

The Campaign for Quality Education

quality-education.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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California Ditches Schools

Students and Parents of Color Grade California Education from 2000 – 2010

Sacramento, CA—Approaching the 56th anniversary of *Brown v. Board*, students and parents of color gathered in the State Capitol to grade California’s public school system from 2000 – 2010. In six “subjects,” the state earned a dismal overall 0.66 GPA. The categories included Funding, Graduation Rates, and College and Career Readiness.

The students and parents came as part of the Campaign for Quality Education’s day of action titled “M.I.A.: California Ditching Schools from 2000 – 2010.”

The morning portion of the program featured student and parent speakers from groups across the state, ranging from OC Human Relations in Orange County to Inner City Struggle in East Los Angeles, and Californians for Justice in Fresno to the Bay Area’s PLAN. The keynote speaker was Assemblymember Julia Brownley (D-Santa Monica) who chairs the Assembly Education Committee.

“We’re here because education is under attack and must be defended,” said Miriam Hernandez, a student leader from Fresno with Californians for Justice, as she pointed at a poster of California’s education grades over the past decade. “We’re here to say that our needs are California’s needs. Students of color, immigrant students, and low-income students make up 70% of California’s students. We are California!”

“I have a solution,” said Kido, a parent leader with Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network. “It’s called organizing, getting together in alliances to work towards a common goal, making sure all our students graduate ready for college and career. You’ve seen the stats, this is a crisis situation.”

The afternoon session featured the CQE using its statewide voice and building relationships with legislators by making over forty legislative delegations visits. Students and parents met with their representatives from across the state, ranging from Orange County to Sacramento.

“We didn’t come to point fingers,” said Veronica Alvarez, a parent and counselor with OC Human Relations. “We came with solutions, too. Over the past ten years, as education has been attacked, grassroots organizations have won important local and state victories. Today, we want to stress that we need political courage and creative policies that generate revenue. We can’t cut our way to a healthy state.”

For the last three years, the CQE has rallied students and parents of color and their allies at the state capitol. They have rallied thousands from across the state and made hundreds of legislative visits. “Students and parents have to be included in fixing our schools,” said Kenyon Davis, a student leader from Long Beach. “We know our schools best and we know what we need. And we’ll keep coming back until we our leaders see that an investment in our schools is an investment in the future of California.”

The **Campaign for Quality Education** is a statewide coalition of grassroots, civil rights, policy and research organizations committed to educational equity for all communities in California’s public schools. For more information, visit www.quality-education.org.