



nacsa
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

**CHARTING THE COURSE:
AN ASSESSMENT OF
ORGANIZATIONAL
STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY
TO SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY
AUTHORIZING**

**NEVADA STATE PUBLIC
CHARTER SCHOOL
AUTHORITY**

**Presented by:
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AGENDA

- About NACSA
- Authorizing Principles
- Organizational Structure and Capacity Report
 - Policy Analysis
 - Proposed Staffing Structure
 - Next Steps

ABOUT NACSA

MISSION

To improve student achievement through responsible charter school oversight in the public interest.

Not-For-Profit, Non-Partisan,
Membership Association

117 Authorizer Members

- Representing 3,700 charter schools (approximately 60% of charter schools)

AUTHORIZER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

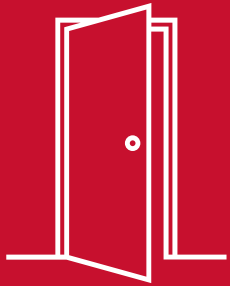
- Authorizer Start-Up
- Application Decision-Making
- Performance Management
- Board and Staff Training
- Authorizer Evaluation
- Due Diligence

PRINCIPLES OF CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZING



**IMPROVE
EDUCATIONAL
OUTCOMES**

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS



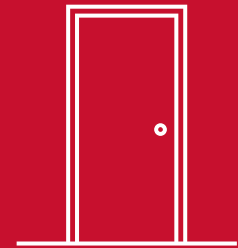
APPROVING

Approving only strong,
demonstrably viable
applications.



RENEWING

Renewing schools only if they
meet or exceed performance
expectations.

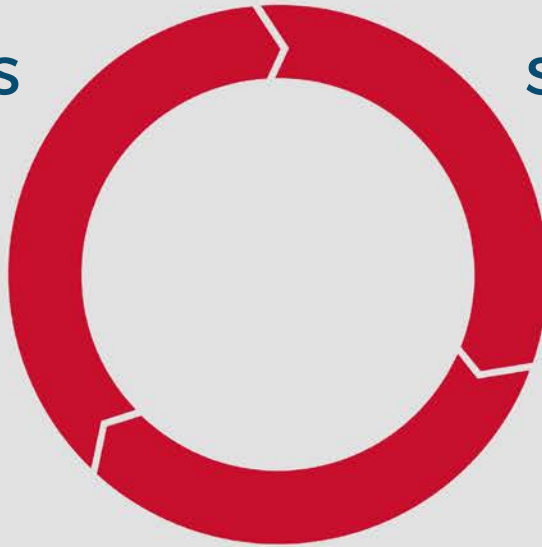


CLOSING

Making the hard decisions
to close the schools that
persistently fail.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

PRINCIPLES



STANDARDS

ESSENTIAL
PRACTICES

APPLICATIONS

- Timeline
- Criteria
- Interview
- External Panel

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- Initial five-year term
- Performance contract
- Financial Audit
- Annual report
- Renewal criteria
- Revocation criteria

CAPACITY

- Mission
- Authorizing staff

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE



PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Academic

Is the
academic
program a
success?

Financial

Is the school
financially
viable?

Organizational

Is the
organization
effective
and well
run?

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POLICY ANALYSIS

Statutory Roles and Responsibilities

- Purpose
- Authorizing Responsibilities
- LEA Designation

STATUTORY PURPOSE

- Authorize charter schools of high-quality
- To provide oversight to ensure schools maintain high educational and operational standards
- Serve as a model of best practices

AUTHORIZING RESPONSIBILITIES

Statutory Responsibilities

- Explicit set of authorizing responsibilities
- Lifecycle of charter
- Written charter school law
- Performance frameworks
- Renewal and revocations tied to performance framework
- Reconstitution

POLICY ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- Staffing
- LEA Designation
- Budget
- Administrative Procedures Act
- Regulatory Powers

STAFFING

Statute

- May employ such persons as it deems necessary
- Qualified
- SB 509's staffing mandates

Current Context

- No authorizing staff
- Current staff does not meet SB 509 mandates
- Budget requests for additional staffing denied

SPCSA must have staff dedicated to charter school authorizing responsibilities.

