



This week in school choice: Working together

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From voucher regulation to district-charter collaboration, here is our weekly rundown of what happened over the past week in school choice.

There was some good news on the West Coast, from the *L.A. School Report*.

At her first community town hall as LA Unified's superintendent, **Michelle King** received the most applause when she called for a healing between charter and district school factions. Seven weeks into her job, she met Tuesday morning with more than 700 parents, teachers, principals and local residents in a relatively low-income area in the north San Fernando Valley where many of those in attendance had strong feelings about charter schools.

"We are all LA Unified school students," King said in response to a charter school parent who was asking about the district's perceived bias against charters. "It is unfortunate we have labels, saying that this one is better than that one. It's not us versus them."

King then shared a plan she is developing. "One of the things we are looking at, and I'm meeting with charter leaders, is to have some sort of forum or event and bring those traditional schools, magnets, pilots, charters all together and share what is working best."

She added, "I can't do it alone, we need your help. We need all of us breaking down walls and barriers on behalf of kids and be working together. It doesn't help to have battles over property."

The idea here is that serving students and the public matters more than who happens to run the schools.

There are efforts to break down the walls between districts and charters all over the country, but collaboration isn't the norm, yet. And Los Angeles still seems to have rifts that need mending.

Once the hot politics are defused, a deeper question arises. Is it possible to create school systems where local governments focus on the "big picture" while educators focus on running schools?

Meanwhile...

Gov. Terry McAuliffe put the kibosh on a “Tebow Law” in Virginia, denying many home schoolers the “privilege” of participating in extracurricular activities or sports.

Rosa Parks dug school choice.

Helping parents navigate choice-based school systems.

As time runs out on Washington State charter schools, who will champion the cause of the students they serve?

Which is more likely to be terminated: A charter school’s contract, or a teacher’s?

Where does presidential candidate Bernie Sanders stand on charters?

D.C. designs schools to meet the needs of immigrant kids. (This is also happening elsewhere.)

What’s next for education reform in D.C.?

The real goal of personalized learning.

School choice supporters rallied in Oklahoma.

Arizona’s bid to expand education savings accounts ran into trouble. Were funding concerns misguided?

Louisiana lawmakers advanced a spending plan that would dismantle vouchers. Was that a mistake? Then there was the debate over regulation. More on that here and here.

“[S]chool systems could consider a system where dollars follow students and are weighted for certain student characteristics ...”

Kentucky could become the 44th state to allow charter schools.

Tweet of the Week



Cato CEF @CatoCEF

LA lawmakers debating killing this program based on new results, says @MichaelPetrilli, we all agree that's a bad idea #schoolchoiceregs

Quote of the Week

There’s no greater bully pulpit in most cities across the country than the mayor. And if we can elevate the issues of education, the issues of housing, the issues of safety then we use the bully pulpit to do that. When I came in as mayor, I came in very clear: I thought there was no issue more important than the issue of educating our young people properly.

—Denver mayor Michael Hancock, whose city knows a thing or two about district-charter collaboration, on how local officials can impact education without having direct control over schools. (*The 74.*)