

# Community Engagement Toolkit for Charter Public School Leaders



**Thank you!**

**Thanks for participating in CCSA's inaugural Rattle the Capitol action during the week of January 16.**

As a school leader, you play a vital role in educating your school community about emergent public policy issues that impact the operation and sustainability of your school.

## **What's included in this Rattle the Capitol Toolkit?**

This toolkit is intended to provide you with the support you need to get the word out to your staff, teachers, parents, and students about what's at stake on January 16 and how they can make a difference.

## **Why Rattle the Capitol?**

CCSA's Rattle the Capitol action is designed to mobilize a groundswell of statewide grassroots activity in opposition to AB 1478 (Reggie Jones-Sawyer).

Legislators' votes often hinge on how much local pressure they feel from their constituents to support or oppose legislation. The more phone calls and emails our community can generate, the greater our odds become at passing legislation that will help guard our movement against future policy threats in the area of charter school governance and transparency.

We can't do it without you!

On January 9th, powerful special interest groups in the state capitol killed SB 806 (Glazer), the CCSA-sponsored bill that would have established consistent rules for decision-making in charter public schools and banned for-profit charters.

Now, CTA is doubling down on the negative narrative about charter schools, and pushing for a floor vote on AB 1478 (Jones – Sawyer), which is a calculated effort to dismantle charter school governing boards by applying an unworkable application of the Brown Act to charters, and to starve charters of the few financial tools they have by imposing Government Code 1090.

That's why we're shifting our focus for Rattle the Capitol on January 16th FROM supporting SB 806 TO opposing AB 1478.

## **How can you and your school communities participate?**

### **1. Spread the Word**

Invite parents and teachers to learn more by using this toolkit, which includes sample emails, newsletter/social media posts.

## 2. Rattle the Capitol

Take action by texting “CCSA” to 52886 or click here:  
<http://p2a.co/charters>

### Where can I learn more?

- Visit the Rattle the Capitol website <http://info.ccsa.org/rtc>.
- Download the AB 1478 (Jones-Sawyer) fact sheet.
- Download the Rattle the Capitol frequently asked questions.
- Contact Laura Kerr at CCSA by emailing [lkerr@ccsa.org](mailto:lkerr@ccsa.org) or calling (916) 230-7496.

### Sample Email 1

Subject: Set the Record Straight, Today!

Message:

Hello X,

Powerful special interests want to add bureaucratic restrictions and red tape that gets between charter public school students, teachers and learning.

We all know a “one-size fits all” approach doesn’t work when it comes to education. Our schools offer the personal attention, creativity and passionate teaching that kids need to learn. Charter public schools are free from bureaucratic restrictions and red tape that gets between students, teachers and learning. In exchange for this flexibility, our schools are held to high performance standards.

Charter public schools put the needs of students first, not the interests of the bureaucracy. We do not need another layer of unworkable bureaucracy!

Learn more: <http://p2a.co/charters>.

Together we can make a difference!

Sincerely,

XX

### Sample Email 2

Subject: Set the Record Straight, Today!

Message:

Hello X,

Charter public schools put the needs of students first, not the interests of the bureaucracy.

The California State Assembly is gearing up to vote on that will impact our school and the families we serve. Powerful special interests want to add bureaucratic restrictions and red tape that gets between charter public school students, teachers and learning.

We don't want them to make decisions based on dishonest rhetoric coming from these powerful special interests.

[Click here to learn how you can set the record straight today!](#)

Together we can make a difference!

Sincerely,

XX

## **Sample Newsletter Article**

Powerful special interests want to add bureaucratic restrictions and red tape that gets between charter public school students, teachers and learning.

The California State Assembly is gearing up to vote on legislation that will impact our school and the families we serve. We don't want them to make decisions based on dishonest rhetoric coming from powerful special interests.

We all know a "one-size fits all" approach doesn't work when it comes to education. Our schools offer the personal attention, creativity and passionate teaching that kids need to learn. Charter public schools are free from bureaucratic restrictions and red tape. In exchange for this flexibility, our schools are held to high performance standards.

Charter public schools put the needs of students first, not the interests of the bureaucracy.

[Click here](#) to learn more about how we can help set the record straight!