Make-up of current staffing does not comply with Nevada's charter school law.

LEA DESIGNATION

Statute

- For certain purposes
- Directing funds for state and federal categorical grant programs
- Paying special education program units to eligible charter schools
- Schools that receive funds must comply with reporting requirements

Current Context

- Unusual for ICBs
- Staff spends most time here
- LEA for all purposes per NDE

SPCSA's current LEA responsibilities go beyond such responsibilities outlined in law. Staff spends more time on LEA duties than other comparable authorizers.

BUDGET

Statute

- Permitted fee of up to 2%
- To cover administrative costs associated with sponsorship
- Two-year budget; legislature must approve
- Budget office must approve amendments

Current Context

- Budget = 1% fee
- Large reserves but can't access
- Lengthy and cumbersome budget amendment process
- Trouble accessing appropriated funds

At a minimum, SPCSA should have access to the full 1.5 percent sponsorship fee.

SPCSA's inability to access its appropriated funds is severely limiting its ability to do its job.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES ACT

Statute

- To establish minimum procedural requirements for the regulation-making and adjudication procedure of all agencies
- Applicability/non-exempt
- Required regulations
- Contested cases

Current Context

- Fuzzy
- Questioning of performance frameworks
- More opportunities for litigation
- Only applies to SPCSA (not other authorizers in state)

SPCSA should pursue an exemption from the APA as the APA will put the SPCSA at a disadvantage compared to other authorizers in the state and will open the SPCSA up to increased litigation, which will be time-consuming and resource intensive.

REGULATORY POWERS

Statute

- Requirement to develop policies and practices in key areas
- SB 509 granted SPCSA express regulatory power and required SPCSA to adopt regulations in additional areas and included extensive detail regarding what must be included in those regulations
- Must also review nationally recognized policies and practices for charter school authorizers

Current Context

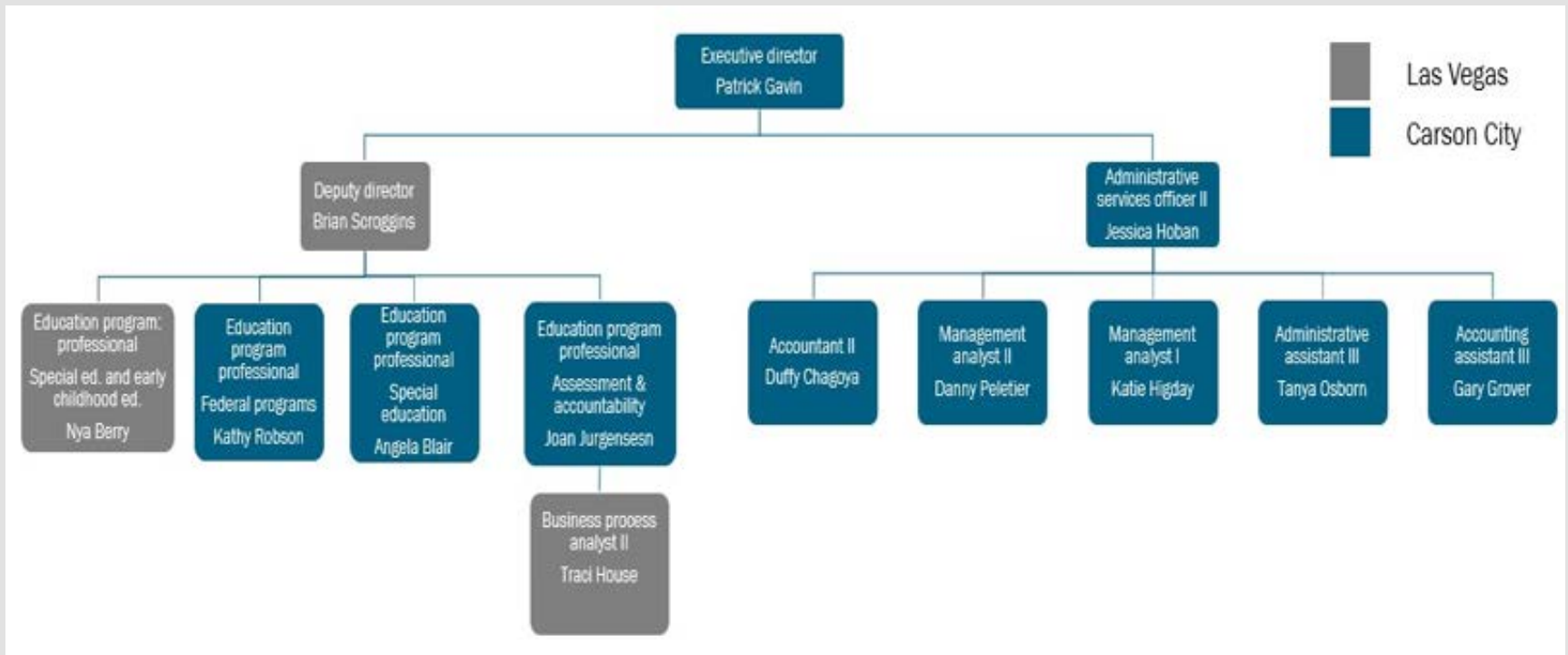
- Applicability of APA
- Level of detail
- Legal counsel

In developing regulations, SPCSA should work closely with a legal counsel and ensure that such regulations are not duplicative, are necessary, and are not too narrowly defined.

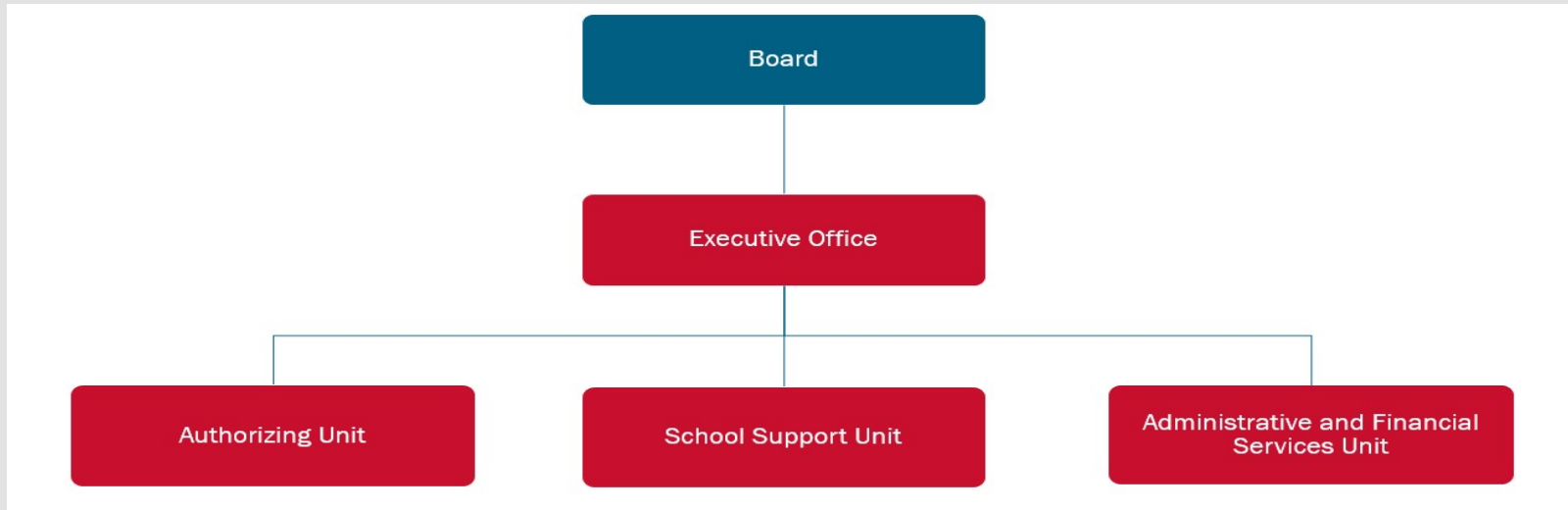
STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Build an authorizing unit with capacity necessary for application review, contracting, monitoring and renewal processes
- Review and reconsider the level and nature of school support, oversight and compliance monitoring
- Build capacity in the Las Vegas office
- Provide all staff with continuing education on charter schools and charter school authorizing

