



Strengthening North Carolina Charter Schools

Charter School Review Board Discussion



October 6, 2026



Goals and agenda for our time

1

Introduce MGT

Who we are and how we would approach this work.

2

Align on priorities

Where the application, review, interview, decision, and RTO processes could be strengthened and better aligned.

3

Confirm next steps

Discuss how we might work together moving forward.

AGENDA

1

Why this work matters

Start with the opportunity: better-prepared applicants, stronger charter schools, and a clearer experience.

2

How MGT can help

Briefly describe the team and the mix of authorizing, data, school turnaround, policy, and implementation expertise.

3

Where the work could start

Walk through the authorizing lifecycle and the first practical focus areas.

4

Board discussion + next steps

Use the questions to surface priorities and tee up a possible working session.



Stronger starts for stronger charter schools

An effective and efficient front-end authorizing process can help prospective schools understand the bar, help Board members make more consistent decisions, and help the sector move in the same direction.

Better applicants

Founding teams know what evidence, capacity, readiness, and planning the Board expects.

Better charter schools

Schools enter opening year with stronger plans, clearer milestones, and fewer avoidable gaps.

Better experience

Applicants, OCS staff, reviewers, support organizations, and CSRB members work from shared expectations.

CSRB is positioned to lead the charge.

The opportunity is to help all partners “swim in the same direction” by setting a clear quality bar and aligning OCS, reviewers, applicants, schools, legislators, and external partners around it.

Start with practical amendments to the process that make applicants, staff, and board members more effective.



A team that brings authorizing, North Carolina, and implementation experience



Rachel Ksenyak, M.Ed, M.A.

Vice President

Experienced charter school and authorizing expert with 20 years in the field

- Former leader at STRIVE Prep Charter Schools, NACSA, Chicago Public Schools Office of New Schools, and BoardonTrack
- Governance, leadership, capacity, quality frameworks, and strategic planning for charter systems



Charlie Lyons, M.S.A.

Vice President

North Carolina school-improvement and turnaround leader

- Co-founder of DRIVE
- School culture, leadership, and turnaround expertise
- Deep understanding of NC schools and implementation realities
- NC Principal Fellow



Allison Clark, M.S.

Director

North Carolina policy and stakeholder-engagement leader

- Leads engagements with agencies, intermediaries, CMOs, districts, and charter organizations
- Former Director of NC Policy and Engagement at The Hunt Institute
- Deep knowledge of NC's education and policy landscape



The value is the combination: standards, evidence, implementation

MGT brings authorizing experience, but our differentiator is helping translate standards into tools, data routines, facilitation, and implementation support that the state can use.

Authorizing + governance

Application design, rubrics, interview protocols, decision tools, and reviewer and board calibration.

Portfolio + data analysis

Shared fact base for approval, renewal, intervention, improvement, and sector strategy.

School turnaround

Practical experience strengthening low-performing schools and supporting implementation.

Project management + Implementation

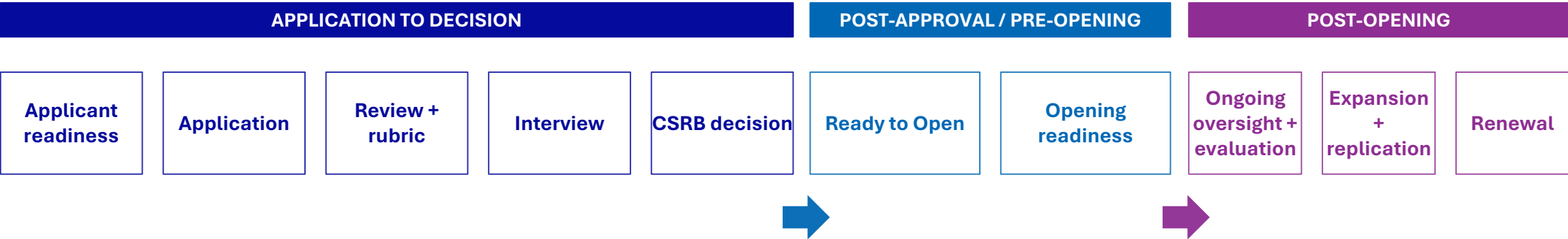
A disciplined process to move from ideas to usable tools, training, and repeatable routines.

