

National Black Caucus of School Board Members



A Council of the National School Boards Association

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Chair's Message

Greetings. On behalf of the Board Directors and myself, I extend a hearty welcome you to the first publication of "The Bugle" for the current fiscal year. And we believe that you will find it interesting and informative.

As we move into the future, we are keenly aware that, while there have been substantive and positive changes in society, there is much work to do. The achievement gap for Black stu-

dents continues to grow and is compounded by economic decline.

The mission of NBC is focused on closing the achievement gap with remedies that will indeed benefit all students.

In response to this "clarion call" of ensuring equity of resources and outcomes, we have establish goals for 2010 fiscal year of focusing on emerging issues, developing collaborative partnerships and expanding

membership. As a starting point, we have developed a working vision:

"To promote and advance equitable educational access and opportunities for African-American children through school board leadership and active engagement in a national dialogue on educational prob-



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A Message from NSBA's President

As leaders in our communities, we are the chief advocates for public education. And, each one of us brings to our school board a unique set of values, life skills, circumstances, and personal traits that help our boards function effectively.

Now more than ever, school boards are under a great deal of scrutiny, and the authority of the board is constantly being challenged from all sides. As you know, good board members are able to communicate effectively, to analyze and evaluate information, to represent our constituency, to make group decisions, to use resources effectively, and to use the board's authority wisely and ethically.

At our recent NSBA Board of Directors' Retreat, NBC

Chair Ed McCormick shared the Guiding Principles identified by the NBC Board of Directors:

- Eliminate Achievement Gap
- Eliminate Dropout Rate
- Increase High School Graduation Rate
- Encourage and Foster Parental Involvement
- Develop a Respectful School Climate
- Create and Maximize the Pathway to Higher Learning
- Challenge Teachers and Administrators to Achieve Student Learning through high expectations

These are ambitious goals, but they can be attained if we connect with our communities and make sure these values are

a part of our schools' culture.

Education is indeed a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and excellence. My own journey has given me a deep appreciation for the work all of you do.

Together, as school board members, we have the power and the knowledge to create the best team to support our students to achieve the best education possible. If we are to achieve the NSBA mission of "Excellence and Equity in Public Education through School Board Leadership" we will all need to keep learning and keep working together.

Sonny Savoie





**BLACK CAUCUS
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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

lems, issues and concerns in conjunction with NSBA and other national organizations committed to the continued achievement, growth and development for children of color."

Seven guiding principles have also been identified to help us stay the course and identify the outcomes we want for our schools:

- a. Eliminate the Achievement Gap
- b. Eliminate the Dropout Rate
- c. Increase High School Graduation Rate
- d. Create and Maximize the Pathway to Higher Learning
- e. Encourage and Foster Parental Involvement
- f. Develop a Respectful School Climate

g. Challenge Teachers and Administrators to Achieve Student Learning through High Expectations

These are all principles that we can stand behind and work toward.

I am often asked if NBC is needed. My response is a resounding yes, primarily because as already mentioned the achievement gap continues. NBC, as part of NSBA, represents the organizational core value of addressing the needs of all students equitably and fairly. And lastly we know that every initiative that helps a deserving segment of our population has benefited the country. So NBC matters!

Enjoy the publication as well as the holidays and I will see you in Chicago.

Ed McCormick

The National Black Caucus Invites you to Participate on our Committees

Student Achievement Committee (SAC)

The mission of the Black Student Achievement Committee is to identify ways to improve student achievement.

Chair: Mary Blackmon, blackmm@mail.resa.net

Membership Committee (MC)

The mission of the Membership Committee is to maintain and increase membership.

Chair: Ron Price, RJ.Price@hotmail.com

Scholarship Committee (SC)

The mission of the Scholarship Committee is to define and establish guidelines and procedures associated with the scholarship program. Define and establish guidelines for scholarship fundraising activities.

Chair: Paul Chatman, phchat@gmail.com

Policies and Resolutions Committee (PRC)

The mission of the Policies and Resolutions Committee is to present and recommend resolutions for approval by the NBC Board of Directors prior to submission to NSBA Policies and Resolutions Committee.

Chair: George Evans, gevans747@gmail.com

Nominating Committee (NC)

The mission of the Nominations Committee is to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing nominations process and develop the officer election process.

Chair: Kathleen Gordon, kathleen.gordon@ocps.net,
melvine.miller-smith@ocps.net

If you have an interest in serving on any of these committees, please contact the NSBA staff at Black_Caucus@nsba.org

After-School Programs: Keeping Youth Safe After the Bell Rings

The tragic death of 16 year-old high school honor student Derrion Albert in Chicago, which was caught on video and posted on YouTube, has brought national attention to the issue of youth violence. United States Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., who met with public school students and elected officials in Chicago following the incident, stated he was trying to spark “a sustained national conversation” about youth violence.

Mr. Holder who was joined by Education Secretary Arne Duncan, the former head of Chicago Public Schools, also stated that “youth violence is not a Chicago problem anymore than it is a black problem, white problem or a Hispanic problem. It is something that affects communities big and small and people of all races and all colors. It is an American problem.”

Youth violence is on the rise nationwide. After 14 years of decline, cities and across the nation are reporting spikes in crime rates, which many law enforcement officials attribute to decrease federal spending on crime prevention and more juveniles becoming involved in violent crimes.

