



Foundation for
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State Legislators Who Refused to Expand Charter Schools Themselves Benefitted from K-12 School Choice

In the aftermath of this week's failed attempt by the New York State Legislature to strengthen the state's charter-school law and better compete for millions in federal education funds, a survey of state legislators found that Democrats responsible for killing the expansion of choices in public education were themselves beneficiaries of school choice.

In the state Senate, a majority (52 percent) of Democrats benefitted from school choice options by attending a private or public exam school. Additionally, 83 percent of Senate Democrats on the Labor Committee and 75 percent of Democrats on the Education Committee benefitted from school choice options.

In the Assembly, almost half (46 percent) of Democrats benefitted from similar school-choice options. Democrats on the Assembly Labor Committee participated in school choice at a rate of 70 percent.

The chairs of both the Assembly and Senate education committees were also the beneficiaries of school choice.

Despite nearly half (48 percent) of the Democratic majorities of the Senate and Assembly having personally benefitted from school choice options, the legislature refused to back the Governor's proposal to lift the charter cap on the number of charter schools, schools that typically serve the neediest students.

"Democratic legislators had the privilege to choose a private school education, including at some of the most elite schools in the country," said B. Jason Brooks, Director of Research for the Foundation for Education Reform & Accountability, which conducted the survey. "The refusal this week to allow even just a few more public school choice options to low-income is hypocritical," he said.

Brooks pointed out that the Race to the Top program is President Obama's signature education initiative that included incentives for states to lift charter school caps; yet, this agenda was ironically spurned by the President's fellow Democrats here in New York who were beneficiaries of school choice.

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Attachments:

- Survey Results of Types of Schools NYS Legislators Attended
- Types of Schools NYS Legislators Attended, Their Votes on Creating and Expanding Public Charter Schools and Relevant Committee Membership

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