

SECRET PLAN REVEALED

“Attack UTLA” & “Take Back” the City

In the wake of our historic strike in January 2019, privatizer Ben Austin sent a series of confidential emails to an inner circle of charter backers. This “strategy group” was formulating their plan to “recapture” the city after Los Angeles overwhelmingly took to the streets to show support for neighborhood public schools during our strike. The privatizers know they have to figure out how to work “differently together” if they want to achieve their goals, admitting in their emails that UTLA “has been working for far more than ten years to achieve the victories that are just now bearing fruit.”

The billionaire-funded charter lobby knows they’re losing, acknowledging in their emails that their side “has lost control” of the public message on privatization because “conventional wisdom tells the public that charter schools are ‘private,’ run by billionaires for profit, and engaged in a scorched-earth ‘war’ on public education.”

In their own words, here is just some of their strategy to “attack UTLA.”



Who is Ben Austin?

- ✗ Author of the Parent Trigger law, claiming that teachers don't care about kids, saying “Parents are the only ones who really care about their children”
- ✗ Billed himself as “Villaraigosa’s pick” for Board District 4 in 2008
- ✗ Wife, Tracy, made \$100,000 for consulting work to defeat Measure EE

“Kids First” Strategy Group To-Do

- ✗ *“Attack UTLA...weaken them politically so we can better achieve our goals.”*
- ✗ Use kids as props in messaging against UTLA and in lawsuits against the district to “create a much needed wedge issue for reformers”
- ✗ “Take back” the Board of Education and the mayor’s office to “drive a citywide agenda from the top-down.”
- ✗ Sue LAUSD in order to “trump district policy and even UTLA contract rights.”
- ✗ “Rebrand education reform as progressive” by “funding Black and Latino civil rights and community groups.”

*Quotes taken directly from the Kids First Strategy Group email conversations in February and March 2019

The charter lobbyists are in a fight for their lives, and they’re going to do whatever it takes to win their “war.” And despite pages of strategy to privatize public education, **increasing school funding is nowhere on their agenda.**

When charter lobbyists attack educators and cynically use students as props, it’s up to us to stand up for our profession, our students, and our schools.