The after-school hours are the peak time for juvenile crime and when youth are most likely to experiment with alcohol, drugs, and sex. According to the Office of Justice Program U.S. Department of Justice most recent report *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report*, youth were 140% more likely to be victimized between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., the first hour that most students are dismissed from school. In addition, youth were ninety percent (90%) more likely to be violently victimized between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Based on the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s *National Incident-Based Reporting System* (NIBRS) data, sixty-one percent (61%) of all violent crimes (i.e., murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault) committed by youth occur on school days. In fact, one (1) of every five (5) juvenile violent crimes (20%) occurs between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on school days. The rate of juvenile violence between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. is almost six (6) times the rate between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

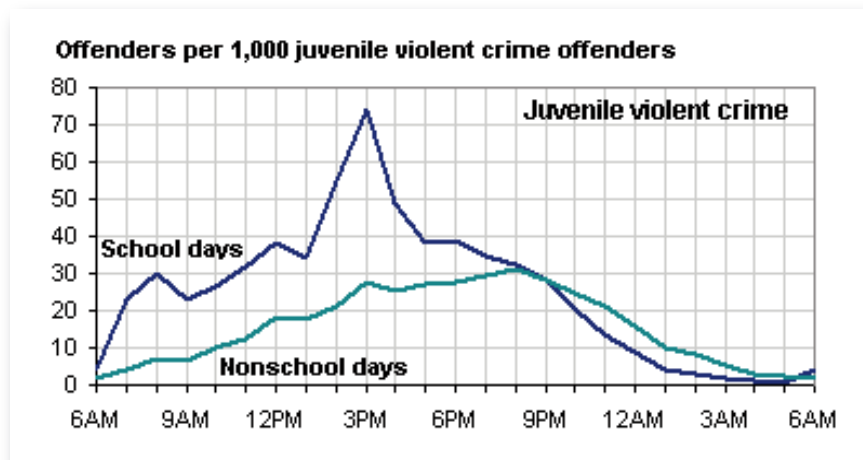
The 2006 *National Report* acknowledged the potential of after-school pro-

grams in reducing juvenile violence. So what exactly are after-school programs? After-school programs are defined as safe, structured learning opportunities that convene regularly for children and youth outside of the regular school day. These programs keep children and youth safe and out of trouble because they meet family needs by providing responsible adult supervision of children during nonschool hours.

They offer more than just a safe haven they provide children and youth with

police association presidents, prosecutors, and crime survivors, reports that quality after-school programs provide “responsible adult supervision, constructive activities, and insulation from deleterious pressure from peers and older children during high-risk hours.”

Studies show that youth at all levels benefits from after-school programs. In fact middle and high school students may often benefit most from these programs. A recent survey of high school students revealed that students who participated in



opportunities to learn new skills such as conflict resolution, leadership, and team building. These skills are critical in helping youth develop in positive ways and to avoid behavior problem. Most experts agree that these programs offer a healthy and positive alternative for children and youth.

Current research demonstrates a link between after-school programs, violence prevention and increased academic achievement. A joint report from the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice entitled *After-School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart*, shows that participants in after-school programs exhibited conflict resolution skills, increased self-confidence, and fewer anti-social behaviors. Programs such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, The BayView Safe Haven and the Quantum Opportunities have all shown positive results in reducing juvenile crime and anti-social behaviors among their participants.

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a national organization of police chiefs, sheriffs,

after-school programs had greater expectations for the future and were more interested in school than their peers.

Yet the reality is that most youth do not have access to after-school programs. Approximately eight million children and youth are left alone and unsupervised every day during the after-school hours. While nine in ten Americans believe that all youth should have access to these programs, two-thirds reports that it is difficult to find programs locally.

After-school hours are prime times for youth to either learn and grow or become victims or perpetrators of juvenile crime. Structured after-school programs can reduce juvenile crime and involvement in risk-taking behaviors by providing youth with constructive activities and opportunities to develop healthy relationships with caring adults. They can serve as important youth violence prevention and intervention strategies.

Aaron Dorsey, MA, is the program manager of the National School Boards Association’s *Extended-Day Learning Opportunities Program*.

Photos of Caucus Members at the 2009 NSBA State Association Presidents' Retreat held in New Orleans



St. Charles Parish (LA) Superintendent Rodney LaFon, Board member Ellis Alexander, Louisiana School Boards Association President and NBC Member Tammy Phelps with Delaware School Boards Association President and NBC Northeast Regional Director George Evans



Louisiana School Boards Association Executive Director and NBC Member Nolton Senegal, Sr.



Louisiana School Boards Association President and NBC Member Tammy Phelps with NSBA President and NBC Member Sonny Savoie



Virgin Islands Board of Education Chairperson and NBC Member Winona A. Hendricks



Ohio School Boards Association President and NBC Secretary-Treasurer Tawana Lynn Keels (far left) listening to Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Member Dale Bayard address NSBA Presidents

Charting a Course for Charter Schools

Thomas Hutton

This year has been a momentous one for charter schools. The Obama administration, the 111th Congress, and the national fiscal crisis all have intensified their attention on charter issues. It remains to be seen whether this will lead to a shift in the relative importance of charter schools and school districts or signal a change in the relationship between them—or both.

