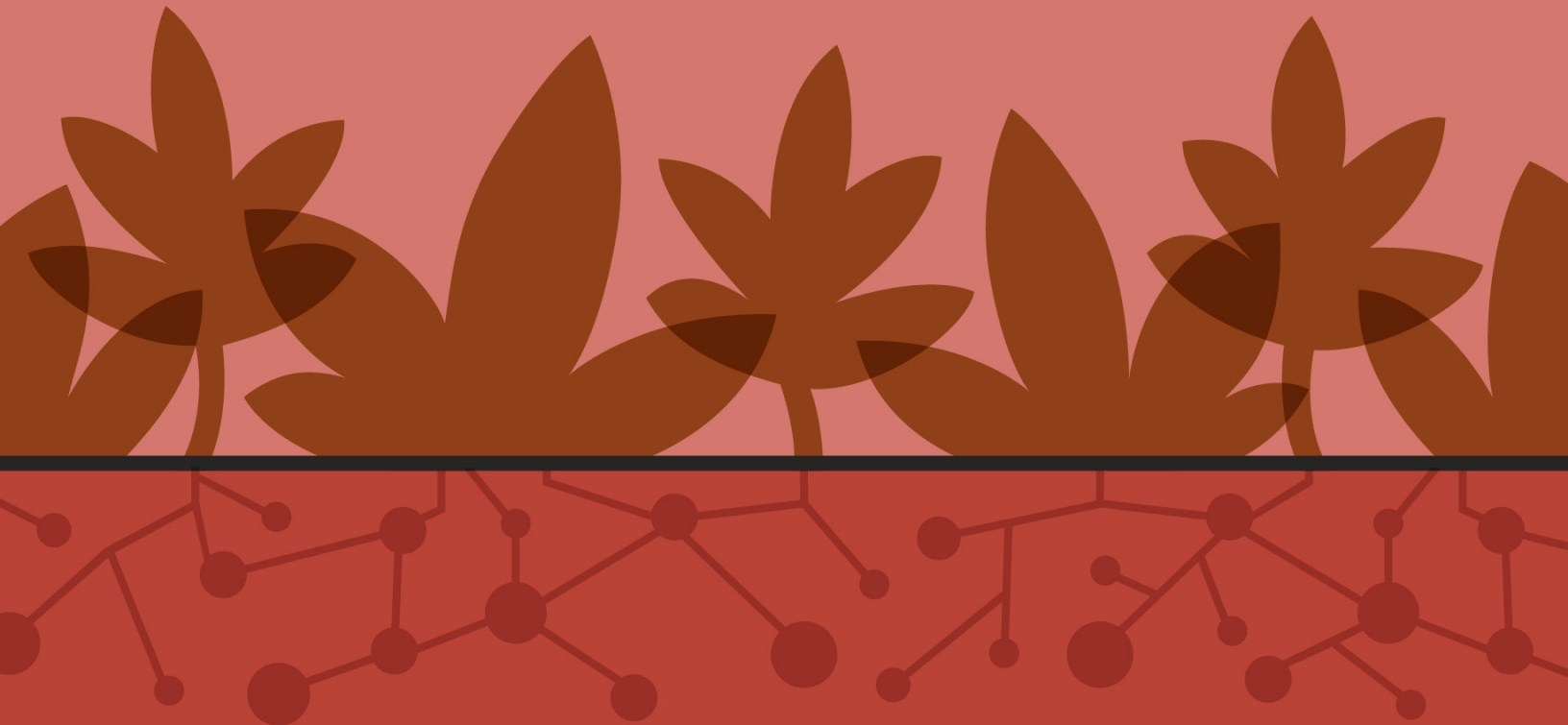




# FOUR MILLION OPPORTUNITIES, FOUR BIG BETS



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# Foreword

May 2017

Dear friend,

We are pleased to share our first strategic plan since the original blueprint that launched 50CAN: The 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now in 2011. A product of over 100 meetings with staff, board members, partners and supporters, inside these pages you will find our vision for the next five years of our work as a locally led, nationally supported network of citizen advocates.

With the federal government more divided than any time since the Civil War and our national leaders unable to find a path forward, now more than ever we need to invest in local advocates who aren't afraid to stand up for kids. These are the people who build bridges within their communities across partisan divides and make sure the needs of students are front and center in all their work.

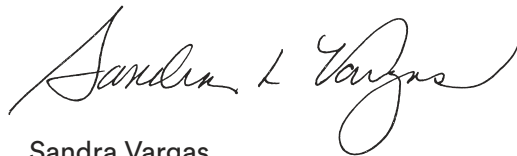
This is a plan we could not have written at our founding because it rests on the hard-fought lessons learned from the countless setbacks and successes of our campaigns. It's because of our history that we know how powerful citizen advocates can be and how important it is for us to be bold in charting the next chapter in the story of 50CAN.

We don't have simple answers, but we do have a strong view forged through experience. We know education advocacy is a marathon, not a sprint; it demands equal parts resilience and accountability. At 50CAN, we have the tenacity to stay the course regardless of the obstacles in our way, and we have the dexterity to adapt our efforts based on what we are learning on the ground.

We are excited to take the next steps on the road ahead as we exit our time as a startup that supports a small number of state-level advocacy campaigns and lift our heads upward to the next challenge on the horizon: building a truly nationwide network of thousands of citizen advocates working at the state, county, city, town and neighborhood level who move us closer each year to the excellent and equitable education systems our kids deserve.

We can't thank you enough for everything you have done to make 50CAN a success in our first six years and are thrilled to take this next step with you in the months and years ahead.

Warmly,



Sandra Vargas  
Chair, 50CAN Board of Directors



Marc Porter Magee, Ph.D.  
CEO and Founder, 50CAN

# Executive Summary

## *Four million opportunities, four big bets*

Our work to improve education in America springs from our belief in the immense potential found within every child. Every year, four million children are born in our country, and we know the most important way to nurture and develop the full potential of each of them is through our public investment in education.

Reimagining American pre-K through 12 education is more than a just cause, it's the most important work we can do as a democracy. The success of our efforts to improve education for all kids will depend on attracting, connecting and investing in people who come from the communities they serve and helping them put the needs of children at the center of education decisions.

Citizen advocates are indispensable. Our civic responsibility to ensure children receive a high-quality education depends on a complex network of thousands of neighborhood, town, city, county and state systems knit together through 200 years of policy and practice. No two states or communities are alike in this vast country.

Because of this, our network of citizen advocates must also be a vast one, with thousands of leaders drawing upon their own unique insights into the needs of their communities while sharing and learning together to accelerate the nationwide pace of change.

Building upon the lessons learned from our work supporting a dozen state-level education advocacy campaigns, we will marshal our organizational resources around four big bets to help democratize education advocacy itself:

- **More people.** We will recruit the next generation of citizen advocates and support them in leading this nationwide effort to reimagine education.
- **Greater opportunities.** We will provide more opportunities for local advocates to create new campaigns of all shapes and sizes to ensure their enthusiasm translates into action.
- **Smarter goals.** We will create a community of learning to ensure these advocacy efforts work on behalf of transforming education into dynamic, vibrant systems focused on children's needs.

- **Better tools.** We will invest in a suite of advocacy tools to help these local leaders build, carry out and learn from their campaigns so that they secure the results our kids deserve.

While we are proud of the 64 policy wins we have secured for kids in our first six years, we know we still have a lot to learn. We are eager to join forces with partners wherever we can to take on these big bets together. By helping passionate local advocates lead the way forward, we can ensure that America has the highest-performing, most equitable education system in the world—one that in all 50 states is supportive of many different paths to success and empowers parents to be in the driver's seat of their child's education. We want to build a system that provides education leaders with the flexibility needed to pursue excellence and rigorous standards to measure their success. Finally, we need a system that supports effective and sustainable policy change that is owned by the communities served.

