



Charter Schools



What's it like to work with F3?

If you have worked with F3 or know us by reputation, you know how easy we are to work with and how laser-focused our attorneys are on your specific goals and unique needs. You can count on F3 to provide you with the most up-to-date information and advice that is specifically tailored to your organization and essential for addressing even the most nuanced and complex charter school issues.

What can F3 solve for you?

With a team of attorneys deeply experienced in all areas of charter school practice, we are ready to assist you with the complex and often novel legal issues specific to charter school formation and operation, ranging from charter petition review to compliance and oversight, and more.

F3 is neither a proponent nor an opponent of charter schools. Rather, we are staunch advocates of excellent public education. However, as California now has more charter schools than any other state, enrolling about ten percent of our public school students—over 600,000 in more than 1,300 charter schools—the importance of experienced counsel in navigating often emerging and unique issues related to charter schools has never been more critical.

As one of the highest-regarded education law firms in California and nationally, F3 is known for assisting school districts and other local educational agencies of every stripe in all areas related to charter schools—including petition review, authorization, facilities, operations, personnel, governance, finances, legal compliance, safety, and supervisory oversight—and our clients count on F3's experience for the guidance they need in each of these areas. Our depth of knowledge regarding charter schools is reflected in our Partner Leslie Lacher's work as co-author/contributor of the updated CSBA guidebook, *Charter Schools: A*



Guide for Governance Teams, which serves as a guide for school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools statewide.

Working toward establishing comprehensive, efficient, and effective charter school petition and renewal processes

The authorization and establishment of a charter school involves a complex petition process with which F3 attorneys are uniquely qualified to assist. We provide direct, hands-on support to our clients in reviewing and drafting petitions, and we evaluate the strength of petitions using tools and metrics that quickly spot anything amiss in the content of the petition and the petition review process itself. From both the perspective of a charter authorizer and a charter operator, a petition has to anticipate everything that can happen in operating a public school. Thus, our detailed toolkits holistically evaluate the proposed charter program from top to bottom. And, when a charter comes up for renewal, we provide support and advice to help that process run smoothly as well.

Providing training on charter school compliance and oversight, legislative changes impacting charter school, and a myriad of other current and emerging topics

Our attorneys regularly offer professional development workshops and in-service training for school administrators, boards of directors, and others on existing laws affecting charter school governance, operations, facilities, oversight, and what may be on the legislative horizon as well.

Helping to ensure charter school adherence to public integrity and transparency laws

California charter schools are held to several of the same legal standards as public school districts and county offices of education, and they must comply with key public integrity and transparency laws, including the Ralph M. Brown Act, California Public Records Act, and laws prohibiting financial and other conflicts of interest under Government Code sections 1090 et seq. and the Political Reform Act of 1974. Charter school governing bodies and officials are considered officers of public schools and, as such, are subject to these laws. We help both charter authorizers and operators to develop and review policies and procedures, coordinate sound and effective practices aligned with these laws, suggest corrective actions when needed, and provide guidance and advice in a variety of other charter matters. We also keep charter authorizers and



schools advised on new legislation or changes to existing laws that may affect their operations, practices, roles, and responsibilities.

Advising on the oversight process

We advise charter authorizers on all components of the charter oversight process. Charter oversight can range significantly from authorizer to authorizer. As a result, we have developed checklists and a comprehensive, “soup to nuts” charter oversight toolkit that is customizable depending on the authorizer’s capacity, staffing, resources, and the number of charter schools it oversees. Our toolkit and checklists are updated annually to capture all legal changes impacting charter authorizers and operators. Utilizing these materials, our attorneys guide charter authorizers through the annual oversight review process from start to finish. In addition to providing guidance and advice in this context, we are also available and ready to roll up our sleeves as a member of the oversight team in monitoring and evaluating charter schools in key compliance areas including governance, the educational program, business/fiscal practices, operations and personnel, facilities, and legal matters. We also help coordinate meetings, compile reports, and assist with the communication and/or enforcement of any necessary corrective actions.

Explore what we’ve done

- Successfully represented the Vallejo City Unified School District before the State Board of Education in connection with an appeal of the District and Solano County Board of Education’s denial of a new charter school petition on the grounds that the district remains under state receivership, where the State Board was interpreting for the first time new language enacted by Assembly Bill 1505
- Successfully negotiated a long-term facilities use agreement for a charter school’s use of a district’s comprehensive school campus, including shared-use athletic facilities, which conferred extensive benefits for both parties – financially and operationally
- Assisted the Wonderful Company LLC – an agricultural business and among the biggest landowners in California – in establishing two charter schools that provides innovative educational opportunities for the children of their agricultural workers and other students

F3 is known for these strengths

- Charter petition review
- Charter petition renewals
- Charter revocations and appeals
- Supervisorial oversight



- Charter school governance
- Legal compliance
- Investigations and audits
- Facilities, including construction, modernization, Proposition 39 requests, facilities use agreements, leases, and more
- Special education issues
- Labor and employment matters
- Workshops and trainings for administrators and boards
- Monitoring of legislative matters

Related Services

- Virtual Learning



F3 Law

Related Professionals



Peter K. Fagen
Partner
San Diego
760.304.6000
pfagen@f3law.com



Leslie R. Lacher
Partner
San Diego
760.304.6031
llacher@f3law.com



Elizabeth B. "Lisa" Mori
Partner
Oakland
510.550.8222
emori@f3law.com



Laurie E. Reynolds
Partner
Oakland
510.550.8202
lreynolds@f3law.com



Tiffany M. Santos
Partner
San Diego
760.304.6013
tsantos@f3law.com



Anne M. Sherlock
Partner
Sacramento
916.604.3070
asherlock@f3law.com



Kathleen Anderson
Partner
Fresno
559.860.4707
kmcdonald@f3law.com



Matejka M. Handley
Associate
Sacramento
916.604.3086
mhandley@f3law.com



Jennifer Nix
Partner
Oakland
510.550.8513
jnix@f3law.com



Lynn Wu
Senior Counsel
Oakland
510.550.8226
lwu@f3law.com



Deaven Rector
Associate
Los Angeles
323.330.6859
drector@f3law.com



Olivia Pacheco Brown
Associate
Fresno
559.860.4717
opachecobrown@f3law.com





F3 Law

Damon Fournier

Associate

Los Angeles

323.330.6837

dfournier@f3law.com

Stephanie Olsen

Associate

Oakland

510.550.8200

solsen@f3law.com