Candidate Obama signaled strong support for charter schools, and President Obama's administration is making good on those promises:

- His 2010 budget proposes \$268 million for charter schools, a step on the path of doubling charter funding in four years.
- The proposed rules for dispensing \$48.6 billion in federal stimulus education grants would require states to provide data on the number of charter schools they permitted, how many are currently operating, and how many closed in the past five years and why they closed.
- The proposed rules for \$4.35 billion in Race to the Top (RTTT) grants will take into account the extent to which states have charter school laws that do not limit charter school growth or restrict student enrollment in charters. They also will consider whether states provide charters with equitable funding, including for facilities.

The administration emphasizes increased accountability whenever it voices support for charters overall. RTTT, for example, will also consider whether states have set guidelines for charter authorizing and renewal, as well as whether charter authorizers have a record of closing "ineffective" schools.

We are witnessing a maturing of charter policy, moving beyond the point where charters, by definition, equal reform. The administration's posture on accountability and the fact that some states are removing charters caps may herald a realization that a focus on the number of charter schools misses the point. But focusing instead on the number of *quality* charters is incremental progress, at best.

The measure of success—and the real potential of the charter movement to create change in public education—lies in what effect charters are having on school districts.

Alternate visions

In the Winter 2008 issue of *Education Next*, Andy Smarick, now a fellow at the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, zeroed in on district-charter relations. He identified two viewpoints in the charter movement. The first assumes charter schools provide value by offering more educational opportunities, especially to disadvantaged students, regardless of their impact on districts. The second, which Smarick associates with me, among others, sees charters as a district-improvement strategy.

Both viewpoints are too timid, Smarick argues. Instead, he writes, dynamic systems of continual chartering should replace urban district-based systems altogether. Smarick and others invoke a powerful argument for chartering schools: In some cases, it's just easier to start afresh with a new organization designed to meet the latest challenges and opportunities than to try to change an existing institution to fit them.

But in my view, it stretches this insight too far to suggest that districts, as opposed to particular schools, are the institutions that can and should be weeded out by new charters. While Smarick acknowledges that the charters-as-competition thing hasn't worked out, he turns this into an indictment of a collaborative approach between charter and district. This critique presupposes that charter-district collaboration has been seriously attempted. Unfortunately, charter policy and rhetoric have doomed most attempts from the start.

The long-prevailing market competition model has enjoyed limited successes that are far outweighed by the downsides. The time has come for a civic vision of chartering. On the three biggest charter school issues today—authorizing and oversight, leaving no child behind, and cost—the civic vision has important advantages.

Authorization and oversight

The key oversight question for the civic vision of chartering is the extent to which a state allows entities other than school

districts, like state agencies, universities, mayors, or even private entities, to authorize charter schools.

Commentators routinely declare districts to be terrible authorizers. This assertion pops up in the 2005 book, *Besieged: School Boards and the Future of Education Politics*, edited by William G. Howell. In a 2007 *Washington Post* article on charters, the first of five recommendations that education columnist Jay Mathews made was "Stop letting the school board authorize charter schools." In the pro-charter Center for Education Reform's 2009 "Race to the Top for Charter Schools" ranking and scorecard, the first factor used to grade state charter laws is whether the state allows multiple authorizers. An obliging *Post* editorial that month echoed the drumbeat.

One problem: If the data are to be believed, school board-authorized charters have outperformed those authorized by all other entities. While NAEP data show charter schools marginally underperform relative to traditional schools, those affiliated with districts achieve the best academic results among charters—even when controlling for student characteristics.

A June 2009 report on charter performance in 16 states by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University found that those with multiple authorizers experience significantly lower growth in academic achievement. The authors speculate that the availability of alternative authorizers invites a race to the bottom—i.e., forum shopping for lax accountability.

One explanation could be that alternative authorizers are more likely than school boards to charter schools to serve the most disadvantaged students. But remember, the data purportedly are controlled for demographics, and some look specifically at the *relative* growth in achievement. So another explanation might be that people in school districts actually know a thing or two about running schools.

Similarly, when it comes to caution in granting charters, districts are well-positioned to ask the hardest questions of applicants, including questions about the

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impact on the district as a whole. Having been dealt a situation that sets up charters not as a help or as an outsourcing tool but as competition, it's little wonder some districts are less than wildly enthusiastic.

Exploring this authorizing question should put an end to the selective nuance that has characterized charter debates. If we insist on analytical subtlety on why district-authorized charters appear to do better than charters which are not, we ought not to settle for arguments that insist simply that charters are superior to "failing traditional schools."

Leaving no child behind

There's a tension in our education system between two things we desire: school choice and leaving no child behind. A civic approach to charters would help ensure that the first of these goals contributes to the second.

Do charters underserve students with special needs, especially those with disabilities or English language learners? Are they "cherry-picking" students who are relatively better off? There's evidence of both phenomena, although some studies suggest that only the first problem is widespread.

Not all explanations are sinister. Many charters are small operations that have yet to figure out how to meet their legal obligation to serve all students. And "creaming" can result from the self-selection inherent in charter enrollment. It can also happen when, over time, struggling students return to traditional schools. But these issues raise questions about the effectiveness and role of charters and their relationship to districts.