We will strive to be resourceful and nimble as we push forward for the changes our kids deserve. We aim to see every win—and every setback—as an opportunity for our growing network to learn what's working today and envision what might be possible tomorrow. We know we don't have all the answers and that we can only succeed by constantly testing our assumptions, working in deep collaboration with others and investing in an inclusive culture enlivened by diverse viewpoints from across our states.

We will work tirelessly in pursuit of an America where every child receives the educational keys to unlock whatever doors they choose as the next step in their journey. To reach this goal, we will redraw our organizational map to ground our work in a simple formula: More people, given greater opportunities to lead, aimed at smarter goals and equipped with better tools, can transform education in America so all children can fulfill their potential.

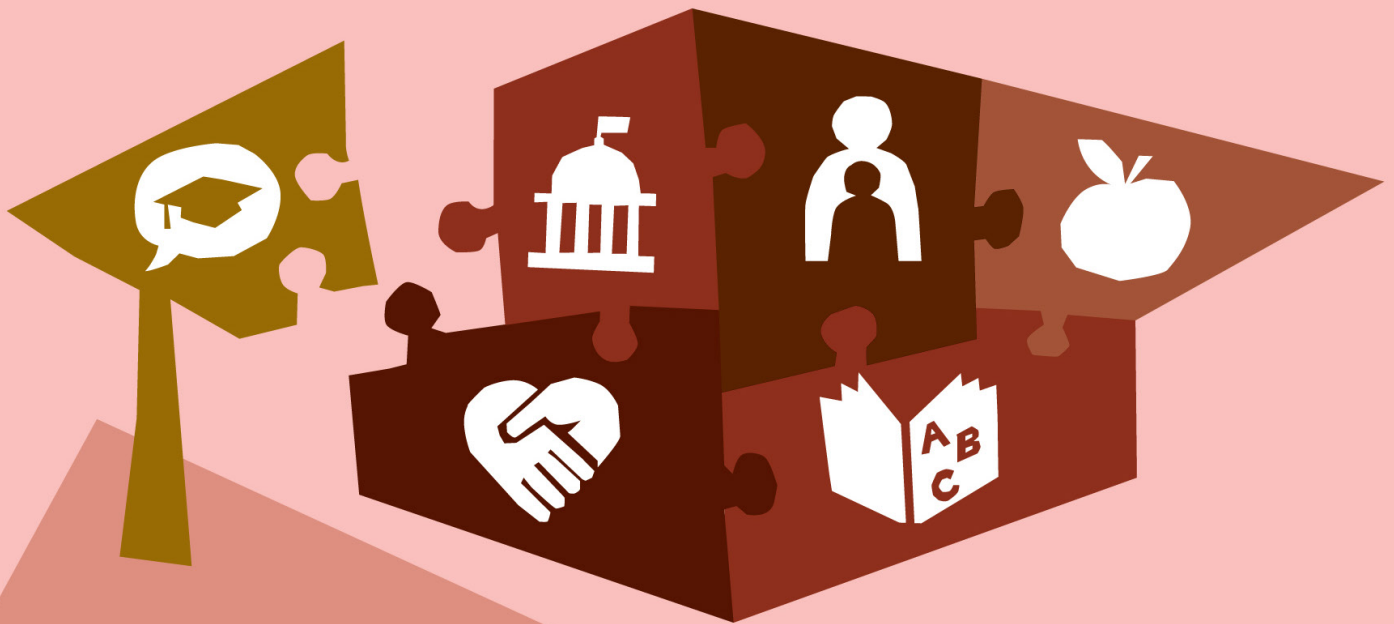


1.

# FOUR MILLION OPPORTUNITIES

“Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children.”  
— Walt Disney





## Our work to improve education in America springs from our belief in the immense potential found within every child.

Every year, four million children are born in our country. We know the most important way to nurture and develop their full potential is through our public commitment to education. Reimagining American pre-K through 12 education to reach this goal is more than a just cause, it's the most important work we can do as a democracy.

The unfortunate reality is that far too often, we fall short of this ideal. The American story is one of striving to live up to our founding principles, with a clear-eyed view of our present challenges and a powerful optimism about the future we can create together. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said it best when he wrote that the charge of each generation is to make America's "declarations of freedom real; to reach back to the origins of our nation when our message of equality electrified an unfree world."

The hard truth is that many of the four million babies born this year will end up in schools that do not provide them with a chance to unlock their potential, often for no other reason than where they were born, the color of their skin or the amount of money their

parents make. We have the opportunity—in this generation—to change this reality. But it will take all of us working together to dream boldly about what's possible and translate those dreams into daring actions.

This public commitment to educating every child must be a shared responsibility. It takes teachers and principals who create a productive learning environment for their students each day, parents and family members who support their child's learning at home, students who strive for new heights, committed community leaders who work to create a safe and caring environment for all the children in their neighborhood and public officials who make it their mission to provide the resources, policies and support to those in the community working on behalf of the education of all kids.

A final piece of the puzzle is the crucial role each of us can play as citizen advocates. This advocacy takes many forms but, at its core, it is about working to ensure the needs of all children are at the center of the education system we create.



While the word “advocate” conjures images of larger-than-life figures, the success of this educational project is too big—and our country too large, diverse and rich in local history—for any one person to accomplish it alone. It’s the everyday advocates, inspired by their love of community, who are leading the way forward. We rarely see their names in the headlines, but we see the impact of their work in communities across the country that are transforming education one child and one school at a time.

These citizen advocates are indispensable because the United States doesn’t have a top-down national education system. Instead, our civic responsibility to ensure our children receive a high-quality education rests on a complex network of thousands of neighborhood, town, city, county and state systems, knit together through 200 years of policy and practice. No two states or communities are alike in this vast country.

And so our network of citizen advocates must also be a vast one, with thousands of citizens drawing upon their own unique insights into the needs of their communities while sharing and learning together to accelerate the nationwide pace of change.

Through more than a decade of local education advocacy work in support of more than 100 local campaigns, we have found that great advocates come from all walks of life.

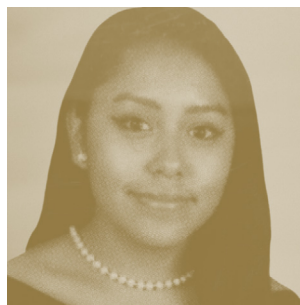
Some, like Michigan’s Melody Arabo, are teachers who are taking what they learn about the needs of kids in the classroom and ensuring that it informs education policy. Some, like New Jersey’s Tafshier Cosby, are parents who are inspired by the experience of their own kids to ensure every child receives the education they deserve. Some, like Delaware’s Alejandra Villamares, are students who are raising their voices to bring urgency to the pace of change to help their classmates. And some, like Hawaii’s David Miyashiro, are concerned citizens who know that whether they have children in their state’s education system or not, everyone depends on its success.



Melody Arabo



Tafshier Cosby



Alejandra Villamares



David Miyashiro

Education in the United States is everyone’s responsibility, and the success of our efforts to improve education for all kids will depend on attracting and connecting people from all walks of life into a common movement for change. Indeed, it is the work of these citizen advocates—building bridges, seeking understanding, organizing neighbors, informing lawmakers, sharing best practices and bringing urgency to the debate—that makes change possible.

50CAN: The 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now exists to help these local leaders be more successful advocates for kids.

# 2.

# OUR CORE INSIGHTS

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead



Charleston, South Carolina.



# Locally led change is in our DNA.

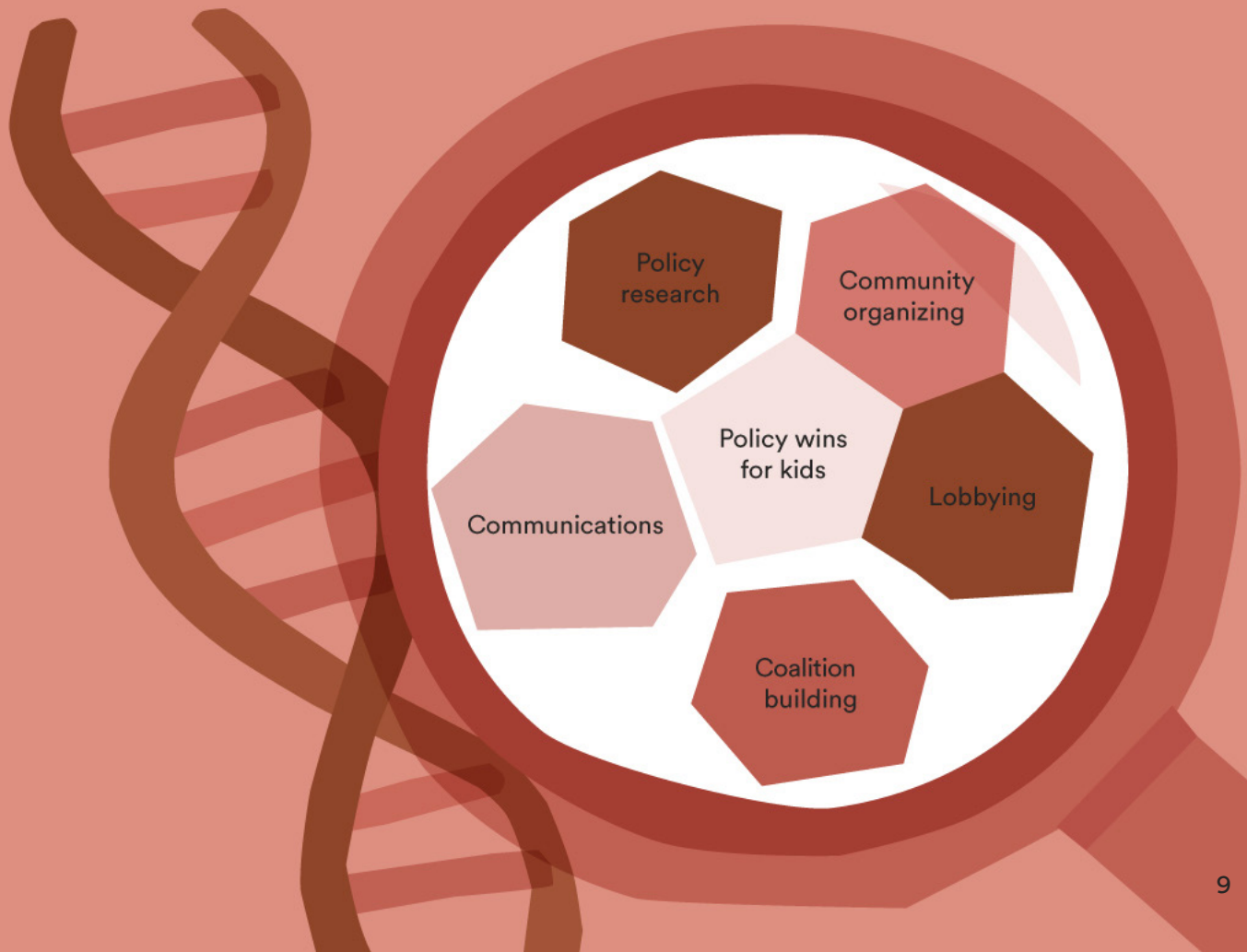
50CAN was inspired by the example of a small group of teachers, parents and concerned citizens who came together in 2005 in their home state of Connecticut to advocate for the changes that the children in the Nutmeg State deserved. Over the next six years the nonprofit organization they formed, ConnCAN, emerged as a tireless champion for putting students' needs at the center of the debate at the state capitol.

Between 2005 and 2010, these local leaders tried and failed and tried again until they found their way to an effective advocacy organization that could get policy wins for kids. During this time they ran 26 issue campaigns that researched new policy ideas, built coalitions of support, elevated the voices of fellow parents and teachers, drove a statewide conversation in the media and lobbied for action at the Connecticut Statehouse. The result of this tireless work was 15 important policy wins for kids, including:

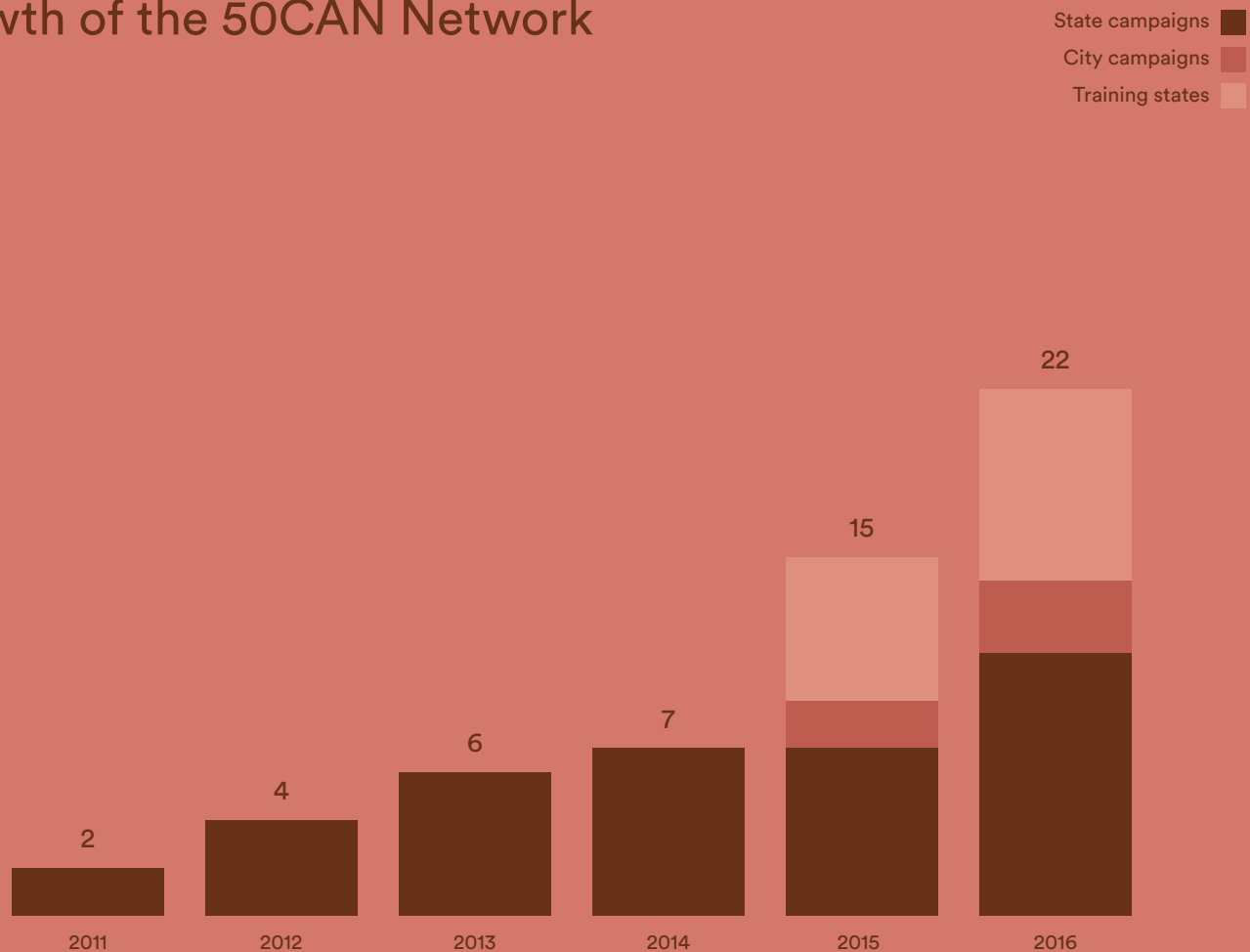
- The largest overhaul of teacher certification rules in 25 years;
- Millions of dollars for an accountability system grounded in student growth;
- More equitable funding for public charter schools; and
- The transformation of the Hartford school system into a portfolio system of schools.

Reflecting on those first five years, New Leaders founder Jon Schnur concluded that, "Every state in the country should have a ConnCAN."

