

Report on Education Committee
Fall of 2009 – Spring of 2010

The Education Committee of Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans met approximately twice a month during this period. The guest speakers were Andre Perry, CEO of UNO/Capital One Charters; Kathy Riedlinger, CEO of Lusher; Caroline Roemer Shirley, Executive Director of the La Charter School Association; Jay Altman, CEO of Firstline Schools; Paul Vallas, Superintendent of the RSD, Nash Molpus of the Cowen Institute; Janet Howard of the BGR; Patrick Dobard, assistant to Paul Pastorek; Jim Huger, Chairman of the Board of the Choice Foundation which has the RSD charter for Lafayette Academy.

Larger events were held in the spring with guests Paul Pastorek, Louisiana State Superintendent of Schools and Leslie Jacobs of Educate Now. Caroline Roemer Shirley spoke at an Advocacy Workshop hosted by Citizens for 1.

The year was spent educating the committee on the issues facing charters. It became increasing apparent that the governance model for the Orleans Parish public schools was going to be a large issue; therefore, the overarching goal for Citizens for 1 was to advocate before BESE to extend the Type 5 charters and the RSD until the issue of governance could be researched, formulated and approved by the city.

The legislative session shaped up to have many bills that were anti-charter. After reviewing the bills that the Cowen Institute, the Charter School Association, and DOE supported, the Executive Committee selected 9 for Citizens for 1 to advocate on. These bills are posted on the web-site and a status report is included at the end of this report.

Recommendations for Future Legislative Sessions:

Next year, I believe that Citizens for 1 should review the bills that it feels are important, communicate these bills to our allies, and then be a support group for the La Charter School Association, the Cowen Institute, and the DOE. Without having a lobbyist on the ground in Baton Rouge, it is very difficult to stay on top of what bills are being introduced and when. Another recommendation would be to delegate responsibility for 1 – 2 bills to a member of the committee and let that person become the point person for those bills.

Recommendations for Education Committee during 2010:

In the late summer and early fall of 2010, Citizens will be very involved with

1. advocating before BESE on renewing the Type 5 charters and supporting the RSD, and
2. educating and advocating for the governance model for Orleans Parish Schools that will emerge, which may entail city charter changes and legislative action.

Citizens for 1 Education Committee 2009 - 2010 Education and Advocacy Actions

- September 17: Organizational meeting of the Education Committee
- October 15: Caroline Roemer Shirley spoke to the committee.
- October 22: Attended Orleans Parish School Board Meeting. Ad valorem tax was rolled forward.
- October 29: Paul Vallas spoke with Citizens.
- Nov. 3: Janet Bean and Carol McCall attended private showing of movie about 21st Century Education hosted by Leslie Jacobs.
- Dec. 3: Nash Molpus and Janet Howard spoke on governance.
- Dec. 10: Andre Perry spoke on charter movement.
- January 21: Kathy Riedlinger spoke.
- February 4: Jim Huger, Chairman of the Board of Choice Foundation, spoke to Education Committee.
- February 25: Jay Altman spoke to Education Committee.
- March 4: Paul Pastorek spoke to group of Citizens for 1 Advocates.
- March 8: Attended the Cowen Institute's 2010 report on the State of Public Education in New Orleans. Those who attended were Brenda Brown, Bonnie Conway, Ann Rabin, Janet Bean, Betty Hope.
- March 15: Advocacy Workshop sponsored by Citizens for 1.
- March 16: Patrick Dobard, assistant to Paul Pasterok, reviewed the Superintendent's legislative agenda with the Education Committee.
- March 23: John Martin, Bonnie Conway, Brucie Rafferty and Janet Bean attended meeting of Mayor-Elect Mitch Landrieu's Education Task Force at Sophie B. Wright.
- March 29: Carol McCall, Betty Hope, Bonnie Conway, John Martin and Janet Bean attended the RSD Oversight Committee of BESE at McDonough 35. The meeting was taken over by outspoken opponents of charters.
- March 30: Education Committee reviews and finalizes position statement on education, reviews bills, and strategizes on advocacy in legislature and BESE.

- April 7: HB 1093 by Rep. Fannin was heard before the House Education Committee. Citizens for 1 spoke in opposition as did the Cowen Institute and the RSD. The bill passed out of committee without dissent. Bonnie Conway, John Martin and Janet Bean were in attendance.
- Brucie Rafferty, Janet Bean, Betty Hope, Bonnie Conway and John Martin attended at meeting of the Charter School Association at Warren Easton to hear about the legislative session.
- April 8: Leslie Jacobs spoke to Citizens for 1 Education Advocates.
- April 12: Citizens testified before BESE meeting to determine legislative agenda. Citizens testified against HB 1093 and BESE agreed to oppose bill.
- April 13: Executive Committee approves and prioritizes education bills for
- April 14: Citizens testified before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee in opposition to SB 492. John Martin and Janet Bean represented Citizens for 1. Bill passed out of committee without dissent.
- May 5: Citizens testified before House Education Committee in support of HB 420. Stephanie Haynes, Beth Sheridan, Laura Politz and Janet Bean represented Citizens for 1.
- May 10: Citizens for 1 testified before the Senate Retirement Committee in opposition to SB 694. Ruthie Frierson, Betty Hope, Bonnie Conway, Carol McCall and Janet Bean represented Citizens. The committee did not vote to pass the bill out of committee.
- May 19: Charter School Day at the legislature and BESE RSD Committee meeting. Mary Looney, Mimi Smith, Ruthie Frierson, John Martin, Bonnie Conway, Janet Bean, Ann Rabin, Sara Gaines, Margo Phelps, and Carol McCall represented Cf1. Citizens testified at BESE in support of the RSD and RSD charters.

Status of Bills on May 24, 2010

HB 210/SB 584:	Statewide Facilities Authority	Assigned to House Ed
HB 420	Local revenues per pupil	Passed House and assigned to Senate Ed.
HB 658/SB 694	TRSL Mandatory	Assigned to House Retirement. Companion bill failed to pass Senate Retirement
HB 729	Sale of Surplus Property	Passed House, Assigned to Senate Ed
HB 950	RSD to Borrow	On hold
HB 1093	RSD Capital Legislative Oversight	Passed Senate Gov't Affairs, amended on Senate Floor, working out details
SB 74	Charter Advisory Council	Assigned to Sen. Ed./ On hold
SB 274	TRSL Voluntary	Pending House Referral
SB 492	Financial Disclosure	Passed Senate, Assigned to House Governmental Affairs
SB 694/HB 658	TRSL Mandatory	Failed to pass Senate Retirement Committee