WE WILL NOT REST 2009
ConnCAN is proud to present you with our 2009 Annual Report. It’s about a single banner year, but it’s also about five years of growth and accomplishment. It’s about individual advocates, but it’s also about the power of this movement. It’s about discrete moments, but it’s also about the big picture. It’s about taking time to read and reflect, but it’s also about rolling up our sleeves and getting to work. And like ConnCAN itself, this Annual Report is greater than the sum of its parts. You’ll notice neon yellow shapes throughout the cards that follow. Piece together the pages and these shapes will create a large mosaic that contains a unique image and web URL (here’s a hint to help you assemble the puzzle: the final mosaic will be 4 × 13). Visit the URL for a special surprise. Enjoy!

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OPERATOR KEY

=  EQUAL TO
≠  NOT EQUAL TO
+  PLUS
()  MULTIPLIED BY
∞  INFINITY
↑n  TO THE POWER OF
△  CHANGE
1. DEMOGRAPHICS ≠ DESTINY

THE BEGINNING
DEAR FRIENDS,

There is much to celebrate! Thanks to your support and the outstanding and persistent efforts of the talented and dedicated ConnCAN team, we’ve accomplished all of the goals we set out to achieve in 2009! ¶ Our work to grow Connecticut’s public charter schools prevented the tragedy of half-completed, high-performing schools. Instead, we ensured that more than 1,000 additional students will be on the path to college over the next two years. ¶ Our work to advance teacher quality ushered through the most significant overhaul of state teacher certification laws in more than 20 years. Thanks to this new legislation, Teach For America will continue growing in our state and many more aspiring math and science teachers will reach the classrooms where they are most needed. ¶ And our work to open up stores of data to the public furthered the kind of transparency and accountability we need to fix our public schools. ConnCAN is already scrutinizing this newly accessible data on which schools have consistently achieved the greatest gains and we look forward to sharing the analysis in the coming months. ¶ We know that ConnCAN’s achievements this year wouldn’t have been possible without your passion and your support. So please accept our profound gratitude. ¶ While it is appropriate to celebrate our success in 2009, we are painfully aware that there is much more to be done before all of Connecticut’s children receive an excellent education and the achievement gap is eliminated. Now more than ever, we are committed to this goal and look forward to working together to reach this worthy aim.

We have much to celebrate on our fifth anniversary—as this annual report communicates in many dimensions. ¶ Looking at the scale of the challenges still ahead of us, it’s easy to feel daunted by how much remains to be done in pursuit of our mission: great public schools for every Connecticut kid. In the state with the largest achievement gap in the nation, well over 100,000 students are way behind, not prepared for college and life. And even our highest performing students are over a year behind the top 10% of students in leading states like Massachusetts. It is no exaggeration to say that the very future of our state is at stake. ¶ Yet the scale of the challenge is itself a powerful source of inspiration. Connecticut has a rich legacy of helping lead the nation through some of our most far-reaching movements for social change, from the abolitionists to the suffragettes. Our country and our state are indeed capable of the most profound transformation when we come together to demand it. After all, when my own grandmother turned eighteen, neither she nor any other woman in America had the right to vote. ¶ Realizing the promise of great schools for all is absolutely within our reach. I’m proud and inspired that so many thousands of people across Connecticut and the United States are already working together to make this vision a reality. This is how we change the world...

BRIAN OLSON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

ALEX JOHNSTON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Alt. pathways like TFA mean more great teacher in urban classrooms.

Nobody thinks 50th out of 50 states is good enough anymore.

Lots more kids attending great charters and other public schools of choice.

Public driving public policy.

CT’s capital city secured best urban achievement gains 3 years running.

New teacher contract passed and Alex Johnston appointed to Board of Ed.

Still just as unsustainable and ineffective as ever.

Eyes are opened and CT citizens energized about closing the achievement gap.

Progress made, but still worst in the nation.

30,000 citizens demanding change = growing political leadership.
YOU ARE THE MOVEMENT: EDUCATION REFORMERS ACROSS CT

WHERE HAS ALEX JOHNSTON BEEN INVITED TO SHARE THE CONNCAN STORY?