What about charters that focus specifically on meeting the needs of disadvantaged children? Enshrined in education law and in the conscience of the nation is that "separate but equal" is inherently unequal. But does the inherent nature of that inequality derive not from any educational reality but from the political reality that the educational resources needed to compensate for the disadvantages seldom are forthcoming?

This issue echoes the debate over ability tracking within schools. But might we actually be better able to deliver the most appropriately targeted services to disadvantaged students in what realistically amounts to "segregated" schools specifical-

ly designed to meet their needs?

Either way, if charter schools do not serve representative student populations, we arrive at a question central to the civic vision: Does charter success require the traditional school district to be the final educational safety net for all children? If so, the competition model is weakened.

One defense of the competition model might be that conditions in some traditional schools can't get much worse, so we ought not to let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Another might be that broader charter systems help break down an arbitrary district-based system in which zip code is educational destiny.

Certainly there are districts where things are bad enough that drastic measures are justified, but it would be an extreme case indeed where things really couldn't be made worse. And if we're not to let the perfect be the enemy of the good, one has to question how likely we are to jettison our school district system anytime soon.

These questions come down to an overarching issue: how much we really want private actors deciding these matters. The competition model is more comfortable with privatizing these decisions and relying on market dynamics to protect against the downsides. In the civic vision, the publicly accountable school district ultimately still bears responsibility for all children, and charters are one tool for district-wide change.

Follow the money

The bottom line on charters and districts also has a lot to do with, well, the bottom line. The current fiscal climate is raising issues that were easier to sidestep when money wasn't so tight:

- The unsustainable cost of "parallel school systems" has come up for renewed discussion.
- Converting schools that are slated for closing due to low enrollment to charters as a last resort for keeping them open, has major cost implications.
- Disputes over how state funds students to a charter school intensify when there's not enough money to go around in the first place.

Austerity also has implications for the notion of dynamic charter churn. The theory surely underestimates the costs of

these ongoing openings and closings, especially where weak accountability rules may allow charter organizers to enrich themselves regardless of their academic results.

And the costs go beyond the financial. The problem with the market analogies is that we're talking not about mere business concerns but about civic institutions that form an important part of the social fabric of their communities. One of the worst things we could do is adopt policies that exacerbate educational instability for disadvantaged children.

Perhaps, from a cost perspective, the much-maligned No Child Left Behind Act has charter schools about right. Their best function may be as an intervention when less intense turnaround efforts have failed—or when public perception of local schools needs a boost. But the difference between NCLB's current charter provision, grounded in the competition model, and a new provision true to the civic vision is this: Chartering no longer would be about privatization for its own sake.



Meeting halfway

Striving for the civic vision requires some charter supporters to think through how competitive notions and a jaundiced view of districts undermine the movement's long-term potential.

Charter laws and advocates are not the only ones mired in the competition model, however. District officials and public school advocates still have a way to come, both to address the concerns manifested in support for charter schools, as well as to harness the potential of charters for systemic improvement.

Addressing the concerns will require district leaders to have more urgency about raising the academic bar and closing

achievement gaps. Even if we recognize that systemic reform is a long-term proposition, there's no getting around this hard fact: Much of the public perceives many districts as tolerating mediocrity, making excuses, or simply lacking the capacity to get the job done.

Apart from perceptions, the charter movement presents a challenge to the institutional culture of school districts. That civic institutions are political and rule-bound is a given. Many also are intensely hierarchical, beset by fiefdoms, and too driven by seniority—understandable, but not predestined.

Many districts could benefit from the culture of autonomy, rigorous accountability, and youthful meritocracy that characterize the charter movement at its best. District chartering is one means. So is emulating aspects of charter school culture in traditional schools.

Still, when a school board considering a charter application thinks through what state rules based on the competition model mean, it's not showing a lack of vision. These are matters of public trust, fiduciary duty, and moral obligation to all of the community's children.

This point is central to leaving no child behind. Only one type of charter authorizer—the school district—combines a sole focus on K-12 education with responsibility for serving every child in the community. Under the competition model, an alternative authorizer of six successful schools that leave the majority of children in the community worse off is doing its job. Under the civic vision, you don't have that luxury.

Questions about district capacity are fair game. But in the civic vision, the answer to inadequate local capacity is to improve it. This would have benefits not only for chartering but also for the governance and management of traditional schools—benefits lost when authorizing decisions are taken away from the community. Outside chartering entities might be put to more effective use augmenting and supporting the capacity of district authorizers.

There is a painful irony to the debate over school board authorizing. School boards associations teach that good governance is about the big picture, about setting broad expectations—providing accountability as to the what and why, but



getting out of the business of the how. What does this sound most like? Charter authorizing.

A question of pragmatism

It may be too much to hope that the Obama administration fully embraces the civic vision of charters. And it probably isn't necessary, which should come as a relief to an administration with a strong inclination toward the middle way. The same goes for state officials.

No, the proposition here is a modest one: In keeping with the administration's "whatever works" refrain, policymakers must start to confront the limitations and costs of the competition model, take more careful stock of the considerations the civic vision puts forward, and squarely address both.

Surely federal and state policy should not presume that all, most, or even many school districts bear much similarity to the most dysfunctional among them. Nor should it presume that districts—even severely challenged urban ones—are oblivious or indifferent to the urgency of 21st century educational imperatives. And it cannot afford to equate charters with reform while avoiding the question of their relationship to, and impact on, school districts.