CURRENT ORGANIZATION



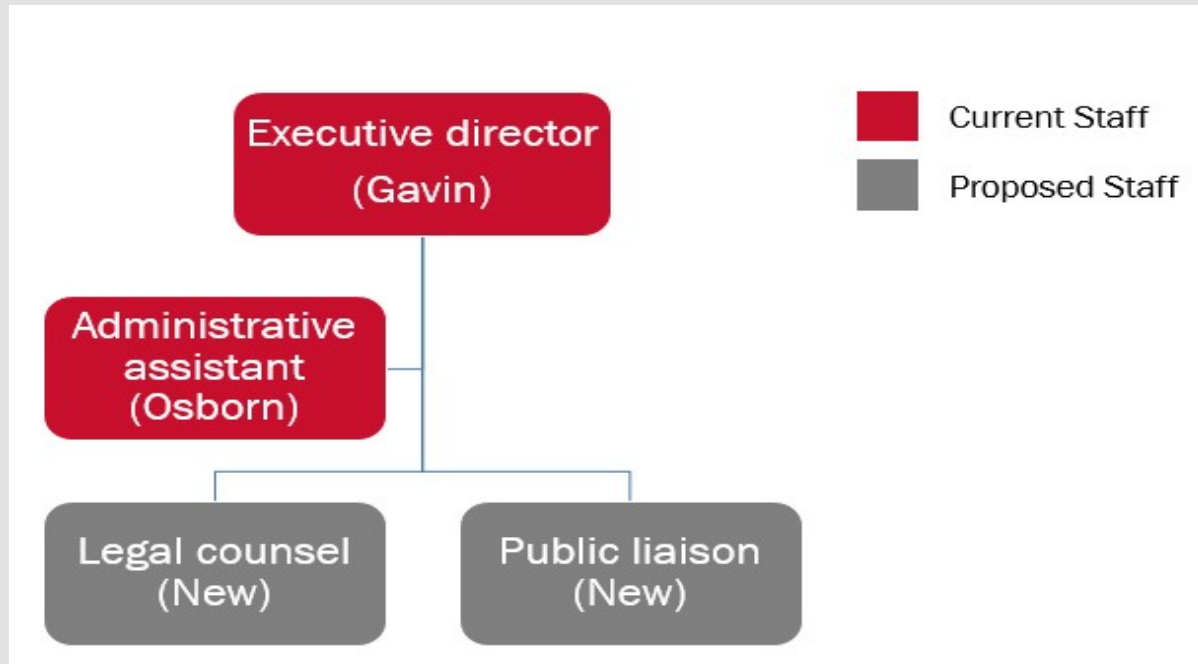
PROPOSED STRUCTURE



The proposed structure is based on four assumptions:

1. The SPCSA needs to substantially increase the resources available for authorizing activities.
2. The portfolio of schools and enrollment will continue to grow.
3. The SPCSA needs to continue to provide LEA services to schools.
4. The increases in staff will be phased in over the next three years.