CONNCAN’S ROI, 2005–2009: 3,300% RETURN ON INVESTMENT

NEW PUBLIC FUNDING FOR EDUCATION REFORM
$170,800,871

$5,150,000

ConnCAN Annual Report 2009 The Beginning
FIVE YEARS OF CHARTER ADVOCACY AND CHARTER GROWTH

- **Per-pupil Charter Funding, 2005–2009**
  - $7,692
  - $8,070
  - $8,720
  - $9,300
  - $9,300

  **$1,608 Increase in Five Years**

- **Students in Charter Schools, 2005–2009**
  - 2,918
  - 3,575
  - 4,000
  - 4,479
  - 5,178

  **Nearly Doubled in Five Years**

- **State Funding for Charters, 2005–2009**
  - $22.4 MIL
  - $28.8 MIL
  - $34.8 MIL
  - $41.6 MIL
  - $48.1 MIL

  **215% Increase in Five Years**
WE WILL NEVER FIX POVERTY UNTIL WE FIX OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.
Connecticut’s achievement gap—the persistent and significant disparity between the academic achievement of low-income and minority children and their white, middle-class peers—is the most urgent social and economic problem facing our state. ¶ We have the largest achievement gap between rich and poor kids in the nation, and we’re paying the price for our failing public schools. Connecticut ranks close to last in the country for job growth. We spend more on prisons than on higher education. ¶ But Connecticut, and the entire nation, was built on the promise of universal education for all. Public schools are the cornerstone of our democracy, and our future is inextricably linked to the education of our children—all of them. ¶ In the tradition of Connecticut’s great advocacy movements, from the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association to Harriet Beecher Stowe and the abolitionists, ConnCAN is building a new movement of concerned citizens advocating to fundamentally reform our public schools through smart public policies.

THE MISSION

Connecticut’s achievement gap—the persistent and significant disparity between the academic achievement of low-income and minority children and their white, middle-class peers—is the most urgent social and economic problem facing our state. ¶ We have the largest achievement gap between rich and poor kids in the nation, and we’re paying the price for our failing public schools. Connecticut ranks close to last in the country for job growth. We spend more on prisons than on higher education. ¶ But Connecticut, and the entire nation, was built on the promise of universal education for all. Public schools are the cornerstone of our democracy, and our future is inextricably linked to the education of our children—all of them. ¶ In the tradition of Connecticut’s great advocacy movements, from the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association to Harriet Beecher Stowe and the abolitionists, ConnCAN is building a new movement of concerned citizens advocating to fundamentally reform our public schools through smart public policies.
1. Change in Policy equals Change in Schools

3. What We Do
Getting state policy right can transform the way we educate Connecticut’s children. This doesn’t mean trying to write every best practice into state law, but instead advancing three fundamental, self-reinforcing principles that work together to reward success, discourage failure and raise the quality of everything in between:

**GREATER CHOICE**

Achievement gaps stem from a calcified education system resistant to the innovations of educators and the desires of parents. Expanded parental choice better aligns school options with diverse student needs and injects a grassroots level of accountability into the system.

**GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY**

Parental choice provides one important type of feedback, but it is much more powerful when connected to strong, data-driven accountability. We need to dramatically expand public awareness of school performance, ground teacher and principal evaluations in student results and close chronically failing schools.

**GREATER FLEXIBILITY**

In order for greater choice and greater accountability to translate into greater student achievement, America’s educators need to have far greater flexibility to pursue excellence. This means removing obstacles to new school creation, expanding alternative pathways for teachers and principals, letting principals make staffing decisions and connecting funding to student needs without excessive top-down restrictions.
“CONN CAN IS PROBABLY THE MOST EFFECTIVE STATE-BASED EDUCATION ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION. Education policy is particularly complicated in CT with a legacy of strong local control (e.g., the state provides less than 40% of funding). But ConnCAN has boiled the problem down to a simple and powerful mission: We will not rest until every child in our state, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, has access to a great public school.”

—Tom Vander Ark’s blog, February 26, 2009
ConnCAN is a platform for Connecticut citizens to speak up for kids effectively. Without the right policy climate, great schools will continue to elude Connecticut’s most disadvantaged children. To close Connecticut’s gaping achievement gap, a new ethos of reform must permeate state government, the education establishment and the wide community of citizens. We don’t build schools or train teachers. Instead, ConnCAN runs results-oriented advocacy campaigns. The three pillars of our work are:

**Research & Policy**
ConnCAN’s original reports and briefs provide the in-depth analysis of public education in Connecticut that is the foundation for our policy recommendations. Our online tools, such as School Report Cards, which assign a letter grade to every public school in the state, and the SmartChoices web site, which provides a simple, user-friendly guide for navigating Hartford’s all-choice public school system, serve as essential resources for parents and help drive and shape the conversation on Connecticut’s public schools.

**Communication & Mobilization**
ConnCAN creates informed citizens with a commitment to commonsense education reform through a combination of media work, electronic communications and social networking, publications, on-the-ground community organizing, partnerships with like-minded civic and community groups and events. Then, we make it easy for Connecticut’s growing cadre of education reform advocates to take impactful action through our e-advocacy system.