For the charter movement, facing up to the likelihood that districts will continue to do the bulk of the heavy lifting could make for less contentious and more productive relations.

For districts, especially beleaguered systems suffering from weak public confidence, pragmatic if painful concessions to realities—some of them unfair—may be the order of the day. Chartering could play a vital role.

I am convinced that a majority of edu-

cators both in school districts and in charter schools would welcome a reorientation of charter policy more toward the civic vision. This approach sounds less visionary, less glamorous. So be it. Paradoxically, it could be the way charter schools end up having the biggest impact on public education.

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Thomas Hutton is a former NSBA attorney who is en route to Seattle to join the education law practice of Patterson Buchanan Fobes Leitch & Kalzer, P.C., Inc. These opinions are his own.

What School Boards Can Do to Help Students with Asthma Be Ready to Learn

Linda Sheriff, NSBA School Health Programs

In these days of high-stakes testing and gaps in academic achievement, health as a factor in learning may not get the attention it needs. Students who are not feeling well, have not had enough sleep, or are worried about their health will not perform at their highest potential. Asthma is a health issue that directly affects student performance and minority populations and children in urban environments are particularly vulnerable. Nearly 20 percent of non-Hispanic black children under the age of 18 have been told at least once in their lifetime they had asthma and more than 12 percent currently have asthma.

On average, a child with asthma will miss three more days of school each year than a child without asthma. How many more days of school will be missed when a child's asthma is not well-managed or when a child is frequently exposed to mold, pollution, or other irritants that can trigger asthma episodes? What impact does this have on schools and the well-being of these children?

If controlled, asthma will have minimal effect on children diagnosed with this chronic disease. Unfortunately, asthma for many non-Hispanic black children is not always well-managed. Their rates of emergency department visits are 260 percent higher than those of non-Hispanic white children, suggesting that management procedures are not taking place. Children with poorly treated asthma may have disturbed sleep and be tired during the day, less able to concentrate, and distracted by fears about difficult breathing. They may also feel isolated and left out because they feel they cannot fully participate in school activities such as recess and physical education. Children with well-managed asthma are less likely to face these concerns.

Here are some ways schools can help students manage their asthma:

Identify students with asthma. Have policies and procedures to obtain health information about students at the beginning of each school year. Include questions about asthma. Have parents and/or the child's physician fill out and return an asthma action plan if a child has been diagnosed with asthma.

Allow easy access to medications. Most states have laws allowing students to

self-carry asthma medication with written permission. Ensure that your district has a self-carry policy and that it is being implemented. If a child is deemed too young to self-administer medications, make sure that medication is readily available at all times.

Confirm that all schools have a protocol for handling worsening asthma. All staff should be familiar with the emergency procedures and fully prepared to implement them.

Identify, reduce, and eliminate common asthma triggers. Even if a child's asthma is well-managed, certain factors can "trigger" an asthma episode. Triggers include tobacco smoke, vehicle exhaust, mold, pet dander, cockroaches, and dust mites. Policies and practices that improve indoor and outdoor air quality include comprehensive tobacco-free school policies, limits on bus or car idling near school buildings and grounds, checks for molds and other toxins, integrated pest management procedures, and proper ventilation. Viral respiratory infections are a common asthma trigger, so take steps to contain H1N1 (swine) flu. An added benefit: Studies indicate that improved air quality can improve behavior and performance for all students.

Have policies and procedures that enable students with asthma to participate in all activities. If their asthma is controlled, there is no reason for anyone to be left on the sidelines.

Educate staff, parents, and students about asthma. All staff (including bus drivers, janitors, and lunch room monitors as well as teachers and administrative staff) should be trained to recognize asthma symptoms and execute emergency protocols.

Collaborate with staff, families and community members. To effectively manage a student's asthma, there should be open and easy communication between school staff, families, students, and health



care providers. School board members can support policies that increase family and community engagement and make schools a welcoming and supportive environment for the community. Community organizations and businesses are also a good source for supplying resources that may be difficult to find in schools.

NSBA's School Health Programs has compiled materials to make it easier for school board members and other education leaders to make informed policy decisions to support effective asthma management and the well-being of students. On our website, www.nsba.org/schoolhealth, you will find:

- An asthma Web page containing such information as a policy assessment checklist, a communications kit, asthma fact sheets, and more
- Links to asthma tools from other organizations
- A Tobacco Consortium webpage with information and tools on tobacco-free schools
- A *Promising District Practices* website that showcases successful asthma practices from school districts across the country
- A Resource Database containing health information, including sample policies, relevant to school board members.

Other relevant resources are accessible through www.nsba.org/schoolhealth or by accessing the web addresses provided below:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—School Health Index, curriculum development tools, and demographic asthma data: www.cdc.gov/healthyouth
- Environmental Protection Agency—indoor air quality tools and information: www.epa.gov/schools
- American Lung Association—curriculum and asthma facts: www.lungusa.org
- National Association of State Boards of Education—Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn (policy guidance), and database of states' laws relating to asthma: www.nasbe.org/index.php/shs
- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, NIH—sample asthma action plan, physical activity information, and asthma materials: www.hhlbi.nih.gov/about/naepp/index.htm

Introducing the National Black Caucus of School Board Members Board of Directors

Edward McCormick currently serves as Chair of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. He was elected to New York's



Arlington School Board in 1986, and he also serves on the Dutchess BOCES Board. He is a past president of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA). McCormick has worked with the New York State (NYS) United Way, The American Heart Association Dutchess-Ulster Division, where he currently serves as chair, and a member of the boards of Healthquest, Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation, Patterns for Progress, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Association for Senior Citizens. He serves as chair of NYS Education Conference Board and is the NYS Board of Regents Appointee to chair the state-run district Roosevelt on Long Island, N.Y.

