

Bond Case Briefs

Municipal Finance Law Since 1971

David I. Backer on the Hidden Politics of School Finance.

Truth to Power is a regular series of conversations with writers about the promises and pitfalls of movements for social justice. From the roots of racial capitalism to the psychic toll of poverty, from resource wars to popular uprisings, the interviews in this column focus on how to write about the myriad causes of oppression and the organized desire for a better world.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

The beginnings of *As Public as Possible: Radical Finance for America's Public Schools* took shape in 2020 when Backer launched his Substack newsletter, "Schooling in a Socialist America." The quieting of the world gave Backer the opportunity to dive into the world of finance and economics where he realized that the language of finance was purposefully exclusive. Backer then committed to writing every week about the intersection of public education and finance, translating those systems into something more accessible.

After about three years of writing, a colleague connected Backer to an editor at The New Press. Pulling upon years of accumulated reporting and analysis, *As Public as Possible* gave Backer the chance to organize those ideas into a coherent framework, that would provide educators, parents, advocates and lawmakers an opportunity to understand how public school education and economics—seemingly disconnected issues—fit together.

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