**Advocacy for Policy Change**
Grounded in our research and policy work, ConnCAN’s expert staff teams with our citizen advocates and key state officials to develop and enact concrete, meaningful education reforms through both legislative and administrative action.
30,000 STRONG

THE MOVEMENT

KIDS + TEACHERS + PARENTS + PRINCIPALS + INNOVATORS + ENTREPRENEURS + DEMOCRATS + REPUBLICANS + INDEPENDENTS + LEADERS + PHILANTHROPISTS + ACTIVISTS + ADVOCATES + SUPERINTENDANTS + SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS + POLITICO + RESEARCHERS + PUBLIC POLICY EXPERTS + PROFESSORS + WRITERS + JOURNALISTS + BLOGGERS + TECHIES + NEIGHBORS + YOU

= CONNECTICUT’S EDUCATION REFORM MOVEMENT

CONN CAN ANNUAL REPORT 2009

WHAT WE DO
EDUCATION = FREEDOM

getting results
In 2009, ConnCAN advocated for three commonsense school reforms: teacher quality, education transparency and support for high-performing public charter schools. In this past year’s tough budget climate, we asked legislators in Hartford to Mind the Gaps in student achievement—and they listened. In a year when nearly every program in Connecticut was at risk of cuts and advocates across the spectrum were pulling out all the stops, the Mind the Gaps campaign rose above the noise and drove the agenda. The campaign passed two laws and secured an against-the-tide funding increase:

**ON TEACHERS**

Public Act No. 09-1 is the most significant overhaul of Connecticut teacher certification laws in more than 20 years. This law improves teacher quality by doing three crucial things: allowing experienced teachers from other states to teach in Connecticut, keeping Teach For America on a path to growth, and removing roadblocks keeping excellent math and science candidates out of the classroom.

**ON DATA**

Public Act No. 09-241 makes available to nonprofits and universities stores of previously concealed longitudinal student achievement data, which tracks the performance of individual students over time, for independent analysis and dissemination to the broader public. Until the passage of this law, the Connecticut State Department of Education collected this invaluable information, but would not release it.

**ON CHARTERS**

In the midst of an $8 billion state budget deficit, ConnCAN secured more than $20 million of additional funding to expand the state’s high-performing public charter schools and avoid the tragedy of high-performing, half-completed schools.
MIND THE GAPS
CAMPAIGN TIMELINE:
HOW IDEAS BECOME LAWS

07 JANUARY
Connecticut’s 2009 legislative session begins.

05 FEBRUARY
ConnCAN launches Mind the Gaps campaign with web site www.mindthegaps.org, video and blog.

11 FEBRUARY
Appropriations Committee hearing on public charter school funding: over 400 supporters turn out wearing bright blue “Mind the Gaps” t-shirts; Within two weeks of launch, ConnCAN’s Mind the Gaps campaign attracts coverage from NBC30, the Hartford Advocate, The Hour blog, Flypaper, the Connecticut Post, Fox 61, WTIC radio, and WSHU, the NPR affiliate in Fairfield.

23 FEBRUARY
Education Committee hearing for House Bill No. 6491: “An Act Concerning Longitudinal Studies of Student Achievement.”

27 FEBRUARY
ConnCAN Chief Executive Officer Alex Johnston participates in a panel at the Center for American Progress: “Realizing the Promise: How State Policy Can Support Alternative Certification Programs.”

10 MARCH
President Obama unveils ambitious education plan.

16 MARCH
Education Committee hearing for House Bill No. 6654: “An Act Establishing a Resident Teacher Certificate.”
01 April
Both data and teacher certification bills unanimously pass out of the Education Committee and onto the General Assembly.

02 April
Press conference and rally in support of public charter schools on north steps of State Capitol Building: over 500 students, parents, teachers, principals and advocates turn out to thank legislative champions.

22 April
McKinsey & Company puts out a powerful new report on the costs of the achievement gap: “Existing gaps impose the economic equivalent of a permanent national recession—one substantially larger than the deep recession the country is currently experiencing.”

23 April
Alex Johnston participates in town hall-style meeting, “A Principal Story,” on CPTV and WNPR.

18 May
Marc’s third Campaign Update video, “Information is Power.”

26 May
Marc’s final Campaign Update video, “It’s Time to Stand Up.”

03 June
Last day of 2009 legislative session; Following ConnCAN’s early morning “Nail-Biter” advocacy e-mail, which prompted over 500 advocates to write their Representative in the span of just 120 minutes, the data bill passes! But session ends—Legislature does not pass a budget and charter school funding left hanging in the balance.

04 June
“A Victory and a Setback” advocacy e-mail announces the passage of the data bill and the 11th hour filibuster of the teacher certification bill.

