

## CHARTERSWORK

### NAACP BOARD LETTER SIGNEE STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

*“Over 60 years ago my father joined with numerous parents to stand with the NAACP and fight for all African American students stuck in a separate, broken education system. Brown v. Board of Education created better public education options for African American students, and made it the law of the land that neither skin color, socioeconomic status, nor geography should determine the quality of education a child receives. I am eternally grateful to the NAACP for their leadership on this case and for giving African American families the opportunity to send their children to the best schools that would help them to succeed. But I am troubled that in 2016, the NAACP would oppose placing better educational choices in the hands of families across the country. Charter public schools present African American families, especially those in low-income communities, with the choice to choose a public option that is best for their child. We must protect this choice.”*

**- Cheryl Brown Henderson**, Founding President and CEO, Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research

*“We all know there is no perfect system—traditional, charter, or private schools. We have seen issues arise in all sectors. All schools that fail to produce excellent educational outcomes should be held accountable for their actions. But as the letter explains, a blanket moratorium on charter schools would limit students’ access to some of the best schools and deny parents the opportunity to make decisions about what’s best for their children.*

*“What we want is for parents to be able to choose the best possible option for their children. There should not be a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach in education, and parents often want the option to select the schools that best meet their needs and set their children up for success. And even more importantly, our studies have shown that black parents overwhelmingly support charter schools and being able to choose the best option for their children.*

*“As policymakers and other groups seek to reform education, some students (namely, low-income students of color) are still languishing in failing schools. Waiting to address these issues means that these students are falling farther behind in the midst of all the changes. But we should be clear that creating options does not mean that we don’t work to reform all schools. Providing educational options, such as charters, helps ensure that all families have the opportunity to gain access to a high- quality education, no matter their zip code.”*

**- Dr. Michael Lomax**, CEO, United Negro College Fund

*“I truly believe the low quality of K-12 education provided to poor children today, especially poor children of color, is the civil rights issue of our time. Without a quality education many of these children will remain doomed to a life of poverty, hopelessness and despair that limit their dreams and aspirations and eradicate their chances for a better future and exit out of poverty. We cannot afford to limit any opportunities for these youth to receive a quality K-12 education. This includes public schools, charter schools, private schools or any other options truly designed to promote and provide a quality education to our children. A quality education was my only exit out of poverty. It remains the same for the overwhelming majority of low income children still today. Poor parents and children need more options by which they can achieve a quality education and escape a future of poverty, not fewer options.”*

- **George Parker**, Former President, Washington Teacher's Union

*"For generations, the NAACP has been at the forefront of the fight for political, educational, social and economic equality for Black Americans. This is why their resolution calling for a nationwide moratorium on charter schools, many of which serve the same Black families the NAACP is fighting to protect, is inexplicable.*

*"The truth is, banning new charter schools will only widen the achievement gap for low-income and working-class Black children by reducing the number of high-quality educational options available and increasing the number of names on existing waiting lists. As a result, there will yet again, be another generation of Black children who will not be prepared to go to, through and beyond college to become economically independent adults.*

*"Our children deserve better. And that includes giving low-income and working-class Black families the choice to access high-quality educational options whether they are traditional district, private or charter public schools. It is my sincere hope that the NAACP board will reexamine the moratorium and opt to work with us to ensure all of our children have great schools and great teachers in the communities they live."*

- **Jacqueline Cooper**, President, Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO)

*"I've met more Blacks (and Latinos) who have attended or graduated from Morehouse, Yale, Vassar, MIT, USC, UCLA, and many other colleges as a result of my work as a charter school leader than when I worked in the traditional system. The good news is that the district's students are doing better, in part, as a result of district and charter school collaboration."*

- **Johnathan Williams**, Founder, The Accelerated Schools, Los Angeles

*"I have no doubt that the people who are behind the NAACP resolution against charter schools are as concerned as I am about the tragic and unacceptable non-education of thousands of Black children. But I stand with those who are making an urgent priority of educating children from low-income and working-class families – those whom the current system so often failed. Our poorest children are being denied a high-quality education in many places in this country. While their futures are being snuffed out, too many of us who are able to access high-quality options for our own children are questioning the idea of empowering poor families by making these very same options available to them."*

- **Dr. Howard Fuller**, Founder and Chair Emeritus, Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO), and Former Superintendent, Milwaukee Public Schools

*"Parents want the best educational options for their children...whether they be in charter public schools or traditional district public schools. Innovative school models that offer personalized learning are creating great opportunities for students, and are available in both types of schools. Parents must have access to these high-performing schools, whatever the governance model may be."*

- **Deborah McGriff**, Managing Partner, NewSchools Venture Fund

*"I am committed to children. BAEO is committed to children. Those who put children first are focused on school choice. Those who are not are committed to the status quo. BAEO represents self-determination. I support self-determination. Those who are committed to the status quo want zip codes and the racism*

*that created segregation. I support our children, self-determination, and our parents' right to choose what is best for our kids. This is why I signed and will continue to fight."*

- **Dr. Steve Perry**, Founder and Principal, Capital Preparatory Magnet School in Hartford, Connecticut

*"The National Alliance stands with the hundreds of thousands of parents of Black children, nationwide, who have chosen or are demanding charter public schools in their communities. The gap in opportunities that too many students face because of where they live or how much money their families have is what supporters of public education should be fighting to close, together, not preventing quality schools from opening to reach more students. We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with BAEO, charter school families, and community leaders to engage in a deeper conversation about the role of charter public schools in the Black community."*

- **Ronald Rice**, Former Newark City Councilman, and Senior Director of Government Relations, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools