



# 2018 Political Summary

**Back in 2017, before the candidates for the 2018 midterms had been selected, before the resources were raised, DFER CT made plans for CT to go Blue in 2018.** Through our independent expenditure, we planned to spend targeted resources to supplement the campaigns of Democratic candidates who would (a) lead the General Assembly; and (b) prioritize education issues and Democratic values. With an 18-18 split in the Senate, we knew every dollar spent in the Senate races would go a long way towards gaining Democratic control of the General Assembly.

## Our Results:

**Of the six competitive Senate contests we invested in, five saw wins. Two of those five winning races were Democratic Party pick-ups.**

In all addition to winning the governor's race and maintaining a majority in the house, CT Democrats took a solid majority in the State Senate, jumping from 18 to 23 seats. We played an important role in that change.

Now, Democrats have chosen the next Senate Education Chair (Doug McCrory, a committed DFER), and allies Senate President Marty Looney and Maj. Ldr. Bob Duff are driving negotiations over the Senate's legislative docket for the next two years.

There are still tough conversations policy debates that need to be settled. But DFER CT will continue to stand by and stand up for Democrats who will improve our education system so that it better serves students and families.

## By the Numbers:

- **Statewide poll** on the Governor's race (featured in the [Hartford Courant](#)).
- Polling in **3 Senate Districts**.
- **25,000** GOTV call contacts.
- **33,000** GOTV text messages.
- Digital advertising reaching over **200,000** people.

## 2018 Senate Races We Supported

- Senator Steve Cassano in District 4** (Andover, Bolton, Glastonbury, Manchester): Had served as a local Mayor, has been consistently targeted by Republicans, and has focused in the legislature on early childhood and workforce development for students.
- Christine Cohen in District 12** (Branford, Durham, Guilford, Killingworth, Madison, North Branford, Northford): Is serving on the Guilford Board of Education, is an independent thinker and business owner, and was running in a competitive open seat that Democrats wanted to maintain.
- Mary Abrams in District 13 - *Democratic Flip***: (Cheshire, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Rockfall): Was a former assistant principal, special education administrator, and educator. She was also running to represent school districts that had been recognized for innovation in their schools.
- James Maroney in District 14** (Milford, Orange, West Haven, Woodbridge): Had previously served as a state representative and had served on the Education Committee, was the owner/director of “First Choice College Placement,” and had expressed interest in focusing on education in the General Assembly.
- Jorge Cabrera in District 17** (Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Derby, Hamden, Naugatuck, Woodbridge): Is a father of school-aged children, had spoken about the need to improve educational opportunities for communities of color, and his wife is a Bridgeport Public School Principal. Lost in a recount.
- Will Haskell in District 26 - *Democratic Flip***: (Bethel, New Canaan, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Wilton): A young, energetic voice that captivated voters in Fairfield County. Vocal about disparities in the education system, he was facing the Republican Senate Co-Chair of the Education Committee—who had been a barrier to reform efforts.

### About Democrats for Education Reform CT

DFER CT is an organization that supports elected Democrats and candidates who are champions of public education. As education progressives, we're building a pipeline of Democratic leaders who will improve our education system so that it better serves students and families.

As part of realizing the American Dream, we advance policies and practices based on democratic values, with a goals of: increasing equity, protecting civil rights and the social safety net, and promoting great educational opportunities for all.

DFER CT is the state chapter of a [national political organization](#).

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