05 June
Rick Green writes must-read column in Hartford Courant on this filibuster: “Petty Partisanship Sinks Plan for Better Schools.”

19 June
Special legislative session called; Big win in the special session—teacher certification bill passes with strong bipartisan support!
**VICTORY! MINDS THE GAPS CAMPAIGN IS 3 FOR 3!**

**22 JUNE**
Secretary of Education Arne Duncan applauds Hartford district’s reform plan and its role for charter schools in keynote address at the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools conference.

**26 JUNE**
Legislature proposes restoration of public charter school funding in their latest budget proposal.

**30 JUNE**
In absence of budget agreement, Governor Rell issues Executive Order to run the state government on a month-by-month basis. Includes instruction to State Department of Education to allow for all the planned grade growth at the state’s charter schools.

**14 JULY**
Governor Rell signs both data and teacher certification bills into law!

**02 SEPTEMBER**
After a three month impasse, Connecticut finally has a budget, which includes all of the charter funding we advocated for in the *Mind the Gaps* campaign.
2009: BY THE NUMBERS

148,028 people visited www.conncan.org

62,963 people visited the School Report Cards section of www.conncan.org

30,900 people in ConnCAN’s database

23,950 people received the quarterly ConnCAN Compass newsletter in their mailboxes

21,410 reports downloaded from www.conncan.org

15,342 people received our monthly e-newsletters

13,440 people joined ConnCAN’s education reform movement

13,092 views on ConnCAN’s YouTube channel

5,499 posts by ConnCAN staff to Yammer, our internal news feed

13,092 advocacy e-mails sent by ConnCAN members

4,000 flyers distributed for the Hartford Board of Education Candidate’s Forum

3,600 turnout phone calls made for the Hartford Board of Education Candidate’s Forum

2,040 people completed searches on the SmartChoices website

7,113 people took action by writing to their elected officials

4,000 School Finance in Connecticut issue briefs downloaded

1,253 people received our monthly Research Roundups in their e-mail inboxes

1,203 NCTQ reports downloaded

1,203 people received our weekly Education News Roundups in their e-mail inboxes

1,683 views of the Mind the Gaps campaign video

1,510 The State of Connecticut Public Education reports downloaded

1,147 people received our weekly Education News Roundups in their e-mail inboxes

1,086 The State of Connecticut Public Education reports downloaded

2009: by the numbers

ConnCAN Annual Report 2009

Getting Results
872 people watched the Brookside Elementary School (Norwalk) Success Story short film

823 people watched the High Horizons Magnet School (Bridgeport) Success Story short film

500+ activists turned out in bright blue “Mind the Gaps” t-shirts for key legislative hearings

466 constituents wrote their elected officials to get the data bill moving on the last day of session

263 people followed ConnCAN on Twitter

184 people were ConnCAN fans on Facebook

150 State Representatives cast a “yay” for the data bill

150 voters turned out for the Hartford Board of Education Candidate’s Forum

146 citizens e-mailed to protest 11th hour filibuster of the teacher certification bill

140 contributors to ConnCAN

116 Democrats in the House and Senate voted “yay” for the teacher certification bill

46 Republicans in the House and Senate voted “yay” for the teacher certification bill

46 Education News Roundups published

23 strategic partners worked with ConnCAN on behalf of education reform

22 press releases & media advisories issued

21 Mind the Gaps campaign action e-mails sent to our base

12 e-newsletters published

12 Research Roundups published

5 passionate education reformers joined ConnCAN’s Board of Directors

1 invitation extended to (and accepted by) ConnCAN CEO Alex Johnston to join the New Haven Board of Education

ConnCAN alumna, Danielle Smith, started a new education reform group: the Connecticut chapter of the Black Alliance For Educational Options—CT BAEO

0 Senators cast a “nay” vote for the teacher certification bill or the data bill
INFORMATION = POWER

InformatIon equals power

5.

Research → Action
You can’t solve a problem if you don’t know the facts. That’s why at ConnCAN, everything begins with research. By digging into the issues, we arm citizens with data about Connecticut’s public schools so they can be effective advocates.
Each year, ConnCAN assesses all 1,000+ Connecticut schools and 160+ school districts to show how they’re meeting the needs of all of their students so that Connecticut citizens find out what the achievement gap looks like in their own backyard.

62,963+ PEOPLE VISITED THE SCHOOL REPORT CARDS SECTION OF WWW.CONNCAN.ORG

There are public schools all across Connecticut leading kids on a path out of poverty. Each year ConnCAN identifies and profiles the state’s top-performing urban schools to show what’s possible.

VIEWED:
872+ BROOKSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, NORWALK
823+ HIGH HORIZONS MAGNET SCHOOL, BRIDGEPORT
794+ THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AT ROGERS MAGNET, STAMFORD
“...THE EXCELLENT WORK CONTINUES WITH CONNCAN’S SUCCESS STORIES.