## The CAN Model



# Growth of the 50CAN Network

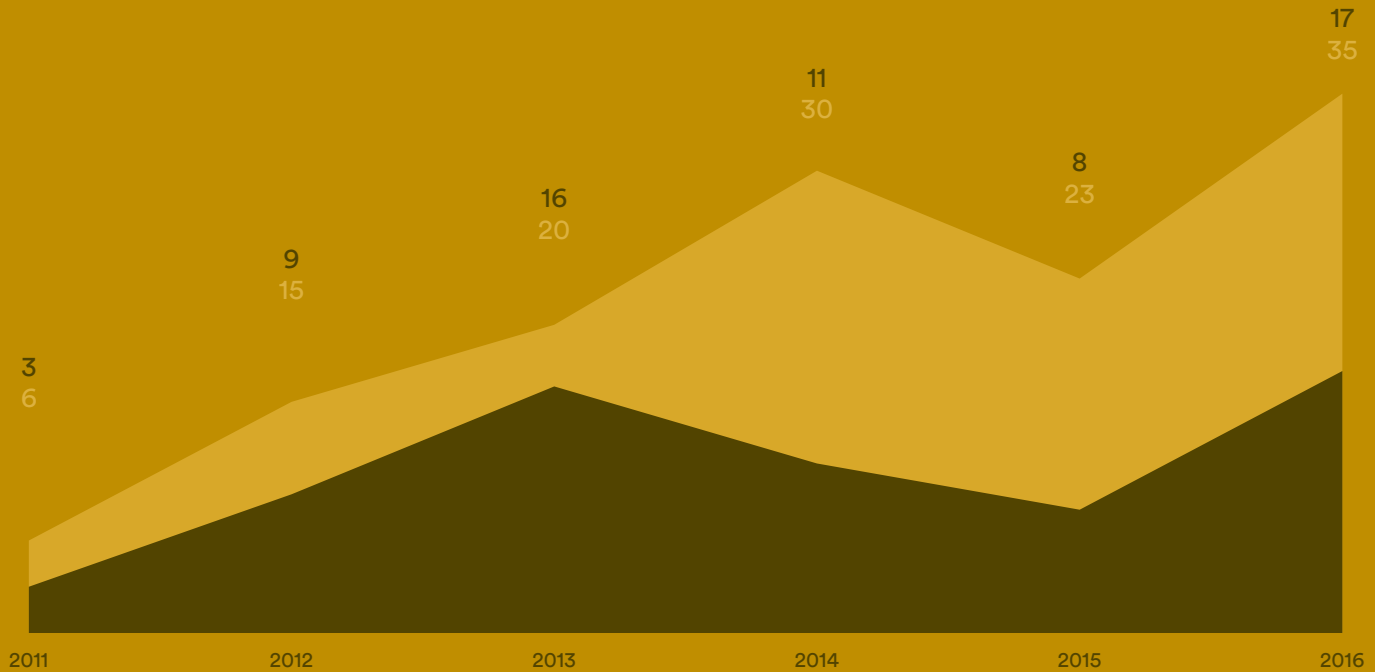


In 2010, Marc Porter Magee, ConnCAN's chief operating officer, took up the challenge of helping more local teachers, parents and concerned citizens in other states create statewide campaigns of their own. What emerged was a new kind of locally led, nationally supported advocacy organization. Not a national organization, but a network of state campaigns working together to advance a common cause. We called it 50CAN: The 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now.

Officially launched as an independent nonprofit organization in January 2011, over the past six years 50CAN has partnered with citizens in communities across the country to bring new education advocacy campaigns to life. Through this work, and many stumbles and setbacks along the way, the 50CAN team discovered in ways big and small how to help local leaders benefit from a network of support while preserving the entrepreneurial energy of locally led campaigns. In 2016, 50CAN joined forces with another education advocacy organization, StudentsFirst, to bring dozens more advocates into this network across three additional states. By January 2017, the 50CAN network was made up of hundreds of volunteers, more than 80 local advisory board members, more than 50 full-time staff and more than 20 advocacy leaders in training.

# 50CAN's Issue Campaigns and Policy Wins

Issue campaigns ■  
Policy wins ■



In the first six years, these local advocates ran 127 issue campaigns to lead the way towards an education system that starts earlier, expands choices, aims higher, cultivates talent and reaches everyone. While it wasn't always easy, together with the help of their local and national partners, the citizen advocates of the 50CAN network secured 64 important policy wins that helped more than 15 million students across 13 states, including:

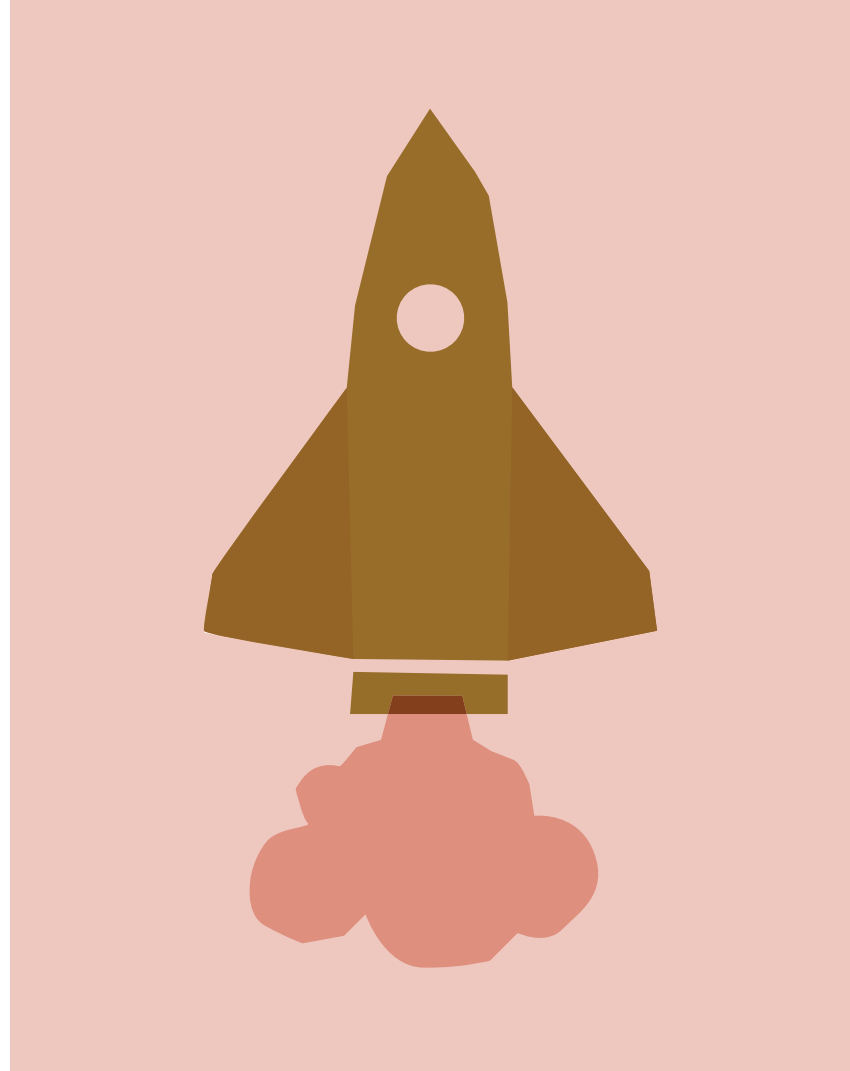
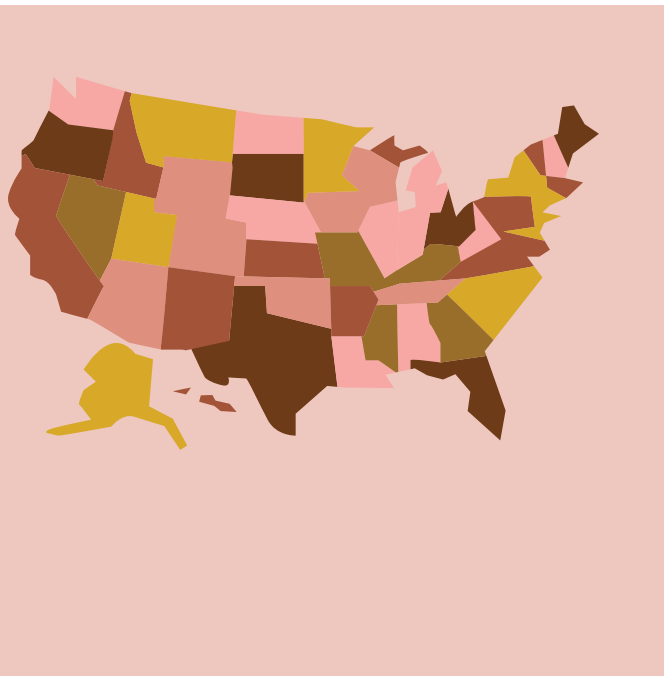
- The largest teacher pay raise in North Carolina state history;
- An A-to-F school grading system in Tennessee;
- More equitable public charter school funding in New Jersey;
- \$96 million in early learning scholarships in Minnesota;
- An expansion of pre-K in Maryland; and
- A complete overhaul of the school facilities funding system in Rhode Island.



Powering this work are citizen advocates—volunteers, staff and board members—who come together to do extraordinary things. In 50CAN, they have found an organization where they are able to do the best work of their lives in an inclusive culture that supports and sustains them. Through these hard-fought victories and difficult losses, we have learned many lessons and developed a few core insights about what it takes to build an education system that can help all children fulfill their potential.

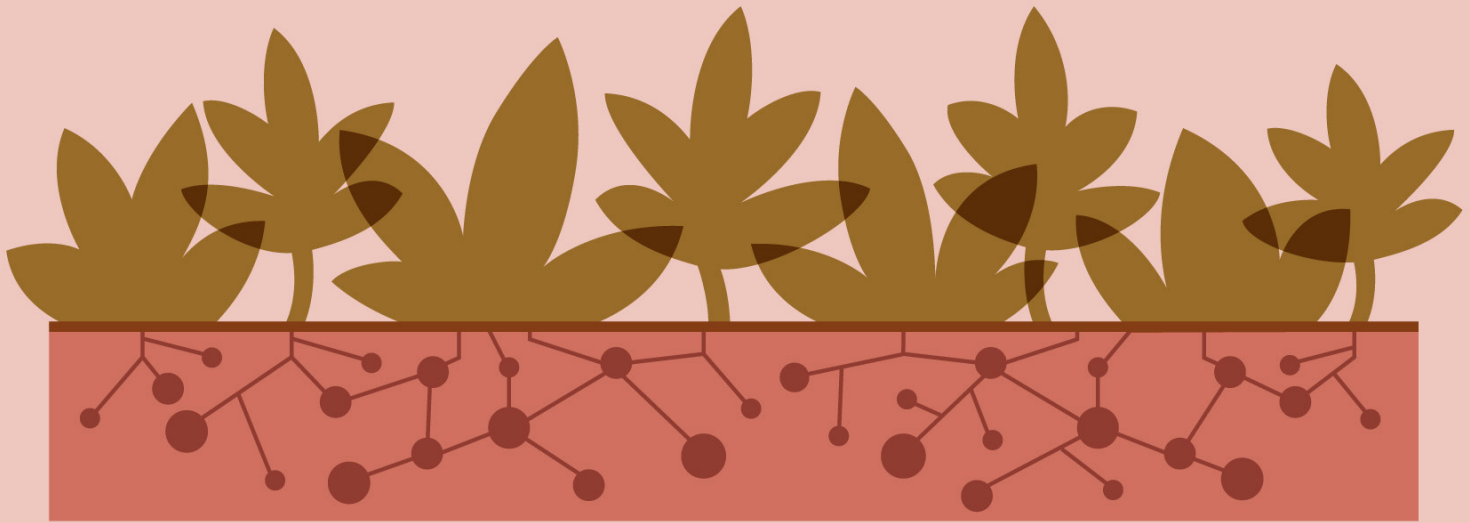
## Our goal should not be uniformity but a mosaic of excellence.

We know that we should not settle for anything less than the highest-performing and most equitable pre-K through 12 education system in the world. Put simply, being a child in America should mean that you will have access to a world-class education no matter where you live, what the color of your skin is or how much money your family makes. When you leave this system as a high school graduate, you should have the keys to unlock whatever doors you choose as the next step in your life. When teachers, parents, students, neighbors and public officials work together, we can make big strides towards this goal. But we will never reach our ultimate objective if what we are trying to build is a top-down, national education system. Our country is too big, too diverse and too proud of its local cultures and traditions for a top-down national education system to work. Instead we need to embrace the diversity of American education by working towards a rich mosaic of dynamic local education systems, striving towards excellence, grounded in the unique local needs of our communities, built upon our strengths and constantly adapting to changing local circumstances.



## Achieving this goal is more complex than rocket science.

We know that the only way to reach this goal is to embrace its complexity. This is perhaps the most difficult work we can take on as citizen advocates, and this effort will be measured not in months or years, but decades. We aim to bring a fierce urgency to each and every campaign without losing sight of the long-term changes needed to achieve our boldest goals. This means working not simply to enact changes, but to set in motion dynamic, adaptive educational systems that will evolve in response to teachers' innovations and students' needs. We aim to build these changes from the ground up, bringing a pragmatic and scientific mindset to working with the depth, scale and connections of this complex, 50-state education system. We see this work as the great public endeavor of our time that will take all of our efforts to ensure success.



**To overcome these challenges,  
we need to harness the  
power of open advocacy.**

We know that the only way we can change a system this vast and complex is by democratizing advocacy itself. We need to cast aside one-size-fits-all, top-down mandates and embrace a larger, more diverse, more dynamic network of thousands of citizen advocates working together in every state in the country. We also know we don't have all the answers, and that we can only succeed by constantly testing our assumptions, working in deep collaboration with others and investing in an inclusive culture enlivened by diverse viewpoints from across our states. By embracing transparency—openly sharing our successes and our failures with each other and our partners—we won't need to have all the answers at the outset to find the right pathways to improving education systems for all kids. And by supporting hundreds or even thousands of campaigns running in parallel, we can dramatically accelerate the pace of learning.

These insights, borne of the work of more than 100 issue campaigns, point the way forward. But to get there we will need to marshal our organizational resources around the big bets that will power us all on the road ahead.

# 3.

# FOUR BIG BETS

“Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work.”

— Daniel Burnham



Baltimore, Maryland



We are proud of all that we have accomplished, but we know we have just scratched the surface of the changes needed to reach our goals.

Building upon the insights from our first six years of successes and failures, we are eager to go further.



We think of the challenge of building a movement of citizen advocates as bringing together three worlds that don't overlap all that often in our communities: people who want to be local advocates, people who have the policy knowledge and political skills to get wins for kids and people who can raise the funds needed to sustain campaigns in the long term.

To bring these different worlds together in communities across the country, we will need to go further by investing in four, interconnected big bets:

1. More people with diverse skills and backgrounds;
2. Given greater opportunities to lead advocacy campaigns of all shapes and sizes;
3. Aimed at smarter and more transformational goals; and
4. Equipped with stronger advocacy tools to increase the odds of success.

**MORE PEOPLE  
+ GREATER OPPORTUNITIES  
+ SMARTER GOALS  
+ BETTER TOOLS**

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**= ALL KIDS EDUCATED  
TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL**

# 1. More people

If there is any field that can't be satisfied with supporting a small number of advocacy leaders, it's ours. The very nature of education in America—the vast network of 14,000 school districts, the complex interaction of thousands of different local, state and federal policies, the enormous diversity of our student body and the challenges of ensuring effective implementation without centralized control—means a small number of advocacy campaigns, no matter how successful, will never be enough.

We're proud of the dozens of local leaders we have worked with during our first six years, but we know that there are thousands more waiting for the right opportunity to get involved. We aim to help many more talented teachers, parents, students, faith-leaders and concerned citizens step forward to champion transformational changes for kids. Education advocacy campaigns should be led by citizen advocates who are part of the communities that they're working to serve. We need to do much more to recruit these local leaders from every walk of life because no place or profession has a monopoly on producing them. Through investments in stories, photos, videos, events, social media and more, we aim to inspire a whole new generation to join this cause and connect them to our growing network of citizen advocates.

→ By 2023

We aim to have recruited and trained more than 1,000 new local advocacy leaders. These citizen advocates will in turn have created, and be leading, at least 250 local campaigns across all 50 states.



## 2. Greater opportunities

When this new generation of education advocates steps forward to lead, we need to ensure that there are many opportunities for them to do so. We've seen the power of supporting community leaders in launching campaigns through the 50CAN Education Advocacy Fellowship. But right now, the barriers to creating new campaigns in our network are still too high because of the time and expense of maintaining a full-time statewide advocacy effort. By building a suite of campaigns of varying shapes and sizes—from part-time neighborhood efforts to single-issue regional campaigns to multimillion-dollar integrated 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 statewide campaigns—we can ensure that this enthusiasm translates into action.

→ By 2023

We will be running comprehensive full-time, part-time and intensive advocacy training programs as on-ramps that allow advocates to join the existing network of state, regional and neighborhood campaigns or start new campaigns. At least two-thirds of the 250 advocacy campaigns we support will be at the neighborhood or regional level. This network of campaigns of all shapes and sizes will include not only branches of 50CAN, but also affiliates and independent partners, all working together in a vibrant community of learning and support.





### 3. Smarter goals

These advocacy campaigns, no matter how successful, won't help kids achieve their potential if we are advocating for the wrong goals. That's why in our third big bet, we are focused on helping local advocates choose the policy goals that will make the greatest difference for kids. Our local leaders have built their campaigns from a menu of specific policies that academic research and local experience show are increasing the quality of education students receive. But what's missing is a way to move beyond choosing from a simple list of short-term policy goals to building comprehensive long-term visions. To get there, we are investing in a new support system. Local leaders will build policy plans grounded in a culture of sharing and learning. A suite of policy courses will ensure that everyone has access to the latest evidence and research. Goals will evolve alongside the evidence of what is working in our communities. And a shared policy language will empower leaders to use multiple lenses to gain a complete picture on how these goals can set transformational change into motion.

→ By 2023

One hundred percent of citizen advocates working within the 50CAN network will be choosing their goals as part of long-term visions of change. These visions will be powered by comprehensive assessments that rate their community or state across four change indexes, a selection of policies grounded in an evolving system of the nation's best research and flexible templates. These multiyear policy blueprints will provide a road map for campaigns and share lessons learned across the entire network.



## 4. Better tools

The ultimate test of what we have built is if local advocates can secure more change for kids as part of the 50CAN network than they could by working alone. In our final big bet, we will invest in advocacy tools to power all of our campaigns. One way we can ensure that citizen advocates immediately benefit from the power of our network is by providing a suite of tools to help them build, carry out and learn from their campaigns. We've seen the benefit of a common platform for building campaigns customized to local circumstances through the publication and use of the *50CAN Guide to Building Advocacy Campaigns*. Now we aim to go further by transforming this guide into an online platform for building thousands of different types of campaigns, organizing a suite of best-in-class technological tools for carrying out these campaigns, building a simple, but powerful dashboard for visualizing the progress made in each campaign and creating new tools for analyzing the data across hundreds of other similar campaigns to better predict how to improve one's odds of success.

→ By 2023

This entire network of advocates will be connected together through a best-in-class technology platform where they can plan campaigns, execute strategies and tactics, track and analyze campaign data in real time and gain key insights into how to increase their odds of success. Powered by in-house tools and a suite of new generation applications, the platform will ensure the 50CAN network can scale to empower as many advocates as are willing to step forward to put kids' needs at the center of the education system of tomorrow.



# 4.

# GETTING TO WORK

“It’s always impossible until it’s done.”  
— Nelson Mandela





# Before we even put pen to paper to write this plan, we started to work on translating these ideas into reality.

In this final section of our strategic plan, we lay out the long-term goals we are striving for in this next phase of our work.

We benefit from a strong and seasoned team that is building upon the experiences gained over the course of more than 100 advocacy campaigns. We are able to take these next steps forward because of the hard-fought lessons learned from our first six years. But we know we still have a lot to learn and we are eager to join together with partners wherever we can to take on these big bets together: teachers pioneering innovative practices in their classrooms, academic researchers pushing the frontiers of knowledge, think tanks shaping insights into smart policy, advocates specializing in key ideas or specific change strategies, technology companies building the next generation of tools, community nonprofits empowering a new generation of leaders and many more.

If we work together as a great network of citizen advocates in communities across the country, we know we can set in motion the changes that will help ensure America has the highest-performing and most equitable education system in the world. This educational mosaic of state, regional and neighborhood systems will be dynamic and supportive of lots of paths to success. It will empower parents to drive better outcomes for their children. It will provide education leaders with the flexibility needed to pursue excellence and rigorous standards to measure their success. Finally, it will support effective and sustainable policy change that is owned by the communities served.

Working together, we can usher in a new era for education in America so that no matter where kids live, the color of their skin or how much their families make, they are educated to their fullest potential. Putting this into action will require an unwavering commitment and a clear-eyed approach. It demands equal parts resilience and accountability. We strive to have the tenacity to stay the course, regardless of the obstacles, and the flexibility to incorporate emerging developments. We aim to see every win—and every setback—as an opportunity to learn what’s working today and envision what might be possible tomorrow.

The four million babies born in 2018 will be entering kindergarten in 2023. How much can we accomplish as advocates to make sure our state education systems are ready when they get there? They will be preparing to enter high school in 2031. What kinds of revolutionary changes can we unleash by then so that the educational opportunities that await them are greater than anything we can imagine now? The answers to those questions start with a new approach to how we organize our work.

## Redrawing the organizational map

To ensure all the pieces of this strategic plan actually happen, we need to redesign how we do our work at 50CAN so all our areas are working together in the service of this bold vision. That means redrawing our organizational map.