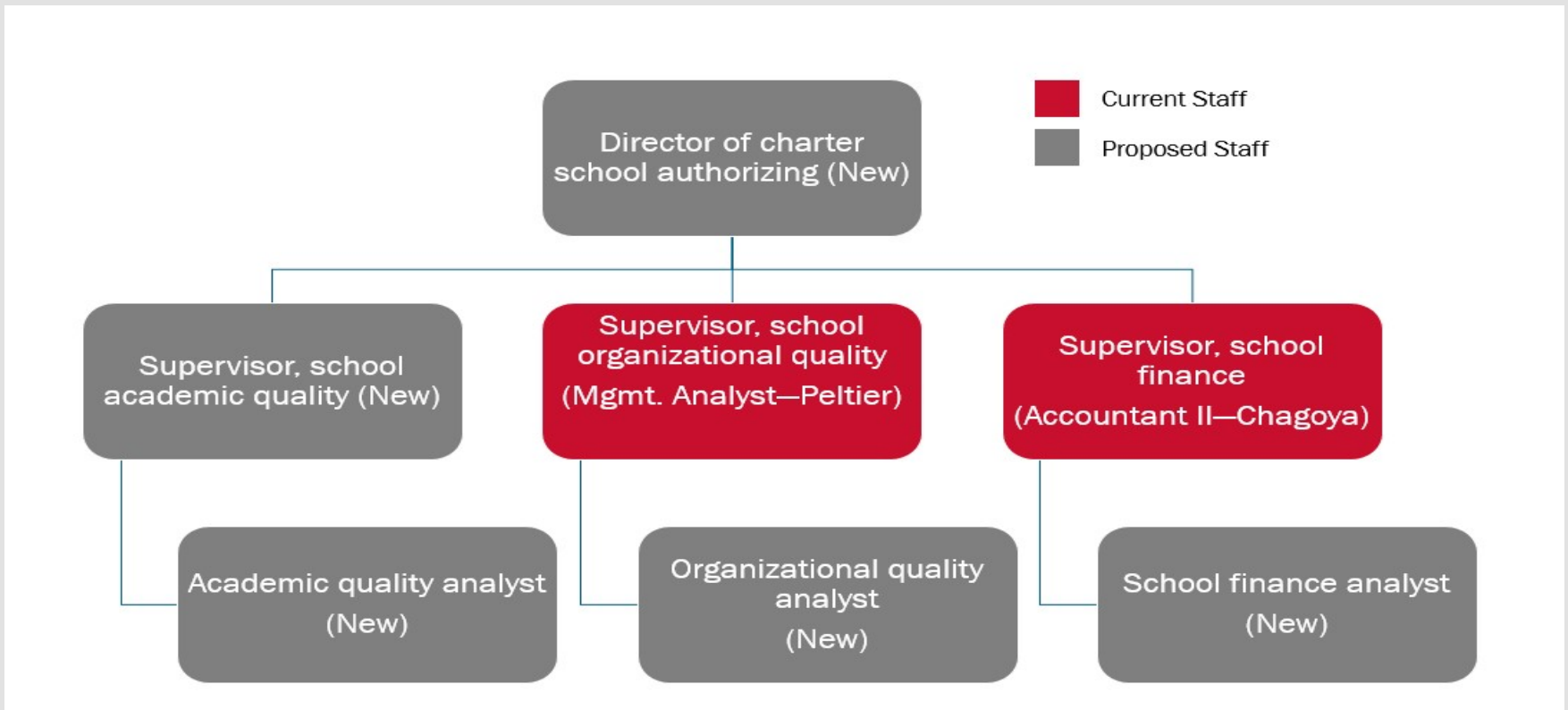
EXECUTIVE OFFICE



Charge:

- Providing leadership for the SPCSA and the Nevada charter school sector
- Managing SPCSA staff and resources
- Ensuring that the SPCSA acts consistent with the law and applicable regulations
- Communicating with stakeholders

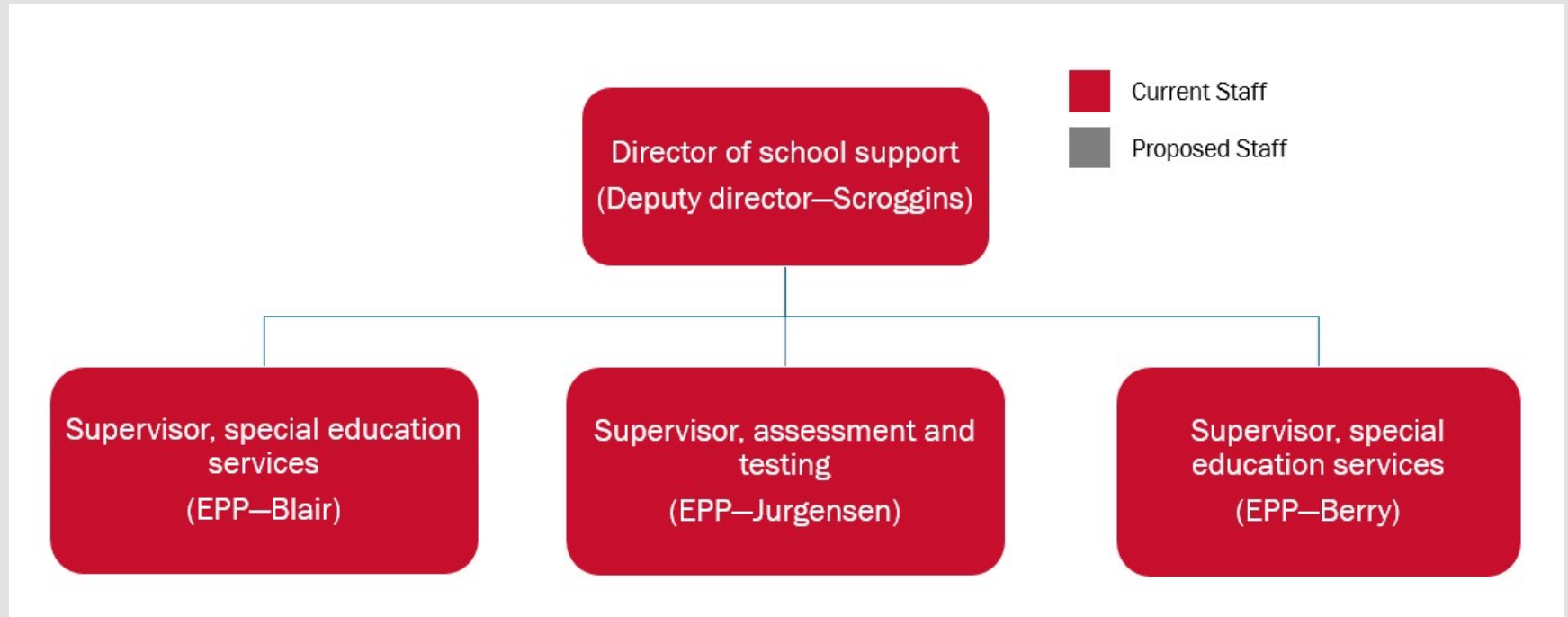
AUTHORIZING UNIT



Charge:

- Ensuring that SPCSA authorizes schools consistent with state law and its own policies
- Application review, contracting, monitoring and renewal