They’ve put together 3-minute videos on the state’s 15 top ‘gap-busting’ charters, magnets, and traditional public schools. Not only are the videos refreshing and encouraging, but you also get the clear sense of why the schools are succeeding. They share a set of critical characteristics that lead to improved student learning....Kudos to ConnCAN. Keep it up.”

—Fordham Institute’s Flypaper, March 27, 2009
SMARTCHOICES WEBSITE

Developed in partnership with Trinity College and Achieve Hartford!, SmartChoices (smartchoices.trincoll.edu) offers Hartford parents a vital tool to help choose from dozens of public school choices under Hartford Superintendent Steven Adamowski’s “all-choice” plan. It is the first web site to cut through the maze of factors influencing this choice by providing a one-stop-shop for comparing the schools for which children are eligible.

2,040+ PEOPLE USED THIS TOOL

MAURY POVICH PROMOTED SMARTCHOICES VIA PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT TWO YEARS IN A ROW

HUMAN CAPITAL IN HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS REPORT

ConnCAN teamed up with the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) to research and report on staffing policies at Hartford’s public schools, resulting in the original study Human Capital in Hartford Public Schools: Rethinking How to Attract, Develop and Retain Effective Teachers.

1,203+ REPORTS DOWNLOADED FROM CONNCAN’S WEB SITE SINCE APRIL
This issue brief examines how our school finance system has evolved—and why it’s still under-serving our kids. Closing the achievement gap is about improving teaching and learning, but it’s also about money: teachers and principals must be paid, books must be ordered and facilities must be built. How our schools are financed can play a major role in student achievement.

1,510+ BRIEFS DOWNLOADED SINCE JUNE

These original maps show how Connecticut distributes money among school districts, how much is spent and how it stacks up against the national average. They provide a fresh look at our school finance system and demonstrate why it’s under-serving our kids.

894+ MAPS DOWNLOADED SINCE JULY

The tab for our K-12 schools is Connecticut’s largest public investment at more than $7 billion per year. But the tangle of funding disguises how money flows and why our school finance system does little to produce dramatic gains for kids. *The Tab: How Connecticut Can Fix Its Dysfunctional Education Spending to Reward Success, Incentivize Choice and Boost student Achievement* offers a plan to change that.

5,000 REPORTS DISTRIBUTED IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER
“WHY, WHEN WE DON’T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO RUN THIS STATE, CAN’T WE AT LEAST DO A BETTER JOB OF FUNDING OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS MORE EFFICIENTLY?

I’m not saying we should spend less than the $7 billion we pour into public education. I’m saying let’s make sure the students who need the money are getting it. In a recent report, the school reform group Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now points out that when students leave a school district to attend a magnet school, the state pays twice—to the tune of more than $186 million per year... Meanwhile, it is nearly impossible to track the ‘tangle of funding that disguises how money flows,’ the ConnCAN folks note. When we are faced with shutting down essential after-school and day-care programs because of budget cuts, this sort of spending is hard to swallow.”

—Rick Green in the Hartford Courant, December 16, 2009
ConnCAN keeps the education establishment on its toes and makes sure that citizens stay in the know by providing real-time analysis of breaking news. When new High School Graduation Rate data, CMT (Connecticut Mastery Test) or NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) scores are released, ConnCAN is there to weigh in.

**DOWNLOADED:**
- 906+ HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE REPORTS
- 631+ NAEP REPORTS
- 748+ CMT CHARTS

This annual publication offers a systematic look at how well our public schools are educating *all* of our children. Our research sheds light on both the successes and challenges in our state’s public schools and examines the underlying patterns in student achievement data.

**1,086+ REPORTS DOWNLOADED**
What's next

The infinite power of public schools

6.

What's next
This year, nearly all fifty states are competing head-to-head for $4 billion in federal money through the U.S. Department of Education’s Race to the Top competition. Who will win? States that most effectively reform their education policies to put kids first. Here in Connecticut, that means truly measuring effectiveness for teachers and principals, implementing world class standards, creating alternative certification pathways for superstar principals and fixing our charter school funding system so that money follows the child. Race to the Top is the largest amount of discretionary funding ever allocated for education reform. It’s our opportunity to make real progress for all of Connecticut’s students. It’s our “moon shot.” And with your help, ConnCAN’s Our Race to the Top campaign will build the political will to leverage the competition for fundamental change in Connecticut’s public education system.
Connecticut needs an excellent teacher in every classroom and an excellent principal in every corner office. To get there, we must first accurately measure the progress students are making in our schools. Right now we have a lot of snapshots of how students are doing at any one time, but we don’t have a trusted system to benchmark their progress against clear expectations for their grade. Connecticut needs a better data system that both measures this growth and links it to teachers and principals. This new system will allow us to begin to both measure the effectiveness of teachers and principals and the programs that train them.