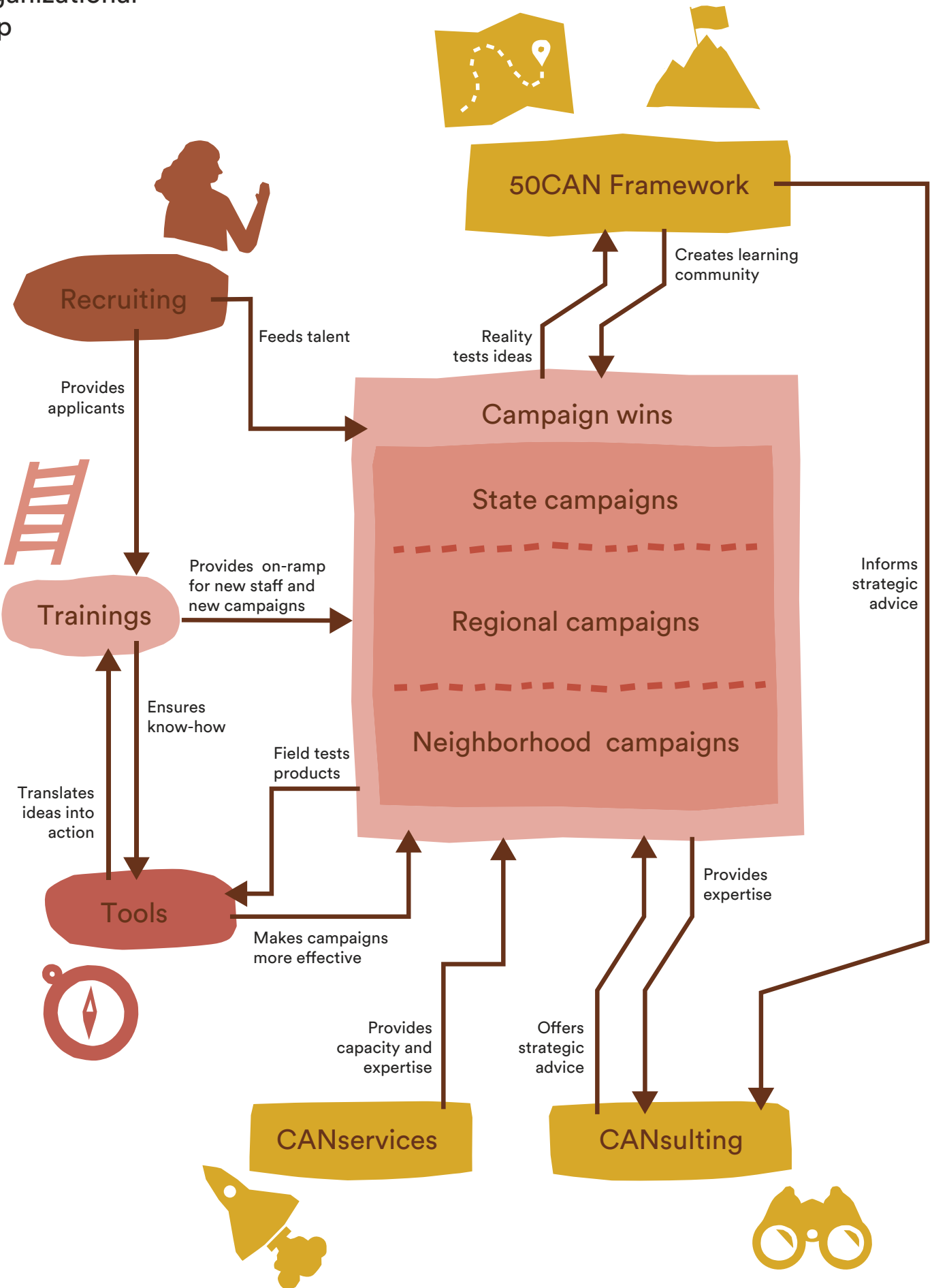
In our first six years, strong state campaigns with a mastery of policy, communications and government relations have been the center of our work. In our new map, these efforts will continue to be foundational, but we will also build upon them by supporting many more regional and neighborhood campaigns, with all three types of advocacy efforts working together in the service of a long-term vision for change.

To support these campaigns over the next five years, we will invest in a rich ecosystem of support services designed to ensure these campaigns thrive. It starts with a commitment to recruiting the next generation of talented advocates and providing them with the training and support needed to either join an existing campaign or start a new one.

The campaigns are in turn supported by CANservices (direct supports like development, advocacy and operations services) and CANsulting (strategic help to plan campaigns).

Finally, a comprehensive suite of tools powers the network and its advocates, resting upon a common way of building and carrying out campaigns: the 50CAN Framework.

# Organizational map





# The 50CAN Framework

What connects our community of education advocates is a common way of discussing, building and sharing advocacy campaigns. This framework is available as a free guidebook on [50can.org](http://50can.org).

Every local campaign in our network is unique, but a common planning process helps to ensure that everyone has the support they need to maximize their odds of success. The 50CAN team uses a three-step approach to campaign building: 1) clarify goals; 2) match strategy to the environment; and 3) select winning tactics.

**1) Clarify goals.** The first step in any campaign is to ensure clarity of goals. Truly transformational change requires grounding our policy thinking in how systems get better over time and avoiding the trap of viewing any one policy goal as the solution. Through our work, we have found there are four distinct ways of looking at educational changes. Together, they help form a complete picture of how to build a more dynamic, responsive and successful educational system:

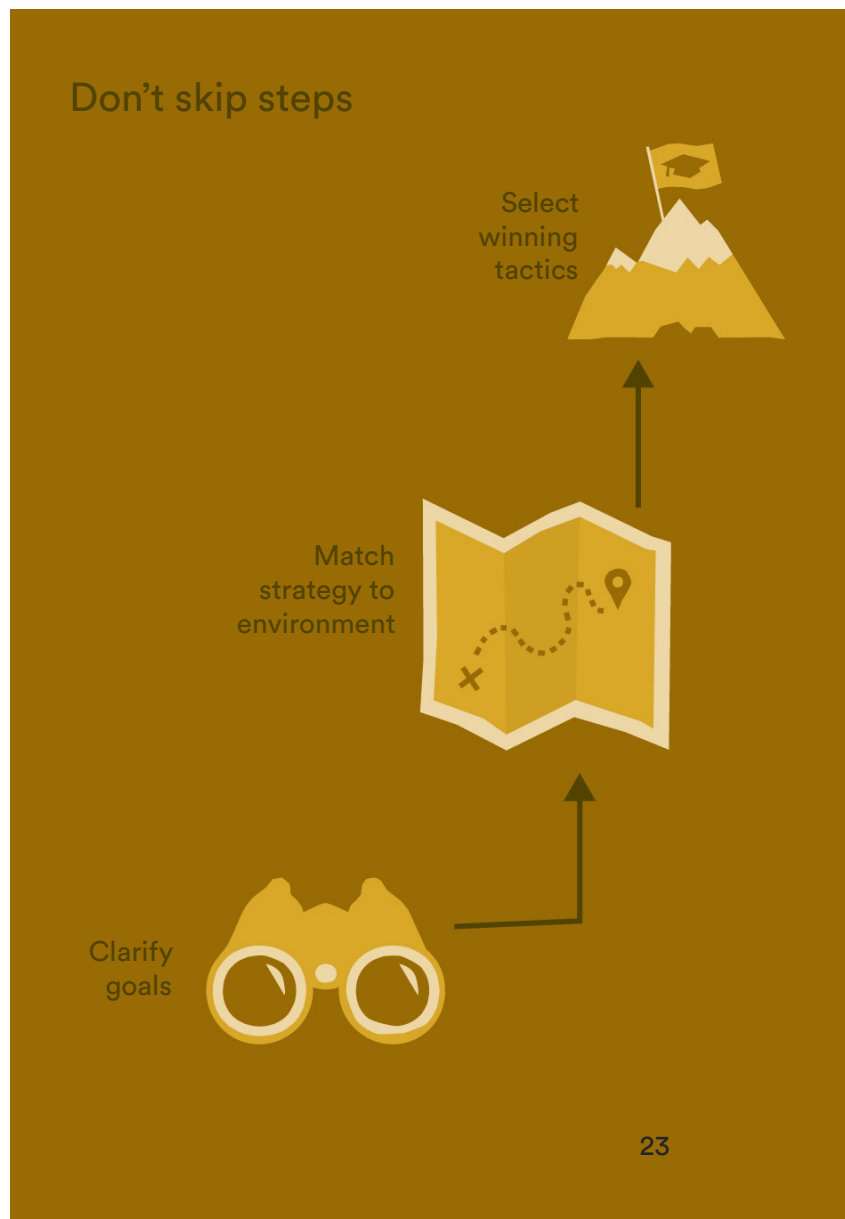
- **Pluralism.** We need a dynamic system that supports lots of paths to success.
- **Competition.** Empowered parents will drive better outcomes.
- **Performance.** Education leaders need the flexibility to pursue excellence and rigorous standards to measure their success.
- **Community.** Effective, sustainable policy change requires community ownership.

Through our big bet on smarter goals, we are investing in a number of ways to help master this first stage of the 50CAN Framework: tools that rate their community across the above four change lenses and ways to translate the latest research into policy indicators of success. We will also invest in flexible templates that local leaders can use to create their own multi-year policy blueprints. These templates provide a road map for their campaigns, create transparency around their goals and hold them publicly accountable for their results.

**2) Match strategy to environment.** Once you are confident you have selected the right goal, you can get to work choosing the right advocacy strategy to secure that goal. The advocacy landscape is complicated, but there are rules for navigating the terrain successfully. Through our work, we have found four key strategies that regularly get results:

- **Elite negotiation.** Advocates use their understanding of the interests of incumbent leaders to alter the status quo through trading and compromise.
- **Social movements.** Large numbers of people get organized over time to change the status quo through their unified voices.
- **Expert communities.** Experts debate ideas over time and, either through convergence or consensus, end up influencing policy.
- **Emergent networks.** Promising ideas are tested and refined by practitioners with the best ideas becoming common practices.

