us all  
move forward  
together**



**Colorado League of  
Charter Schools**



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