To make the most of these new measurements of effectiveness, we need loftier goals to strive towards in our public schools. Connecticut needs to take our academic standards for students to the next level, such as the ability to develop a thesis in English or prove a theorem in Math. These goals must be internationally benchmarked to prepare Connecticut students to compete in the global economy. Connecticut has already signed on to national Common Core Standards Initiative but we must commit to actually implement these new standards by August, 2010.
2010 CAMPAIGN GOALS

3 SUPERSTAR PRINCIPALS

Connecticut needs outstanding leadership in our public schools. That means creating alternative pathways for outstanding classroom teachers to become principals. Just like Teach For America created an alternative pathway for some of our most promising college graduates to teach in urban public schools, programs like New Leaders for New Schools can do the same for Connecticut's principal corps.

4 MONEY FOLLOWS THE CHILD

Connecticut’s antiquated school finance system has become fiscally unsustainable. It is high time that we begin the transition to a commonsense, transparent, funding system where money follows children based on their learning needs. This year we have an important opportunity to begin these financial reforms—and an urgent need to start with our state's high-performing charter schools because of Race to the Top's special emphasis on leveraging the growth of these schools as part of statewide strategies for education reform.
In 2010, Connecticut will elect a new governor. ConnCAN will work to put education reform front and center in the 2010 governor’s race. Every candidate will have to answer to thousands upon thousands of education reformers—to you—because this movement will not rest until every Connecticut child has access to a great public school. And along the way, we will be building consensus around the solution to our state’s broken school finance system so that the new governor can get serious about money following kids from their very first day in office.
“ConnCAN-do: A former Critic joins the Board of Education just in time for School Reform.

"An organization once seen as critical of New Haven public schools now has a seat at the table—literally. Alex Johnston, who heads ConnCAN, or the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now, has been appointed to the Board of Education just days after the teachers’ union voted overwhelmingly to ratify a contract that would allow school reform efforts to move forward. Johnston and ConnCAN have made it their mission to highlight the educational disparities in a state with one of the highest achievement gaps, and to point out the state’s inaccurate graduation rates. In the past, talking about these issues earned scorn from the mayor and the Board. But now that New Haven Mayor John DeStefano is pushing forward with education reform, City Hall has embraced Johnston’s constructive criticism by inviting him to join the Board."

—New Haven Advocate, October 21, 2009
Tomorrow’s Connecticut is a state where no matter how humble your background, you receive an excellent public education. It’s a safe state, where prison sentences give way to college degrees. It’s a state whose students graduate with the skills to compete globally, propelling our economy to new heights. Today’s Connecticut is a state where the children most dependent on our public schools all too often get the least effective education. It’s a state with the largest achievement gap in the country, where our low-income students’ math skills are on par with the developing world. It’s a punitive state, where we spend more on jails than higher education. It’s a state whose economic future is in peril.
YOU.
BUT YOU CAN

ACT
NOW

JOIN THE MOVEMENT We can’t remake our public schools without you. Become a ConnCAN member so we can keep you up-to-date with timely advocacy actions and information.

LEARN THE FACTS Learn about the problems in our public schools by reading our reports and materials. Then be a part of the solution.

SPREAD THE WORD We can’t fix our schools if nobody knows they’re broken. Help build Connecticut’s education reform movement by becoming a fan on Facebook, following us on Twitter or e-mailing your friends with ConnCAN’s Tell-a-Friend tool.

TELL YOUR STORY Make the case for the power of public schools. Have you witnessed Connecticut’s achievement gap? What is your wish for our public schools? Why are you an education reformer?

CONTRIBUTE We can fix poverty by fixing schools. ConnCAN needs your support to make sure that every child in Connecticut, regardless of race, ethnicity or class, has access to a great public school. Make your voice heard by giving to ConnCAN (and it’s tax-deductible too).
"Maury Povich became interested in helping [ConnCan] after visiting Amistad Academy in New Haven this fall. Seeing the school’s success inspired him to get involved with public education reform in Connecticut. Alex Johnston [...] went down to New York to meet with him, told him about the efforts in Hartford and together they came up with the PSA idea."