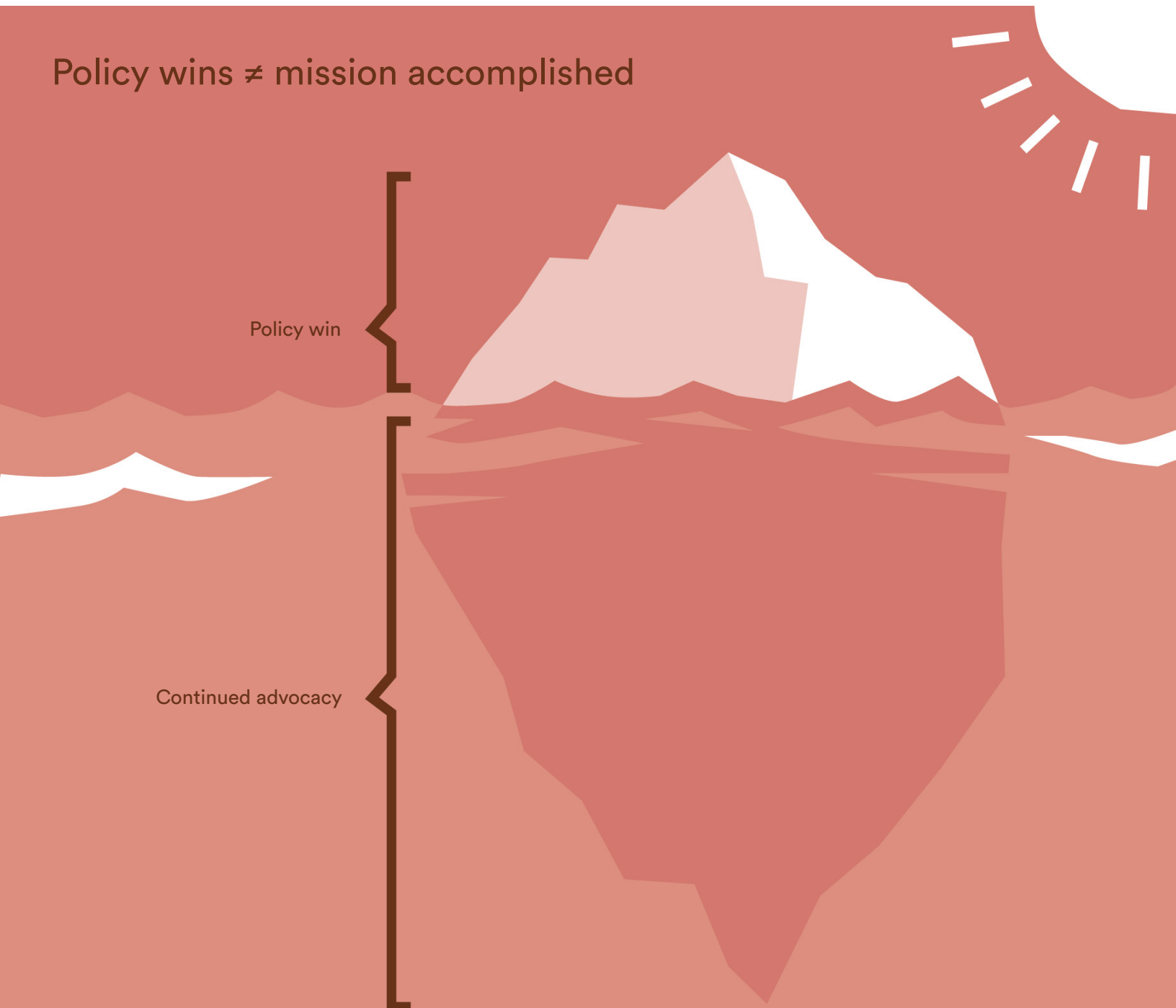
**3) Select winning tactics.** There are hundreds of possible tactics that could be used in a campaign, so it's critical that selecting winning tactics is always the last step in the campaign planning process. Our local leaders build their campaigns from a tactics toolbox of the 52 most common tactics found in successful advocacy efforts.



At the conclusion of each advocacy campaign, we come together as a community to take stock of how we did by reflecting on our goals and our campaign plan. While it is a common adage to say we learn more from failure than success, in our experience that's not exactly right. We learn the most from experiences that require us to continuously return to our mistakes and try new approaches until we eventually find a path to success. Those paths to success then become road maps for future campaigns.

But even when our local leaders secure major policy change, we never say “mission accomplished.” There is always more work to do. A policy win is just the tip of the iceberg to ensure these victories translate into life-changing experiences for kids.

## Policy wins $\neq$ mission accomplished



# How to get involved

“More people” starts with you. If you are inspired by this vision for the road ahead, we want to talk about how we can travel the path together. You can reach us by email at [partnerships@50can.org](mailto:partnerships@50can.org), on the web at [50can.org](http://50can.org), on Twitter and Instagram @FiftyCAN and on Facebook @50CAN.

## Individuals

- **Sign up for our emails.** Want to learn more about what we are doing right now? Sign up for our emails at [50can.org](http://50can.org) so we can keep you plugged in to everything happening across our network.
- **Start the conversation.** Sometimes the best place to start is with a conversation. We would love to hear from you and talk more about how we might be able to work together. Email us and we will respond with a way to take the next step.
- **Read the *50CAN Guide to Building Advocacy Campaigns*.** We have taken everything we have learned about building education advocacy campaigns and written a free guidebook that we would love for you to read. Visit the resources page of our website to download it and let us know your thoughts.
- **Apply to a training program.** We offer both full-time and part-time training programs and other opportunities for engagement across the country. Find out more about these programs and how to apply on the programs page of our website.
- **Join a campaign.** We aren't in all 50 states yet, but if we are in your state we would love for you to get involved as a volunteer, intern, staff member or advisory board member. Visit the careers page on our website to find out more about opportunities within our current campaigns.
- **Make a contribution.** Give 'til it feels good! We love individual donors and nothing makes us more proud than when a fellow advocate chooses to support our work. You can find out more about how to contribute by visiting the donate page of our website.

## Partners

- **Speak to our staff.** We are always looking to learn from others in the field. If you are willing to share your hard-earned wisdom, we have a ready audience. Send us an email at [partnerships@50can.org](mailto:partnerships@50can.org)!
- **Join a network gathering.** A few times a year, we bring the whole network together to share what we are learning. We are always happy to have partners sit in on these off-the-record gatherings. Let us know if you'd like to be added to the invitation list.
- **Partner on the big bets.** Like what you are hearing about the four big bets of more people, greater opportunities, smarter goals and better tools? Great! We would love to share our latest project plans in each area and talk about how we might work together to make these ideas a reality.
- **Join the network.** Interested in a deeper collaboration? Let's talk about what it could mean to bring your organization into the 50CAN network as a campaign branch, affiliate or independent partner.

## Funders

- **Let's talk.** Strategic plans are exciting, but we have more to share and are eager to hear about your plans. Let's start the conversation with a phone call or coffee. Email us at [partnerships@50can.org](mailto:partnerships@50can.org) to set up a time.
- **Visit a campaign.** There is nothing like seeing the work in action. We can help arrange a visit to the campaign of your choice at a time that works for you.
- **Support a big bet.** If one or more of 50CAN's big bets aligns with your philanthropic goals, or sounds like the kind of idea you want to help become a reality, let us know and we can share more detailed project plans with you.
- **Support the network.** None of this is possible without the general operating support that our most committed supporters provide to power the whole network. We would love to share more about how important your support can be in advancing our mission.

Have thoughts on this strategic plan in general? We would love to hear them! Send them our way at [partnerships@50can.org](mailto:partnerships@50can.org).