

John Legend Joins Education Advocacy Group Stand For Children Leadership Center's Board Of Directors



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Music artist John Legend has joined nonprofit development and training organization Stand for Children to support a movement working toward improved public schools.

The Portland, Ore.-based [Stand for Children Leadership Center](#) and New York City-based [Education Equality Project](#) have partnered to create a collaboration in education reform efforts and working to close achievement gaps across the country, the two groups announced today.

Legend is a board member on the Education Equality Project and now joins the Stand for Children Leadership Board of Directors. Likewise, board members Michael Lomax and Phil Handy have also joined the Stand for Children, Inc. national Board of Directors.

"EEP is now joining forces with Stand in order to make the greatest impact in communities of color," Lomax said in a statement Tuesday. "Their grassroots structure allows us to connect our leaders and advocates with community-based leaders and advocates, and to work together on policies that will improve graduation rates, transform schools and close the achievement gap."

The EEP was founded in 2008 and through research and advocacy, has worked to close the achievement gap with the support of leaders from minority communities, education and policy experts and lawmakers.

Legend launched the [Show Me Campaign](#) in 2007 with the goal of using education to overcome poverty. In July, he [joined forces with P&G and Communities in Schools for GIVE Education](#), a campaign that aims to increase awareness and fight America's high school dropout crisis. [Legend also wrote music for "Waiting for Superman,"](#) a film that highlighted issues in the nation's broken education system.

In a public service video that calls for community action to work with Stand and the EEP, as well as support their goals, Legend talks about his own experience at high school graduation.

"Half of my fellow students dropped out before graduation, I was one of the lucky ones -- I finished high school and went on to college," Legend says in the video. "With a different situation, different teachers, maybe I would've been one of those 53 percent of young black men who do not graduate from high school. One of the 53 percent doing the low wage jobs, unemployment and prison."

Legend is among a number of celebrities and music artists who have taken a part in a movement to improve education in the U.S. The Black Eyed Peas' Will.i.Am has called for [a push in science, technology, engineering and math education](#), and has a ["Yes We Can" video](#) to convey the message.

Similarly, music artist Shakira has taken part in a movement [to provide universal access to education](#) through her launch of the Barefoot Foundation. She was also [appointed last month to the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics](#).

WATCH Legend's message: