

What is “Families for Excellent Schools”?

A Fact Sheet from Citizens for Public Schools

Families for Excellent Schools is the latest deep-pockets, out-of-state organization with a pro-charter school agenda to set up shop in Boston, joining Stand for Children and Democrats for Education Reform.

Who controls “Families for Excellent Schools”?



FES was founded in 2011 in New York. Four of its five founding board members are Wall Street players, according to WNYC, the leading public radio station in New York City¹.

The group’s board of directors includes hedge fund managers from some of Wall Street’s top funds.

Who funds “Families for Excellent Schools”?



FES CEO Jeremiah Kittridge “declined to discuss his organization’s funding,” WNYC reported. Much of its money comes from secret sources.

However, public tax filings show the Walmart family’s foundation donated \$700,000 in two years². More giant contributions come from other corporate foundations. Their Boston venture got an \$800,000 boost³ from Strategic Grant Partnerships founded by Joanna Jacobson, former president of Keds Corporation, the sneaker company.

What does “Families for Excellent Schools” do with all that money?

In New York, the group has waged unrelenting warfare to expand charters at the expense of district schools.



FES put down \$6 million for a TV ad campaign attacking New York City Mayor Bill DiBlasio, to make him let more charter schools set up camp inside already-occupied public school buildings⁴.

FES spent \$98,795 on “parent stipends” in 2011⁵. And that was before they really got rolling. The latest filings only cover 2011. We don’t know how much the hedge fund owners are paying parents to support their corporate agenda this year.

The bottom line:

“Financiers for Privatizing Public Schools” would be a more accurate name for this Wall Street transplant.



Citizens for Public Schools

Parents, teachers, and other Massachusetts residents working to improve public education for all children.

Visit us at www.citizensforpublicschools.org.



Photos: Colin, Andrew Magill, 401kcalculator.org, Mike Licht

¹ <http://www.wnyc.org/story/behind-pro-charter-school-group-fighting-de-blasio/>

² <http://www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org/grantees/families-for-excellent-schools>

³ <http://edushyster.com/?p=5945#more-5945>. The \$800,000 amount has since been deleted from the SGP web page.

⁴ <http://www.wnyc.org/story/pro-charter-lobbying-group-spent-almost-6m-media-blitz/>

⁵ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.documentcloud.org/documents/1114478/families-for-excellent-schools-990-filing-2011.pdf>