## **Sample Tweet**

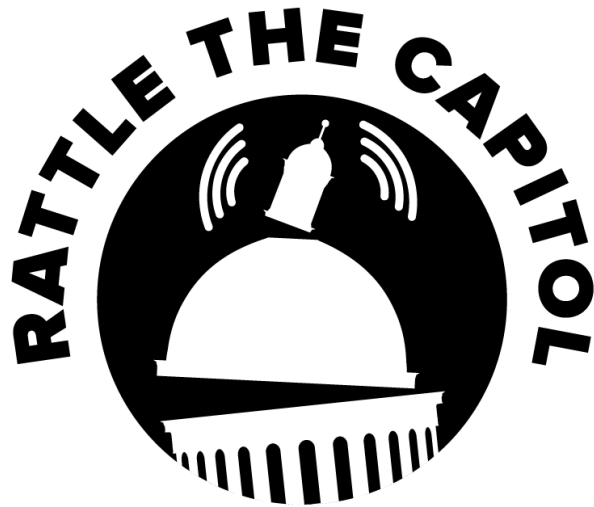
Charter public schools put the needs of students first, not the interests of the bureaucracy.  
#RattleTheCapitol <http://p2a.co/charters>

## **Sample Facebook Post**

Powerful special interests want to add bureaucratic restrictions and red tape that gets between charter public school students, teachers and learning. [Click here](#) to learn more about how we can help set the record straight!

We don't want the CA State Assembly making decisions based on dishonest rhetoric coming from powerful special interests.

Charter public schools put the needs of students first, not the interests of the bureaucracy.



Charter public schools put the needs of students first,  
not the interests of the bureaucracy. Let's set the record  
straight, once and for all.

Text "CCSA" to 52886

## What's at stake?

Powerful special interests are engaged in a systematic, mean-spirited, and dishonest campaign designed to discredit and demoralize charter school practitioners and families. Operating behind the front group, *Kids Not Profits*, these special interests are so threatened by the success and growing demand for charter public schools in California that they are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on paid ads and a glossy website designed to engineer a public backlash against charter public schools.

Their campaign casts charter school parents as thoughtless pawns in an alleged broader conspiracy between charter operators, board members, and billionaire philanthropists to privatize public education and profit off of students. They've taken their conspiracy theory and misinformation to the Capitol in an attempt to pass legislation under the guise of local control and public transparency that would:

- **Dismantle multi-site Charter Management Organizations (CMOs)** by requiring them to break-up their governance structures. (*AB 1478-Jones-Sawyer*)
- **Impose draconian conflict of interest regulations** under Government Code 1090 **that would result in criminal penalties and the prosecution of charter school board members and officers** who provide a loan, lease, line of credit or pro-bono services to a school for which they serve as a governing board member. (*AB 1478-Jones-Sawyer*)
- **Repeal due process rights for charter schools** such that petitioners would no longer have an appeal right to seek approval at the County or State Board of Education. (*SB 808-Mendoza*)
- **Grant legal authority to district authorizers to deny charter petitions based on district finances.** (*SB 808-Mendoza*)

Thankfully, school leaders and parents have partnered with CCSA over the last year to beat back these legislative efforts for now. However, because these special interests are relentless in their effort to discredit and demoralize our communities, their lack of success at enacting these troubling policies in the Legislature last year has only emboldened them to seek even more extreme and desperate measures to force these harmful policies on our schools.

**It's the start of a new legislative year and they're at it again, working overtime to pass the charter killer bill that we defeated together last year, AB 1478 (Jones-Sawyer), which will be considered in the Assembly before the end of January, 2018.**

The central argument behind AB 1478 is that self-dealing, misappropriation of public funds, and secrecy are endemic characteristics of California's charter sector and must be addressed by imposing a raft of new regulations. While the vast majority of charter schools in California follow the state's open meetings and public records rules, and manage the affairs of their governing boards in accordance with the nonprofit corporations code, proponents of AB 1478 are uninterested in the facts.

Make no mistake, AB 1478 is not at all about weeding out bad actors or achieving greater transparency. AB 1478 represents a calculated effort under the *guise* of ethics and transparency to dismantle charter school governing boards by applying an unworkable

application of the Brown Act to charters, and to starve charters of the few financial tools they have by imposing Government Code 1090.

#### Why Is AB 1478's Brown Act Requirement So Insidious?

The proponents of AB 1478 have refused to include flexibilities for multi-site and multi-jurisdictional charter organizations to comply with the Brown Act through teleconference or telephonic means. If AB 1478 were to become law, multi-site and multi-jurisdictional charter organizations would be required to either a) hold serial meetings whereby the same agenda is adopted by a quorum of board members who travel from location to location for each board meeting or b) these organizations would be forced to dismantle their existing governance structures and disintegrate into separate organizations based on jurisdiction.

#### Why is GC 1090 So Problematic?

GC 1090 is designed to create special protections for school district boards which are entrusted with extraordinary powers that nonprofit charter public school boards do not have including taxing, eminent domain, zoning waiver authority, tort claims protection, obligating the state in the case of fiscal insolvency, and others. It would be inappropriate to impose GC 1090 restrictions on charter school boards without also conferring these extraordinary powers on charter school boards as well. GC 1090 provisions are so open to interpretation and the penalties so severe that school district authorizers cannot be trusted to fairly enforce them over charter school boards.

Further, under a strict application of GC 1090 on charters, board members would be prohibited from offering pro bono services, or enter into loan or lease agreements with the charter for which they serve on the board.