From: National Association of Charter School Authorizers
To: Patrick Gavin
Subject: ICYMI: Storytelling Lessons from Heads of Authorizing Community Meeting in DC
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Heads of Authorizing Offices
March 28, 2016

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Stories Matter

Positive stories inspire. A well-crafted story can help reinforce your messages, lead people to follow you, and shape the outcomes necessary to ensure all kids get the education they deserve. Last week, a number of your peers retreated to Washington, D.C. to help hone their storytelling chops and assist them in becoming more effective leaders.

Together, the group explored the basic elements of storytelling and how to apply these techniques in their work as an authorizer. Most importantly, we strengthened our bonds as a community committed to quality, learning from each of our shared experiences.

For those of you unable to join us, here are a few takeaways to help you better integrate

storytelling into your work as an authorizing leader.

1. **Start building your story bank.** Think about your experiences as an education professional. How can you use these stories to your advantage? Which audiences might be most moved by your story? How can you use your stories to back up your data? How can you leverage these stories in difficult situations?

2. **Practice. Practice. Practice.** Storytelling is a craft, and unless you are a natural born storyteller, practice is essential for effective delivery. Practice the stories in your bank. Think about how you can add descriptors to make your story come alive. Consider how you can tailor your stories to different audiences. But, don't write them down and memorize them. Let them flow from your heart.

3. **Be relatable and engaging.** Find stories that will relate to your audiences. Use your stories to convey that you know what you are talking about and that you can be trusted. Ask yourself what you would want to hear if you put yourself in your audiences' shoes. Show that you care and demonstrate that you want to do the right thing. The more relatable and authentic you appear, the more likely your audiences are to follow you.

As an authorizer, you are often ushering parents, students, teachers, and even your board into uncertain futures. This work can lead many of us to get caught up in our heads. Stories can add the heart to authorizing. Helping families find better options. Doing what is best for the kids in your communities. Showing that there is a brighter future out there. Finding solutions when there appear to be none.

Authorizers do beautiful things every single day to make the world a better place. A few well-crafted stories can help others follow your vision for quality.

Get Involved

We need you. This community only works if you engage in it. Here are a few ways for you to support this group:

- Diversity is a major issue in our field, and we're going to tackle it head on. The Community is putting together a Diversity Working Group to dissect the problem and develop recommendations for the sector.
- What activities can this group engage in that would provide you with the most value? What topics are of the greatest interest to you?
- From serving as a co-chair or on our content committee to serving as a mentor for a new leader, we depend on volunteers to make this community work.

Please contact us at membership@qualitycharters.org if any of these opportunities interest you.

Support Your Team

Looking to support the professional development of your application/petition review team? NACSA will host an interactive workshop on April 28-29 in Nashville on interviewing and other key practices related to a rigorous and thorough application review process. There is no cost to attend

this event, but advanced registration is required.

An independent voice for effective charter school policy and thoughtful charter authorizing practices that lead to great public schools.

National Association of Charter School Authorizers
105 West Adams Street
Suite 1900
Chicago, IL 60603

Add us to your address book

Ph: 312.376.2300

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