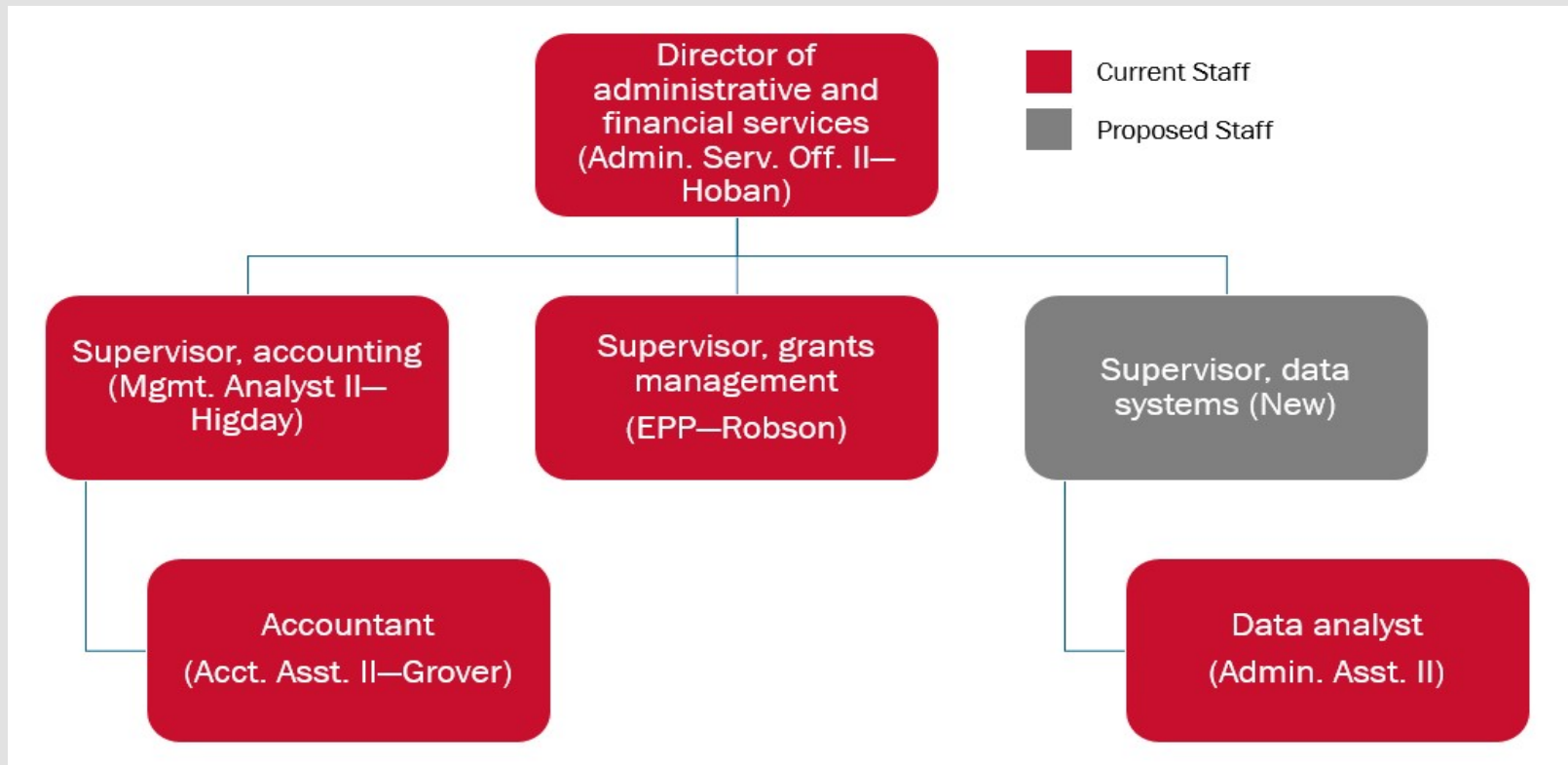
SCHOOL SUPPORT UNIT



Charge:

- Provides supports to school and monitors compliance to fulfill the SPCSA's LEA responsibilities regarding special education, federal programs, assessments, and grants management

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES UNIT



Charge:

- Allocation, disbursement and monitoring of state and federal funds to schools
- Prepares and manages the SPCSA budget
- Manages the SPCSA's Infinite Campus systems

STAFFING BENCHMARKS

State-Wide Authorizers	# of Schools/Campuses	# of Students	Total Staff	Authorizing staff	Non-Authorizing staff
Colorado Charter School Institute	35	14,000	18	~9	~9
Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission*	34	~10,000	18	NA	NA
South Carolina Public Charter School District	32	18,500	20	~12	~8
District of Columbia Public Charter School Board*	126	39,000	34	NA	NA
SPCSA (2015-16)	22/37	25,988	13	~2	~11

- The two authorizers with LEA responsibilities, CO and SC, have substantial non-authorizing staff
- All four have staffing levels that are comparable to what is being proposed for SPCSA

TRANSITION PLAN

Phase 1: Building the SPCSA's leadership capacity

- Director of charter school authorizing
- Supervisor, school academic quality
- Legal counsel

Phase 2: Building authorizing capacity

- Public liaison
- Supervisor, data systems
- Academic quality analyst

Phase 3: Building authorizing depth

- Finance analyst
- Organizational quality analyst

Hire new staff over the next 3 years to match school and enrollment growth.

RECRUITMENT

Two of the new positions merit a national search for strong candidates with authorizing experience:

- Director of charter school authorizing
- Supervisor, school academic quality

For the other new positions, authorizing experience is less important than experience working with schools, the right mindset and a capacity and willingness to learn.

Recommendations

- Positions should not be “classified”
- Need competitive salaries
- Conduct national search
- Consider flexibility on location

STAFF TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- New and incumbent staff need substantial training about charter school authorizing
- Structured orientation program
- NACSA and National Alliance for Public Charter Schools conferences
- NACSA leaders program
- Executive coaching

NACSA's Knowledge Core is a key resource available to SPCSA

QUESTIONS & ASSISTANCE

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