

Connecticut:

Conference Call, 5/2/2007 at 10 am

Participants:

1. Jeanne Allen
2. Kevin Chavous
3. Reggie Beamon
4. Ronelle P. Swagerty - Exec. Dir., Friends of NBFA
<http://www.nbfacademy.org/>
5. Michael Musante
6. Jose Sousa
7. Ray Smart

Notes:

Former Rep. Reggie BEamon has been involved in the charter schools movement since 1995 when he served on the Governor's Commission for School Choice

More often than not, Achievement First is the organization that is consistently trotted out as the shining example for the movement. No other statewide voice for charters exists within the state.

ConnCan has taken a very hands-off approach to this discussion. They will play a very small and yet to be determined role. Statewide, they are powerful because charters are stretched too thin and too stressed to act

A lawsuit will accomplish a few things:

1. increase visibility
2. introduce pressure to the legislature to act
3. ultimately resolve equity issues.

There need to be a group of smart and energetic parents to be the voice and face of the 501 C 3 that will take the lead on this. CER will assist with funding, parent, media and grassroots training and other forms of support where needed.

Providers and Schools must be provided some measure of political cover so that the Connecticut Dept. of Ed. And Legislature doesn't begin retaliating against schools and operators. Planning must take place in stealth in order to provide this cover.

Parents, not schools, are the ones who we seek to empower for this project.

Connecticut is ripe for this effort because:

1. Law emphasizes equitable funding
2. Charters that do well in the state are a natural link to parents
3. Funders view CT as a state that is high on the priority list for many reasons (one of which happens to be its proximity to NY which will increase media exposure)

Why Not Connecticut?

Could be a theme

10-15 charter parents spread across the state would be an effective strategy.

Rallies can be cumbersome, since little to no action usually takes place after they are through. A committed effort by a group of parents this size would resonate with the legislature.

Potential timeline for 2007-2008

- 5/2-6/10: Continue gathering of info. Formalize case and get legal components in place
Flesh out who else should take part
Assign who will bring what to the table when we meet
- 6/11: Tentative meeting in Bridgeport (NBFA has offered their space)
- 6/11-8/30: Gear Up
Find and Develop People; Arguments
Prepare for Filing
- 9/1: Filing?
- 9/2007-12/2007: Maintain issue presence in communities, media, and to other concerned parents
- Jan. 2008: Legislative Push during shortened leg. session where only fiscal matters are to be discussed

How can we make an effective group?

It needs to be founded by CT based people. Ray Smart lends his name to it with no reservation.

Talk to operators to let them know that something is being planned and that their role should be minimal so as to avoid any fallout, but they should still provide some clandestine support.