



## *Los Angeles Unified School District*

### **Charter Schools Division**

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**Ramón C. Cortines**  
Superintendent

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Executive Director

January 28, 2009

David Montes de Oca  
Coordinator, Office of Charter Schools  
Oakland Unified School District  
1025 Second Avenue, Room 206  
Oakland, CA 94606

Dear Mr. Montes de Oca:

I am writing to express my sincerest appreciation to you and the Oakland Unified School District's Office of Charter Schools for the collaboration we have developed between our offices in the hopes of increasing authorizer quality and student achievement. The National Association of Authorizers has shared that quality charter school authorizing is an innovation, and in the spirit of the California Charter Schools Act, I value your open sharing of promising practices, lessons learned, and resources to enhance our work in Los Angeles.

It is quite evident that you and your team have invested serious effort and consideration into your office redesign and authorizing tools. We seek to uphold a high standard of quality in our work and as I review your tools and reflect on our conversations, I certainly understand from you a strong commitment to such expectations. Elements of your new petition process, for example, have really resonated with us, particularly the manner in which your office works to maintain a consistent and calibrated process that requires applicants to demonstrate their capacity with clarity about the role of your office in the process. In our current drafts of proposed policy and new procedures, we are looking to incorporate similar practices.

Thank you also for the preliminary feedback you have provided on the renewal rubric we are developing. Your insights ranged from specific phrasing in the rubric and rating systems to philosophical matters on being an effective authorizer. Particularly helpful were your comments on the practical implications of using these documents and how they could affect relationships with charter schools.

I look forward to continuing our collaboration, including expanding our work to include colleagues from other authorizing agencies across the state. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to share resources and ideas with the goal of improving our service to all students and the public whom we have the privilege to serve.

Sincerely,

José Cole-Gutiérrez  
Executive Director