—Hartford Courant blog, January 8, 2009
CONN CAN NOT REST

THE ORGANIZATION
Staff

ConnCA n Annu Al report 2009  the org Aniz Ation
ALEX JOHNSTON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Before helping to found ConnCAN, Alex Johnston directed operations at the New Haven Housing Authority, working as a member of the management team tasked with turning the agency around from the brink of receivership. A graduate of Harvard University, Alex received a D. Phil. in politics from Oxford’s Lincoln College on a Rhodes Scholarship, where he studied the impact of government funding on non-profit service providers. Alex serves on the state commission charged with developing Connecticut’s P–20 data system, is a member of the National Charter School Resource Center Advisory Board and sits on the New Haven Board of Education.

MARC PORTER MAGEE, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Prior to joining ConnCAN, Marc worked in Washington, D.C., as research director of the Partnership for Public Service, founding director of the Progressive Policy Institute’s Center for Civic Enterprise, and as a contributing editor of the policy journal Blueprint. He is co-editor, with Will Marshall, of the book The AmeriCorps Experiment and the Future of National Service (PPI) and serves as an advisory board member of the Edwin Gould Foundation. Marc is a graduate of Georgetown University and received his Ph.D. in sociology from Duke University.

RONALD JARRETT, VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
Prior to joining ConnCAN, Ronald Jarrett was deputy director of information services for New York State Senate Minority Leader (now New York State Governor) David Paterson. In this position, Ron managed grassroots and organizational campaigns supporting state legislation. Previously, he was an editor at Atria Books/Simon & Schuster. A graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, Ron received a J.D. from Yeshiva University’s Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law.

LISA WHITFIELD, EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR HUMAN RESOURCES & OPERATIONS
Before joining ConnCAN, Lisa Whitfield worked as a corporate legal office manager. Prior to that, Lisa was director/educator of the Business Management Program for a college-level proprietary school. She is a graduate of the University of New Haven.

KAREN RUTZICK, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
Before joining ConnCAN, Karen worked in Washington, D.C. as communications manager for the Save Darfur Coalition. Previously, Karen was a staff correspondent for National Journal’s Government Executive Magazine and a desk assistant for the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer. Karen is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg School for Communication.

ADENA SILBERSTEIN, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Before joining ConnCAN, Adena studied American Jewish History at New York University, where she is a doctoral candidate. She also worked as an editorial intern at the New Haven Register. Previously, Adena was a senior fellow at the American Jewish Committee. She is a graduate of Barnard College, Columbia University and a Wexner Graduate Fellow.
JESSICA STRAM, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS MANAGER
Prior to her arrival at ConnCAN, Jessica was a public policy intern for the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, where she conducted research for their national anti-bullying legislative campaign. Jessica earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Connecticut and her master’s degree in public policy and administration from Southern Connecticut State University.

TORI TRUSCHEIT, RESEARCH & POLICY MANAGER
Before joining ConnCAN, Tori Truscheit taught in New York City through Teach for America. She then taught at Elm City College Prep, an Achievement First public charter school in New Haven. Tori graduated from Yale University and received a master’s degree in teaching from Pace University.

LOURDES FONSECA, COMMUNITY RELATIONS ASSOCIATE
Before joining ConnCAN, Lourdes Fonseca was a community organizer at Hartford Areas Rally Together (HART). Prior to that, Lourdes worked at the Hartford Board of Education for seven years, where she was most recently a family resource aide. Lourdes earned her child development associate credential at Goodwin College in East Hartford.

ALLISON PELLICCIO, E-ADVOCACY ASSOCIATE
Before joining ConnCAN, Allison worked as E-Organizer for Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, where she managed communications with PPC’s database of supporters. She is a Connecticut native and graduated from Fairfield University in 2003 with a degree in Political Science.

NEW ADDITIONS IN 2010

SARAH GANLEY, ASSISTANT TO THE CEO & COO

CLAIRELISE RODRIGUEZ, ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE
LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Brian Olson, Chairman of the Board
Andy Boas
Sarah Greenhill
Will Heins
John N. Irwin III
Michael M. Kassen
Erika Long
Gary Lubben
Art Reimers
Bruce Ritter
Jonathan Sackler
Chris Shumway

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Dr. Philip E. Austin
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Cory Booker
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Konrad “Chip” Kruger
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Len Miller
Dr. Cheryl Norton
Anthony P. Rescigno
Dr. Theodore Sergi
Reverend Eric B. Smith
Richard Sugarman
Allan B. Taylor
Tom Vander Ark
CONNCAN CONTRIBUTORS: 2009

Anonymous
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Andrew B. Ashforth
David & Susannah Bailin
Kenneth Bartels & Jane Condon
Morgan Barth
Raymond Bell
Richard Bentley
Ethel Berger
Bodman Family Foundation
Lee Ann & Duane Bollert
Courtney Bourns
Kevin Brennan
The Peter & Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation, Inc.
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Peter Butler
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Susan Carney & Lincoln Caplan
Susan Caplan
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Alicia DeSouza-Rocha
Margaret DiBenedetto
Rebecca Diaz
Edith Baldinger Charitable Lead Annuity Trust
Emily J. Eisenlohr
Mr. & Mrs. Eric N. Ferguson
Richard & Marissa Ferguson
James Foote
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Louise Lancaster-Keim
James J. Lang
Kate Larson
Lone Pine Foundation, Inc.
Erika & Kevin Long
Lubben Capital Management LLC
Michael & Patricia Magee
Michael & Tia Mahaffy
Sue & Steve Mandel

Thank you!

