



Pro-union front group takes on charters, skips a few salient facts

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A pro-union group called [In the Public Interest](#) doesn't mince words while addressing charter schools and school choice.

Posting articles such as “What a Victory Against Wall Street in Nashville Means for Students in Massachusetts,” “Without Planning and Oversight, Charters Hurt Neighborhood Schools” and “School Choice Isn't All It's Cracked Up to Be” it's clear the organization is not exactly a fan of charter schools or school choice.

Of course, presenting school choice as nothing more than a way to defund public education and turn a profit presents a problem. You have to ignore many salient facts indicating students excel in many choice schools.

Neal McCluskey, director of the Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom, told Watchdog.org that ITPI's tactics are nothing new.

“I'm not familiar with this group, but what I read on their website looks like fairly common attacks on charters and privatization as being some sort of nefarious ‘Wall Street’ scheme,” said McCluskey. “School choice is not such a scheme. It is about enabling students to access the education that is best for them. And it is not about taking money from public schools, but having it do what it is intended to do: educate children.”

Larry Sand, a former teacher and head of the [California Teachers Empowerment Network](#), told Watchdog.org that ITPI's derogatory articles on school choice are clearly self-serving.

“The anti-charter crowd has two ongoing themes,” said Sand. “One is that these public schools of choice are not accountable. The other is that they are controlled by billionaires. Late last year, Donald Cohen, founder and executive director of [In the Public Interest](#), hit on both here: ‘Billionaires Can't Teach Our Kids,’ which slams Eli Broad and other philanthropists for initiating a plan that would double the number of charter schools in Los Angeles. He claims, ‘Broad and his billionaire friends have decided that instead of investing in our public schools, they'll just create new ones with less accountability and fewer standards ...’ But a little digging reveals that In the Public Interest, which partnered with the American Federation of Teachers last year to push for more [charter accountability](#), is a project of [The Partnership for Working Families](#), an ACORN-like group. PWF hates anything capitalist and is a card-carrying member

of the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement, whose raison d'être is to vilify 'one percenters.' Not surprisingly, several of PWF donors are rich philanthropists, including billionaire George Soros and other wealthy globalist/socialists." While ITPI continues to post articles smearing school choice entirely, both McCluskey and Sand suggest taking a look at the source before accepting it as truth.