Bottom line: MGT can help CSRB set the quality bar and build the practical infrastructure and protocols needed to use it consistently.



The early process affects the full lifecycle

Application, RTO, oversight, expansion, and renewal are connected. Clearer expectations at the front end can make later decisions easier and more consistent.



Key roles	CSRB	OCS / NCDPI	State Board of Education
	Authorization, renewal, and other charter decisions	Application administration, technical assistance, monitoring, and renewal review	Appeal role for specified CSRB decisions

First practical focus: Application → Review → Interview → Decision → Ready to Open



A first phase focused on the application-to-RTO continuum

1 New school application

Clarify what applicants must demonstrate and what evidence reviewers should expect.

2 Review + rubric

Improve criteria for quality, risk, readiness, and consistency across reviewers.

3 Interview process

Refine questions, protocols, and interviewer preparation.

4 Decision-making

Create clearer tools for approval, denial, conditions, or deferral.

5 Ready to Open alignment

Carry approval expectations into Planning Year / RTO milestones.

6 Renewal connection

Over time, connect application, monitoring, renewal, and intervention.

CSRB and OCS own the system. MGT helps turn priorities into tools, training, calibration routines, and a repeatable process the state can use.



A clearer applicant pathway can reduce friction before formal review

The long-term opportunity is to make preparation, application, review, and Ready to Open feel like one coherent path rather than disconnected steps.



This is where applicant-readiness support and CSRB's authorizing process can reinforce one another, without blurring who owns the formal decision.



Use national practice to set the bar; design for North Carolina reality

National authorizing practices

- Application expectations** Clear criteria, transparent timelines, and materials applicants can understand.
- Review quality** Reviewer guidance, interview protocols, and external expertise where useful.
- Accountability decisions** Performance expectations, renewal criteria, revocation criteria, and annual reporting.

North Carolina context

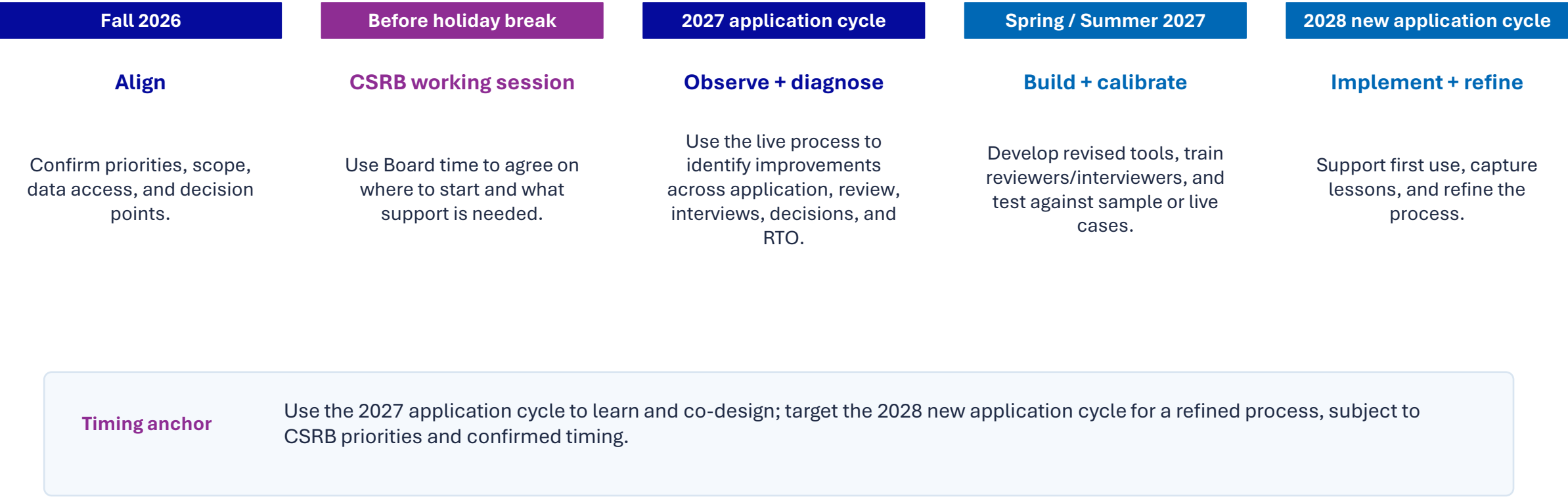
- Governance + capacity** What CSRB and OCS can own, run, and maintain with realistic staffing.
- Current NC process** How changes fit application timing, Planning Year / RTO, data systems, and reporting.
- Local context** Sector dynamics, school realities, and the decisions the Board actually faces.

