



**Campaign LEARN Position Statement on Charter Schools and School Funding Reform
February 16, 2010, Appropriations Committee Hearing**

Connecticut's Campaign for Leadership in Education, Achievement, and Reform Now is a collaborative effort of advocacy partners who are committed to real, lasting education reform for our state's most vulnerable student populations.

As individual organizations, we are interested in the well-being and vitality of low-income families and families of color in communities across the state. We recognize that ensuring educational opportunities and outcomes for children is one of the most important leverage points for reducing poverty and addressing persistent social ills.

We therefore support any and all programs and options that provide low-income families and families of color the opportunity to educate their children to a high level. We know that in communities across the state, there are powerful examples of high-performing public schools in which the majority of the students are Black and Latino, come from working class families, and overcome seemingly insurmountable barriers to high education attainments. Some of these schools are district-led neighborhood and magnet schools and many of them are public charter schools. For this reason, we have decided as a coalition to express our clear support for excellent schools of all types—including charter schools—that are closing the achievement gap.

We believe that all public schools should be funded in an equitable and sustainable way. It is our understanding that the way we fund public education in Connecticut is fundamentally flawed and that we will never achieve equity in education if we do not transform school funding.

Last week, Campaign LEARN outlined several policy priorities that we will pursue in 2010. Several of these are directly aligned with what we know will make Connecticut more competitive for the federal grant opportunity, Race to the Top. However, we are committed to the long-term vitality of our communities and our state, and we know that supporting all public schools that are working to close the achievement gap is necessary.

Campaign LEARN is the collaborative initiative of state-wide advocacy organizations committed to real, sustainable education reform for Connecticut's children, including the African American Affairs Commission, Connecticut Association for United Spanish Action, Connecticut Black Alliance for Educational Options, Connecticut Charter School Network, Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now, Connecticut Commission on Children, Connecticut State Conference of NAACP Branches, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, Stamford Multicultural Chamber of Commerce, State of Black Connecticut Alliance