



Keynote Speaker Paul O'Neill

"Across the country charter school advocates are working create opportunities for successful charter programs to replicate, and to remove barriers to shutting down poor ones."

Paul T. O'Neill is an education attorney, advisor, professor and author with extensive experience in guiding education organizations through challenges and growth. As Founder & President of Tugboat Education Services and as a Principal in the Education Law Practice Group of Cohen Schneider LLP in New York, he advises schools, authorizers, networks, non-profits, government agencies, and philanthropies on the rules and complexities that apply to educational organizations.



Mr. O'Neill's professional experience spans the education sector. He served for several years as General Counsel of the SUNY Charter Schools Institute, one of the nation's leading charter school authorizing offices. He later held senior positions, including Senior Vice President and Chief Regulatory Officer, with EdisonLearning, the national school management and services organization. Notably, he led Edison's efforts to engage in the post-Katrina revitalization of public schooling in New Orleans. He is a former Associate Director of the Newgrange School and Educational Outreach Center in New Jersey, which serves individuals with learning disabilities, and a former litigator in the New York offices of Dewey Ballantine LLP and Willkie, Farr & Gallagher.

On the academic side, Mr. O'Neill serves on the adjunct faculty of Columbia University's Teachers College, where he teaches courses on education law and policy, including Designing Charter Schools, and Special Education Law & Policy. In 2011, he was honored to receive a Distinguished Alumni Award from Teachers College for his achievements within 10 years of graduation. He is a frequent guest lecturer at other universities on a range of education reform topics and is the author of several books and numerous scholarly and professional articles.

The Evolution of Charter Schooling

Opening Session 9:30 - 10 am

In some respects the work is the same as it has always been: giving families that have few good educational options the choice to send their kids to a strong school, and the ability to help kids get a quality education that will get them on a path to a good career and a good life. But the charter school environment has changed a lot since the early 90s when the first charters opened in MN. The most important word used to be "innovation," and now many charter advocates think that has proven to be almost a dirty word. At charter school 20 year mark, Paul O'Neill brings a national perspective on the charter school movement and on the next generation of charter schools we need to be developing in South Carolina.

The Realities, Risks and Rules that Can Sink Charter Schools

Greystone Meeting Room 11-12:25pm

An upbeat, proactive approach to driving achievement and success in charter schools, this presentation focuses on the operational practices of highly successful charter schools. It advocates taking control of practical factors at the board and leadership levels and leveraging charter autonomy. This includes how to manage the regulatory factors and authorizer relations that can have a huge impact on success, as well as empowering the board and school leader to develop and use a dashboard to set and achieve goals and to drive instruction. Passive schools don't win, and kids suffer. They don't have to.

Registration: <http://www.sccharterschools.org/conference>