Adapt, not import

The work is to translate the quality bar into tools, routines, and decisions CSRB/OCS can sustain.



A near-term working session can set up the larger build





Start with the front end, then build the system over time



The first phase should create useful tools now and a foundation for broader authorizing maturity later.



A stronger authorizing process should be informed by what the portfolio is teaching us

The portfolio analysis can give CSRB/OCS a shared fact base for understanding school performance, risk, improvement needs, and sustainability.

Academic performance

Student outcomes and trends

School stage + geography

Age, location, model, and community context

Financial + operational health

Viability, governance, compliance, facilities signals

Risk + improvement potential

Where support, intervention, or accountability may be warranted



Used to inform

Support

Intervention

Renewal

Restructuring / merger

Non-renewal / closure

MGT can connect the authorizing process to the evidence needed for better renewal, intervention, support, and growth decisions.



Questions to guide the discussion

- 1 Which parts of the application, review, interview, decision, and RTO processes offer the greatest opportunity for refinement?
- 2 What applicant pain points should an updated process help reduce or clarify?
- 3 Where could external support be most helpful as CSRB sets priorities and leads the work?

Suggested next step

Schedule a CSRB working session before the holiday break to set priorities, define the first phase, and clarify the support needed.

Appendix

Additional qualifications and partner examples

Relevant experience for this effort

MGT brings authorizing expertise together with data, portfolio strategy, school-improvement implementation, and operator-side experience.

Authorizing + authorizing-adjacent systems

Application templates, rubrics, performance contracts, accountability frameworks, monitoring resources.

- DC Public Charter School Board; Texas Education Agency
- Houston, Midland, Aldine, Judson, Grand Prairie, Beaumont, and Tyler Independent School Districts

Charter associations + support organizations

Market analysis, value propositions, business planning, high-quality seats plans, stakeholder engagement, implementation roadmaps.

- Opportunity 180; Texas Public Charter Schools Association
- Choose to Succeed; City Fund

CMOs + charter operators

Site selection, launch strategy, financial stabilization, five-year modeling, leadership evaluation, recruitment analysis.

- Zeta Charter Schools; Da Vinci RISE High
- Harmony Public Schools; Paul R. Brown Leadership Academy; National CMO partner

Portfolio analysis + planning

Quality Seats Analyses, portfolio planning, dashboards, decision support, and school performance diagnostics.

- Houston ISD; Indianapolis Public Schools
- Grand Prairie, Tyler, and Judson ISDs

Leading funders + policy partners

Convenings, grantee-quality strategy, growth planning, sustainability planning, and implementation support.

- City Fund; Charter School Growth Fund
- Bloomberg Philanthropies; Walton Family Foundation

Staff experience

Firsthand authorizing and operating expertise; governance, data, stakeholder engagement, board/CEO coaching, system development.

- Chicago Public Schools Office of New Schools; NACSA
- STRIVE Prep; 100+ charter CEOs and boards coached

The throughline: MGT pairs authorizing knowledge with data, turnaround, operator, funder, and implementation experience.

