

BESE SUMMARY- LA 2015 ELECTION AND COMMON CORE

There is another deliberate attempt being pushed by Louisiana businessman Lane Grigsby and the organization he chairs, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), which is the Louisiana Chamber of Commerce, to push and coerce the voters of Louisiana to get behind his pro-Common Core, pro-John White education reform. Grigsby hopes to accomplish his agenda with the help of over \$1 million dollars in donations coming to his newly formed Empower Louisiana Pac, mostly from non-educator, out-of-state sources including children of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton as well as Los Angeles-based philanthropist, Eli Broad.

<http://theadvocate.com/news/13594497-123/group-led-by-baton-rouge>

<http://ethics.la.gov/CampaignFinanceSearch/ShowEForm.aspx?ReportID=50700>

<http://www.opednews.com/Quicklink/Los-Angeles-Eli-Broad-s-I-in-Best-Web-OpEds-Democracy-Diane-Ravitch-Education-Eli-Broad-150926-163.html>

Many may not be aware that as recently as 2007, the total spent on Louisiana BESE elections was approximately \$250,000. With the help of Mr. Grigsby and his out-of-state financial backers, that number jumped to over \$2.5 million in 2011 and will likely surpass that with this year's election. The following article can help explain the interest of these financial backers.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/why-do-some-americas-wealthiest-individuals-have-fingers-louisianas-education-system/>

A recent article quoted LABI's Brigitte Nieland stating that she is "counting on getting 8 out of 8" in reference to the BESE seats she and Mr. Grigsby's organization are hoping to win with their exorbitant financial backing. The article goes on to say that candidates supported by LABI can expect to get \$40,000 each in LABI donations for their campaign.

<http://theadvocate.com/help/13412984-172/candidates-in-bese-races-feature>

It is pretty reasonable to assume that if a candidate is being endorsed by this group, he or she must first agree to support the pro-common core agenda that has been endorsed by this organization for years. This link shows which candidates are taking the Grigsby money and being endorsed by LABI.

<http://blocktheagenda.org/2015/09/28/besefinance/>

Offering money to legislators has paid off for Grigsby and LABI in their efforts to keep Common Core in Louisiana and repress any effort at the state capitol to repeal it. In fact, during a very long and heated committee hearing in May 2014 for HB 953, which would have repealed Common Core, the House Education Chairman-Rep. Stephen Carter, allowed Mr. Lane Grigsby, the president of LABI and a spokesperson for CABL over one hour to speak in favor of Common Core. None of these gentlemen are educators nor are they experts in education. They are businessmen and spokespeople. When it was time for the parents and other concerned citizens to speak against Common Core, the chairman placed a timer on his desk and allowed only three minutes of speaking time per person. This sad display sent a statement that our democracy is not one that allows the "voice of the people" to be heard, but rather the "voice of the people with money" to be heard. Also, parents were subjected to ridicule by LABI's Brigitte Nieland and several other members of pro-CC organizations.

<http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2014/05/29/louisiana-parents-report-ridicule-by-pro-common-core-representatives-during-legislative-hearings/>

It is not only BESE candidates being heavily financed and endorsed by Grigsby and LABI. Many of their pro-common core legislators, including the chairmen of the House Education (Rep. Carter) and Senate Education (Sen. Appel) committees, are being backed again by them. These chairmen have been heavily pro-common core and had their names originally listed on the website "Unicorns Are Not Real " which was aimed at mocking legislators and parents opposed to common core.

<http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/04/20/jeb-bush-mike-huckabee-among-those-mocking-common-core-opponents-with-unicorns/>

A big problem is that the "common core compromise" provides political cover for our pro-CC legislators. We are going to end up with Louisiana Standards, which will simply be Common Core with a new name. The process to create these new standards was set up in good faith with the help of several of our anti-CC legislators who trusted that this process would not be tainted. However, this is proving to be false. The pro-CC crowd has manipulated this process from the start which is revealing why they were so willing to agree to this compromise.

<http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/05/16/jindal-expresses-concerns-about-louisiana-compromise-plan-considered-big-win-to-eliminate-common-core/>

The reason that pro-CC legislators such as Senator Appel agreed to the compromise is that he can now try to claim to have "led the effort to replace CC in Louisiana". In fact, he is doing just that in his advertising for the upcoming election in October. His claim is completely false. He staunchly opposed the only bill this past legislative session that would have repealed Common Core, just like he opposed similar bills over the past few years. He only agreed to a compromise that would allow a rebrand. This has helped other pro-CC legislators and BESE candidates running for office to go around our state claiming to be against CC because they know Louisiana will now have the same CC standards"replaced" only with a new name as the biased and manipulated "Standards Review Process" moves to completion.

In reality, the PRO- CC legislators, BESE members, and Supt.of Education John White have been unresponsive to the concerns, complaints, and requests made by citizens during the public comment period of the August 19 "Standards Review Committee" meetings and afterward . They are ignoring emails, FOIA inquiries , and requests that information (such as the 2015 student PARCC test results) be shared with the Review Committee members because

they are secure in knowing that they will still receive exorbitant financial support from influential PRO-CC groups in their bids for re-election.

<http://files.meetup.com/1387375/LOUISIANA%20STANDARDS%20REVIEW%20PROCESS%20-%20ACT%20329%20AND%20JOHN%20WHITE.pdf>

<http://files.meetup.com/1387375/REQUEST%20FOR%202015%20PARCC%20TEST%20RESULTS%20TO%20BE%20RELEASED.pdf>

The same big government, big business stakeholder groups (Chamber of Commerce, Eli Broad, Walton) that conspired with the federal government to push the Common Core Initiative into every state at the national level are now spending huge sums to target individual states like Louisiana in an effort to overwhelm the voices and votes of the people in statewide elections. The pro-CC candidates are outspending the grassroots anti-CC candidates by as much as 100:1.

Fortunately, heroic parents, educators, and citizens have stepped up to run for elective office in an attempt to remove the CC Initiative from Louisiana. We have these ANTI- CC candidates in critical races who are dependent upon grassroots "boots on the ground" campaigning and small individual donations.

BESE (State Board of Education)

District 1: Lee Barrios

District 2: Kara Washington

District 3: Lottie Beebe (incumbent)

District 4: Mary Harris and Glynis Johnston

District 5: Johnny Fatheree

District 6: Jason France and Kathy Edmonston

District 7: Mike Creamer

District 8: Carolyn Hill (incumbent)

Senate District 9: John LaBruzzo (Sen Appel seat)

House District 68: Robert Cade Ciprano (Rep Carter seat)

The eyes of the nation should be on this battle in Louisiana. Any help you can provide to these anti-CC candidates would be greatly appreciated..... especially by the children of Louisiana.