



THE INDEPENDENT VOICE  
OF PARENTS AND  
FAMILIES ACROSS THE  
UNITED STATES

Statement of opposition to AB1316 (O'Donnell)  
Legislature

California State  
Honorable Assembly Members  
California State Capitol  
10th and L Streets  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 324-0333

The National Parents Union stands in strong and unified solidarity with families throughout the state of California in OPPOSITION to Assembly Bill 1316 (O'Donnell). At a time when we all need to be laser focused on building an equity-infused educational recovery for all students, AB1316 is yet another cheap shot in the never-ending charter school wars that put a special interest groups narrow focus on maintaining a death-grip of control on every dime of education funding in California over the best interest of our children and getting them the outcomes they deserve. As parents and taxpayers, we say, "Enough!"

This bill would fundamentally destroy the already limited access and opportunity to high quality education options for children and families and erode services for hundreds and thousands of California's **most vulnerable, Black, Brown, and Disabled, disadvantaged** students.

Parents are the most credible source of information and authority regarding their children's needs. The parents and families served by public charter schools in California have **chosen** these schools with the well-informed intention of affording their children an education where they succeed, thrive, and that supports their students various modalities of learning.

Black, Brown, and Disabled students that attend high quality public charter schools are able to make academic and social emotional gains at a much greater rate than their non-attending public charter school counterparts. Many of these students rely on personalized learning models to support their diverse learning needs.

The State of California should recognize and respect its duty and obligation to innovate. The Charter Schools Act gives rise to this duty and obligation by affirming that California must "provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure" for the purpose of increased learning opportunities, innovation, and expanded choices through a performance-based accountability system (Education Code section 47601). AB 1316 would **fundamentally damage** ALL of California's public charter schools harming the children and families who choose them.

The State of California should equally offer respected, meaningful, effective collaboration with parents in decision making processes about our K-12 school aged children. In fact, the legislature finds and declares that "It is essential to our democratic form of government that parents and guardians of school age children attending public schools and other citizens participate in improving public education institutions. Specifically, involving parents and guardians of pupils in the education process is fundamental to a healthy system of public education." (California Education code 51100 a)

It is time that elected representatives hear us, uphold our constitutional rights, freedoms and liberties, and ensure our equal protections under the law. Our children across the state of California deserve to attend schools that are culturally congruent, welcoming to the diversity they bring, offer a rigorous education that supports their modalities of learning, and operate with high expectations for them to learn and thrive.

We are not alone in our stance. In a recent poll 71% of Black registered voters in CA say they support charter schools. Fortune released the poll with an equity coalition that includes NAN (National Action Network) and Black Greek letter organizations.

<https://blackvoicenews.com/2021/05/11/poll-reveals-what-black-families-really-want-politicians-need-to-listen/>

The most socioeconomically disadvantaged student groups in California are Latino 80% and Black 75%. 1 in 5 students are English Language Learners. In 2017, 306,545 Latino public school students were enrolled in California's public charter schools. These disproportionately underserved students and families should have the opportunity to choose a quality educational environment that serves them best.

[http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/2098/unidosus\\_californiadu\\_allanguage\\_fastfacts.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/2098/unidosus_californiadu_allanguage_fastfacts.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

California's charter schools provide a quality, meaningful and accountable educational opportunity for **many of California's disadvantaged students**. These students and many others were served by the flexibility of charter schools during the pandemic. Charter schools were among the first public schools to transition to distance learning and also led the education community to provide critical community support such as student meals. **This type of service should be replicated and commended, NOT hindered and destroyed!** AB 1316 is the WRONG approach. It is aimed at disallowing California's Black, Brown, Special Needs, low income, and disparate student populations an opportunity to achieve academically and attempts to reroute them back into the school environments parents and families **did NOT**

**choose.** If the State of California in concert with the nation is serious about eradicating systemic racism and oppression, this is not the way forward

Our children deserve to learn and thrive by having a quality education that **we as parents choose.** For these reasons we respectfully **OPPOSE AB 1316.**

**National Parents Union**

<https://nationalparentsunion.org/>

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