McCormick is currently CEO and President of McCormick Management Consulting, which provides broad-based consulting to private, public, and education agencies, and specializes in developing management teams who will execute strong governance.

Ron Price is the Chair-Elect of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. Price joined the Dallas ISD Board in 1997. He has served as first vice-president and has served two terms as secretary of the board. He was elected to the TASB Board in March 1998, has served on several committees, and has participated in Delegate Assembly.



Price, a former instructor at Pearl C. Anderson Learning Center, has served as a community liaison at Paul L. Dunbar Learning Center. He also served as a Specialist II in the Youth Action Center at Madison High School. Price currently serves as the president of the African American School Board Association for the metroplex and president of The National Young School Board Members Caucus.

Price serves as the president of the National Association of African American

School Boards and the president of the Texas Caucus of Black School Board Members. He was selected as one of 20 school board members to participate in a national leadership campaign forum dealing with AIDS/HIV in the nation's minority communities and has received the 2004 Chairman Award from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Tawana Lynn Keels

serves as Secretary/Treasurer of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. Keels is also a member of the Ohio Black Caucus where she serves on the Nominating Committee and Scholarship Committee. Keels is the 2009 President of the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) and serves as Chair of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee. She served as President-Elect of OSBA in 2008 and President of the Southwest Region, OSBA. Keels has represented the State of Ohio as a National School Boards Association (NSBA) Delegate and as a member of NSBA National Nominating Committee and Credentials Committee.



Keels is a member of the Ohio Delegation of the Federal Relations Network and was a guest speaker at the Wisconsin Education State Convention in 2009. She is serving her 12th year on the Princeton City Board of Education in a northern suburb of Cincinnati, and her fourth year on the Board of Directors of Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development.

Keels holds a BSPA from Indiana University with a triple Major in Public Financial Management, Personnel/Labor Relations and Public Policy and Administration. Keels completed graduate course work in the School of Education at the College of Mount Joseph in Cincinnati and is experienced as a substitute business teacher for junior high and high school students. She is a Management Analyst in the Office of Budget and Evaluation in the City Manager's Office, city of Cincinnati. Keels has been recognized for her work in public education. Keels has two children, Karmen, a graduate student at the University of Cincinnati, and Tiffany, a sophomore at Princeton High School.

Mary E. Blackmon is the Central Regional Director of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. She has been an elected member of the Wayne County Regional Educational



Service Agency (Wayne County RESA) since 1981, where she has served in all officer positions. She was an elected member of the Detroit Board of Education from 1978-1988 where she served as Vice President. She has earned the Master Diamond certification from the Michigan Association of School Board's Certified Board Member training program. Blackmon has been a member of the Caucus since the late 1970s, and was instrumental in forming Michigan's Black Caucus of School Board Members.

Blackmon was the Co-Chair of the NBCSBM's Federal Relations Committee where she worked with Caucus members throughout the Central Region to be actively engaged with their elected officials on education issues especially as they relate to the education of African-American students. As Co-Chair of the Federal Relations Committee, she initiated efforts to work with the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) to collaborate with them on their major initiative, Education is a Civil Right. Currently, she chairs the Student Achievement Committee.

Blackmon is the Immediate Past Chair of SEMCOG (Southeast Michigan Council of Governments) where she serves as RESAs educational representative. She has been a presenter at Michigan Association of School Boards, National School Boards Association, Metropolitan Detroit Alliance of Black School Educators (MDABSE), and the Black Caucus, former member of the Wayne County Association of School Board Members, State Board's Administrative Waiver and Social Studies Committees, served on MASB's Federal Relations Network (FRN), Resolutions and Bylaws Conference Committee.

Blackmon is a retired Director of Public Relations from SBC Ameritech (now AT&T). She has served on the Detroit Board of Water Commissioners since 1989

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and has been President since 2003. She is an active member of the Detroit Branch NAACP where she has chaired the student Art/Essay Committee since 1991.

Blackmon is the recipient of numbers community service and education awards. Mrs. Blackmon was the first African American woman to serve as President of the Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program (DAPCEP).

George E. Evans,

Esquire, is the Northeast Regional Director of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. He is a graduate of Delaware State University and Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey School of Law. He is a Delaware attorney in private practice.

Evans has extensive local and national experience serving on school boards. Locally, he is President of the Christina School Board, and has served on this board since its inception in 1981. He has served as President and Vice-President during five previous terms.

At the state level, Evans serves as the President of the Delaware School Boards Association (DSBA). He is Chairman of the DSBA Executive Committee, and past-Chairman of its Legislative Committee.

On the national level, he served as the Northeast Region Director of the National School Boards Association Board of Directors from 1998 to 2005.

