

## ***The Coalition for Public Education Speaks Out Against Charter Schools***



***Junebug Jabbo Jones asks this simple question to the Charter School-loving Black and Latino Parents: “If Charter Schools are so great, why aren’t white parents asking for them?”***

As last spring’s state exams indicated, with very few exceptions (most of whom were mere test prep factories)- charter schools are no better than traditional public schools. Their performance had to disappoint every charter school parent, teacher, and administrator. Given the poor outcomes, charter school parents should demand and expect a renewed focus on improving learning for already-enrolled students.

***But these schools are not about educating our children. They exist only to maximize the political influence - and the associated profits of their investors. » » » »***

So... these privately-owned, “public schools” can declare a holiday -forcing their unwilling staff, parents, and students to parade across the Brooklyn Bridge for a media photo-op. Privatization, whether of prisons, healthcare, social security, or education has been shown to be a pro-business gimmick that is against the broader public interest.

The protesters here today are well meaning but unwitting pawns of the charter school operators. Some parents, frustrated with the failing system, see charters as the only alternative. They fight to get their children in, and aggressively oppose anyone critical of the policy.

The counterfeit “parent associations” and “students first” groups are management-financed, management-run, and management-controlled. They take no direction from parents, who have no say in setting the agenda or priorities. These groups are replicas of the “company unions,” they prevent real parent involvement

*The Coalition for Public Education (CPE/CEP)* is here today in support of public education and in opposition to charter school expansion and co-location programs. We support policies that require private, for-profit and nonprofit corporations to identify, develop and finance their own facilities. Charter schools should pay rent for the use of publicly owned buildings – in the same way that the Mets pay for using Citifield or the USTA rents Louis Armstrong tennis Stadium.

Charter schools are well financed, highly-resourced corporations. They have the ability, and the willingness to find and operate facilities to pay for their operations. Of course, they will also seek and accept corporate welfare in the form of rent-free space. Many neighborhoods, for example have recently-closed private or parochial schools that are specifically designed for school use. These corporations are capable of identifying their own facilities.

Charter School expansion – was originally sold as a type of education laboratory; where new teaching methods could be developed for incorporation into the existing system of public schools. Under Bloomberg (and, regrettably, U.S. Education “Czar” Arnie Duncan,) charters have become a tool in the battle against teacher unions. They also serve to divert scarce public funds into the hands of profiteering charter school corporations. A new form of political patronage; these school charters are often used to reward go along, get along politicians who follow the orders of the corrupt political machine.

**The Coalition for Public Education** supports efforts to get independent analysis of the true performance, the costs and benefits of charter schools. Such an analysis cannot be done under the biased watch of the Bloomberg administration.

The Coalition hereby calls for the new Mayor, whomever that may be, to immediately implement a moratorium on any new charter schools and perform an open, inclusive, transparent analysis of the impact of charter schools on the education of our children.

We call on charter school parents to sit down with us in order to respectfully discuss our different views on education, and develop a consensus-reached way forward to a stronger more democratic parent-teacher-student led public school system.