

COLLABORATION WITH CHOATE HALL & STEWART LLP TO CREATE A *PRO BONO* EDUCATION LAW PROJECT AIMED AT SERVING AT-RISK YOUTH IN MASSACHUSETTS

Announcement

The Center for Law and Education (CLE), directed by Kathleen Boundy and Paul Weckstein, and the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School (CHHIRJ), directed by Professor Charles Ogletree, Jr., are pleased to announce a partnership with Choate Hall & Stewart LLP of Boston. CLE's Jenny Chou, a highly regarded attorney with over a decade of experience, will direct the project for CLE. Ms. Chou will screen requests for assistance from Massachusetts' legal service field offices as well as other public interest agencies. Assisted by other CLE attorneys and CHHIRJ staff, she will provide training and mentoring to Choate attorneys working on the Project. Choate lawyers will represent low-income students in administrative hearings at the school, district and state levels, as well as in court. The students will include those with disabilities, students facing school disciplinary exclusions and students who are otherwise being deprived of effective education and related services. Choate's representation will be on a *pro bono publico* basis – free of charge.

The overall goals of this collaboration are to: (1) enhance the direct representation available to low-income students facing expulsions, suspensions and other school placement decisions resulting in their denial of a quality public education; (2) identify, monitor and pursue broader educational issues to be addressed systemically, including through litigation and administrative compliance complaints; and (3) ultimately promote legislative reforms aimed at eliminating denial of education as a response to challenging behavior and at improving educational opportunities and outcomes for students, particularly those from low-income families and communities.

John Nadas, co-managing Partner at Choate, Hall and Stewart has said: “We are particularly pleased to welcome CLE into our ongoing collaboration with the Houston Institute. CLE has earned a reputation, not only statewide, but across the country, for its effective advocacy on behalf of low-income students. It is vital for the future of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that low-income students and students of color receive the tools necessary to compete and succeed at the highest levels of our society. Every child deserves a quality education, and we are proud to participate in efforts aimed at ensuring this basic right.”

For More Information, Please Contact:

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About Partner Organizations:

Choate, Hall & Stewart LLP is a leading law firm with nationally recognized practices in private equity, business and technology, litigation, intellectual property, wealth management, and insurance/reinsurance. The firm’s clients range from Fortune 100 companies to leading venture capital and buyout funds to technology startups.

The Center for Law and Education strives to make the right of all students to quality education a reality throughout the nation and to help enable communities to address their own public education problems effectively, with an emphasis on assistance to low-income students and communities. For almost forty years, the Center for Law and Education has worked to bring about school- and district-wide change across the country in order to improve educational outcomes, particularly for low-income students

The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School was founded in 2005 by Charles Ogletree, Jr. The Institute honors and continues the work of Charles Hamilton Houston, one of the nation's great legal minds of the 20th century, and the "engineer" of the strategy that ultimately led to the Supreme Court decision, *Brown vs. Board of Education*, abolishing "separate but equal" education for black and white children. The Institute harnesses the resources and expertise within Harvard University and beyond to address structural and legal barriers to equal opportunity in this country.