For his school board service, Evans has been recognized by both DSBA and NSBA with Distinguish Service Awards. He also is involved with several organizations including as a member of the National Bar Association, President of the Delaware Barristers Association, President of Housing Opportunities of Northern Delaware and Secretary-Treasurer of the Delaware King Memorial Foundation.

Evans is the father of two sons educated in the Christina School District and the University of Delaware.

Paul H. Chatman is the Pacific Regional Director of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. A board member in the Ocean View School District in

Ventura County, he is the 2008-09 Immediate Past President of California School Boards Association.



Chatman has served on the board of trustees for the Ocean View School District since 1989, with 10 years as president. He has been a member of Ventura County Association of School Boards since 1989 and was chairman in 1996.

In 1994, Chatman received the Senate Resolution for Distinguished Community Service; and in 1996 he received the Summit Award for Outstanding Statesman and the Gold Award, Outstanding Public Official. Chatman serves on a number of community organizations, such as Rotary Club of Oxnard Sunrise, Oxnard Police Chief Advisory Committee. He lives in Oxnard and has two grown children, Dennis and Keli, and a granddaughter, Keliyah.

Kathleen "Kat" Gordon

is the Southern Regional Director of the National Black Caucus of School Board Members. A former Orange County educator, Gordon was elected to the school board in November 2000. She has been a resident of Orange County since 1968 and was a librarian and counselor in Orange County for 25 years. She worked full-time in the business world for six years as a licensed mortgage broker, life insurance agent, and a registered securities representative.

Gordon was named the 2007 Teacher of the Year for the New Beginnings Education Center in Osceola County, she received the Distinguished Dove Award for being selected Osceola County's Vocational Teacher of the Year, and she was selected Denn John MS Minority Educator of the Year and later became Osceola County's Ida S. Baker Minority Educator of the Year.

Gordon has been awarded by her church, St. Mark A.M.E., for her civic and social involvement in her community. In 2006, she received the Junior Achievement's Educator of the Year Award. In addition, she received the Humanitarian Award at the 2006 Annual Scholarships and Volunteers Awards Dinner sponsored by Orange County Mayor Richard T. Crotty and the Board of County Commissioners for services on the Head Start Policy Council and Community Action Board.

As a school board member, Gordon has chaired the Master Calendar Committee and the Superintendent's Evaluation Committee, which designed the current template for the evaluation of the superintendent.



In 2005, she earned Board Member Certification from the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) and also served on the FSBA's Board of Directors.

In October 2007, the College of Education at the University of Central Florida named Gordon as one of its "Alumni of the Decades" as part of its 40th anniversary celebration.

On May 16, 2009, Gordon was honored with the General Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr. Four Star Major Award for Community Service. The award was presented by the Central Florida Chapter of the Tuskegee Airman, Inc. and Congressional District Three.

In February 2008, she received an award from the Osceola Classroom Teachers Association for her dedication and service to cultural diversity within Osceola District Schools.

Gordon earned her bachelor's degree in library science from South Carolina State University, her master's degree in guidance and counseling, and her certification in administration and supervision from the University of Central Florida.

Gordon has served on the Governor of Florida State Dropout Task Force. On Feb. 26, 2009, in the name of the President of the United States of America, she was appointed as a member of the Selective Service System Local Board in the State of Florida serving Region II.

Gordon is the widow of the late Reverend James D. Gordon, Jr., and the mother of three children, all of whom graduated from Jones High.

Thelma Reece Parks

was born in Muskogee, Oklahoma and is a Cum Laude graduate of Langston University.

Mrs. Parks earned a Master's degree from the University of Oklahoma with an emphasis in Guidance and a Professional Certificate in Guidance and Counseling from Central State University in Oklahoma. Mrs. Parks was among the first African Americans to teach in the first integrated school in Oklahoma City. In 1971, Mrs. Parks became the first African American Counselor at U. S. Grant School in Oklahoma City, three years before any African American student was admitted. In 1987, she won the District 5 seat on the Oklahoma City Public Schools Board of Education, and served as President of



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Lost Opportunity to Learn

A 50-State Report on the Opportunity to Learn in America Executive Summary

In its *Lost Opportunity* report, the Schott Foundation for Public Education establishes an “initial” metric for determining the Opportunity to Learn for students. The Schott Foundation provides a state-by-state comparison of both academic proficiency (as illustrated by the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient on the eighth grade National Assessment of Educational Progress - NAEP reading exam) and access to high-performing schools (as measured by the Schott Foundation’s Opportunity to Learn Index, or OTLI).

Realizing if the U.S. is to provide every student a true opportunity to learn, the country must first ensure that all students, even the most disadvantaged, have access to the high-quality resources necessary for success. The Schott Foundation used resource models to identify the four core minimum resources that are necessary if a child—regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status—is to have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn:

1. High-quality early childhood education;
2. Highly qualified teachers and instructors in grades K-12;
3. College preparatory curricula that will prepare all youth for college, work, and community; and
4. Equitable instructional resources.

Opportunity to Learn, Nationally

The report’s data indicate that, nationally, students from historically disadvantaged groups have just a 51 percent Opportunity to Learn, when compared to White, non-Latino students, as measured by the OTLI. The effects of these inequities are disproportionately concentrated in a few states. California and New York each account for 15 percent of the nation’s Opportunity to Learn inequity impact. Texas accounts for an additional 12 percent. Illinois, Michigan, and Pennsylvania account for 5 percent each. New York’s share of the economic effect of inequity is nearly three times its percentage of the national population.