Jeffrey Mayer
Mr. & Mrs. William F. McNagny
Doug & Ali Milne
Rebekah Menning & Willis Jenkins
Douglas Newman
The Olson Foundation
Jack Orchulli
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Everett & Sally Schenk
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The Shumway Family Foundation
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Silverleaf Foundation
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Jonathan Sonneborn
James Starr
Jessica Stram
John Strand
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Wyatt Truscheit
H.A. Vance Foundation Inc.
Venberg Foundation
Giselle Wagner & Paul Myerson
Rebecca Weiner
Lisa Whitfield
Robin Woods
Elaine Wyden
Yannix Management, LP
Leonard Zimmerman
We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now, Inc. (ConnCAN) as of December 31, 2008 and 2007 and the related statements of activities, and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of ConnCAN’s management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. ¶ We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of ConnCAN’s internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion. ¶ In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now, Inc. as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.
# Statement of Activities

**Years Ended December 31**

## Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>1,353,432</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>1,378,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest income</td>
<td>4,706</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized loss on sale of donated securities</td>
<td>(36,051)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(36,051)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-kind contributions</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>10,170</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restriction</td>
<td>261,609</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>261,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>1,596,266</td>
<td>(236,609)</td>
<td>1,359,657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and related expenses</td>
<td>837,320</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>837,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowering parents</td>
<td>34,461</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving policy change</td>
<td>70,652</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing the public</td>
<td>150,205</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>150,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training and development</td>
<td>41,047</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>41,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy</td>
<td>79,817</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>79,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional fees</td>
<td>67,816</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>26,292</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment and maintenance</td>
<td>28,188</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>10,534</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>8,920</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>24,164</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dues and subscriptions</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation expense</td>
<td>9,701</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous expenses</td>
<td>5,449</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>1,395,929</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,395,929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Change in Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>200,337</th>
<th>(236,609)</th>
<th>(36,272)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>200,337</td>
<td>(236,609)</td>
<td>(36,272)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning of year</strong></td>
<td>453,536</td>
<td>588,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of year</strong></td>
<td>653,873</td>
<td>453,536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ConnCAN Annual Report 2009**

**The Organization**
# Statement of Cash Flows

**Years Ended December 31**

**ConnCAN Annual Report 2009**

## Cash Flows from Operating Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>(36,272)</td>
<td>241,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash from operating activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized loss on donated securities</td>
<td>36,051</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donated securities</td>
<td>(256,031)</td>
<td>(33,920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount to present value on contributions receivable</td>
<td>(5,991)</td>
<td>6,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>9,701</td>
<td>13,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changes in operating assets and liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions receivable</td>
<td>142,600</td>
<td>(382,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>3,588</td>
<td>4,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expense</td>
<td>1,523</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deposit</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>(1,500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Cash from Operating Activities</strong></td>
<td>(104,831)</td>
<td>(151,038)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Cash Flows from Investing Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sale of donated securities</td>
<td>253,900</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of equipment</td>
<td>(12,902)</td>
<td>(25,928)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash from investing activities</strong></td>
<td>240,998</td>
<td>(25,928)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Cash and Cash Equivalents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning of year</strong></td>
<td>429,695</td>
<td>606,661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of year</strong></td>
<td>565,862</td>
<td>429,695</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We hope you enjoyed reading this Annual Report as much as we enjoyed creating it! But it’s not over yet; now it’s time to get to work.

**STEP 1**
Piece these cards together: Create a mosaic that contains a one-of-a-kind image and special web URL for you to visit (here’s a hint to help assemble the puzzle—the final mosaic will be $4 \times 13$).

**STEP 2**
Make your voice heard: Take action during ConnCAN’s 2010 Our Race to the Top campaign.

---

**CREDITS**
Adena Silberstein, Editor
Keiko Hiromi, Student Photography
Marc Porter Magee and Adena Silberstein, Staff Photography
house9design.ca, Art Direction and Design
Imprimerie L’empreinte, Printing

Special thank you to the Achievement FirstBridgeport Academy and the Macdonough Elementary School for hosting the photo shoots.