Partner Highlight: Paul R. Brown Leadership Academy – NC



**PAUL R. BROWN
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

Our Challenge:

Prior to the IPG partnership with MGT, Paul R. Brown Leadership Academy had experienced **ten years as an “F” school.**

Our Work:

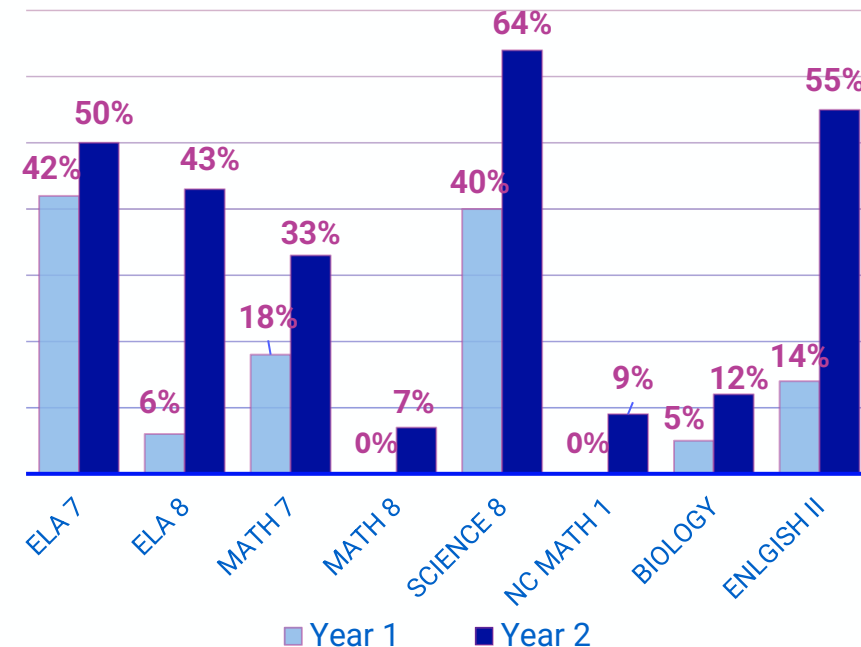
- Provide **professional learning sessions for teachers on foundational practices.**
- Engage in observation cycles to support implementation.
- Facilitate **collaboratively determined set of values** through “This Is Us” Covenant to improve climate and culture.

Jason M. Wray, EdD, Superintendent

“The impact MGT and the Innovative Partnership Grant has had on Paul R. Brown Leadership Academy has really saved our school. Our biggest takeaway is all about alignment. All decisions are evaluated based on whether or not that decision aligns with our Mission Statement. It’s something the entire staff now understands, and we are a much better school because of it.”

Our Impact:

Percentage of Students Proficient at Paul R. Brown on EOC/EOG



Partner Highlight: DC Public Charter School Board



OUR CHALLENGE

The Board needed a practical way to strengthen school accountability while keeping implementation grounded in evidence and stakeholder needs.

OUR WORK

- Supported project management for the accountability work.
- Engaged stakeholders to inform the framework and its rollout.
- Built progress-monitoring and implementation routines to support adoption.



OUR IMPACT

An equitable, evidence-based accountability framework supported by disciplined project management, stakeholder engagement, progress monitoring, and rollout support.

Relevant to Workstream 1

Application design, reviewer calibration, decision tools, accountability, and implementation support.

Partner Highlight: TX System of Great Schools Authorizer Capacity Building



OUR CHALLENGE

Texas districts were building local authorizing capacity across varied contexts and needed consistent tools for applicant review, school selection, and ongoing performance management.

OUR WORK

- Served as SGS Executive Advisor to TEA and districts including Houston, Midland, Aldine, Judson, Grand Prairie, Beaumont, and Tyler ISD.
- Established or strengthened dedicated authorizing functions and review committees.
- Built tools and processes that connected application decisions to performance and portfolio insight.



OUR IMPACT

A repeatable authorizing toolkit spanning review committees, Calls for Quality Schools, application templates, rubrics, performance contracts, accountability frameworks, monitoring, and Quality Seats Analyses.

Relevant to Workstream 1

Application design, reviewer calibration, decision tools, accountability, and implementation support.



Let's Build It Together

We look forward to your input on priorities, leadership, and the path forward for North Carolina's charter sector.

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