Opportunity to Learn, State-by-State

The interstate opportunity gap is stark.

Looking at the 50 states and the District of Columbia, only eight states can be identified as providing both at least a moderately proficient and a high access education for all students. Sixteen states were found to provide a moderately proficient education for most students, but demonstrated low access when it came to providing that education to historically disadvantaged students.

Disturbingly, 17 states were found to provide high-access, low-proficiency education to their students. While these states are to be recognized for breaking down the barriers between White students and Black and Latino students, and between high income students and low-income students, it cannot be missed that these states are doing so at the lowest common denominator. In many cases they provide an equal, yet very inferior education to students. Most disturbing are the nine states at the bottom, which show both low-proficiency and low-access public education ratings. Even with significant disparities in equity, these states are unable to provide even moderate quality education to any significant number of their students.

Moving Forward

The federal government must make access to a high-quality opportunity to learn a federally guaranteed right for every American. We cannot have equity without quality. And we cannot have true quality without real equity. The Lost Opportunity data should serve as an eye-opener for every federal, state and local policymaker and community advocate grappling with decisions on educational priorities.

The federal government should develop and implement a national opportunity to learn resource accountability system to track student access to core educational resources. To support this system, the following recommendations are presented:

- The federal government and community advocates should support, monitor and track states in the adoption and implementation of “Opportunity to Learn plans” for their states.
- The federal government and community advocates should take steps to use data systems to ensure that states and

localities are achieving the highest return on investments from taxpayer dollars. With such data, policymakers, advocates and educators will be equipped with the information necessary to close the opportunity gap and improve public education for all students.

- A similar frame should be used to certify that charter and magnet schools are Opportunity to Learn schools; corporations and local businesses are opportunity to learn businesses; communities are building opportunity to learn environments; and families and parents are fostering opportunity to learn homes.

- Noting that President Obama has set a national goal for the United States to produce the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, advocates called on the President to immediately establish a National Interagency Commission on the Opportunity to Learn to determine the necessary sustained investments, coordination and partnerships to ensure that students in all states have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn by 2020.

- The federal government should establish an Opportunity to Learn Education Trust Fund to provide resources to states to support the implementation of the state’ Opportunity to Learn Resource Equity Plans and stabilize the implementation of the plans during economic down times.

The nation now recognizes the strength of its public schools is directly and inextricably linked to its social, civic and economic strength. The U.S. will be a stronger nation and global citizen—economically and socially—with a better-educated citizenry when all Americans have access to the pathways of success and opportunity. If every child is to have an opportunity for success, every student MUST first receive a true Opportunity to Learn.

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The full Opportunity to Learn report with state-by-state information and other resources can be found at the Schott Foundation for Public Education’s website at www.otlstatereport.org.

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the Board in 1993 when the largest bond issue ever passed in Oklahoma City for school improvement was completed. Two brand new elementary schools were built and one was named the Thelma Reece Parks Elementary School.

Mrs. Parks has been recognized, nationally, for her work. She became the first African American from the State of Oklahoma to serve on the National School Board Association's Board of

Directors. Another "first" came in 2002 when she was elected President of the National Black Caucus of School Board members. She is the recipient of the Oklahoma City NAACP Life Time Achievement Award. Mrs. Parks has been inducted in the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame in Atlanta, GA and is a life member of the National Urban League, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, NAACP, National Sorority of Phi

Delta Kappa and the Nu Arts Association. She has served on many other community boards. Mrs. Parks is a Trustee at Faith Memorial Baptist Church. This life long advocate of Education has always stepped forward for what she believes in, and children are at the top of that list. Her commitment is "Children First!" and service to all mankind.

2010 NSBA Annual Conference National Black Caucus of School Board Members Schedule of Events

****Events at McCormick Place West Convention Center, unless otherwise indicated****

Friday, April 9, 2010

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm *NBC Board of Directors' Meeting* (Hilton Chicago)

Saturday, April 10, 2010

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm *NBC General Session & Business Meeting*
9:00 pm – 12:00 Midnight *Joint Caucuses 30th Anniversary Celebration Event* (Hilton Chicago)

Sunday, April 11, 2010

8:30 am – 9:45 am *NBC Workshop Session*
12:30 pm – 2:00 PM *NBC Luncheon – Geoffrey Canada, keynote* (Hilton Chicago)



Arguments about charter schools abound, but there is no question that business and education are taking a look at some of the innovative practices used in charter schools. **Geoffrey Canada** has become nationally recognized for his pioneering work helping children and families in Harlem and as a passionate advocate for education reform as President and Chief Executive Officer for Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ,) which *The New York Times Magazine* called "one of the most ambitious social experiments of our time." In 1997, the agency launched the Harlem Children's Zone Project, which targets a specific geographic area in Central Harlem with a comprehensive range of services that "combines educational, social and medical services...The objective is to create a safety net woven so tightly that children in the neighborhood just can't slip through." Get inspiration, insight, and ideas from a reformer named one of "America's Best Leaders" by U.S. News and World Report and recently featured as a part of CNN's Black in America II documentary.

Monday, April 12, 2010

10:00 am – 11:00 am *NBC Board of Directors' Meeting*