



## Parent Voices Weekly Education Fax

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### Parents oppose “parent trigger” laws

*The story: Support for parent trigger laws isn't parent-based or local.*

The Florida legislature is currently debating a controversial “parent trigger” law which could hand public schools over to a private management company if 51% of a school's parents sign a petition requesting that change. Parent trigger laws are being pushed across the nation by astroturf groups like Parent Revolution and Students First, and wealthy foundations such as Walton and Gates, but not by local Florida grassroots parent groups or groups like the Florida PTA (<http://tinyurl.com/ckacgzn>). Florida parent and PAA founding member Rita Solnet writes a first-hand account of the local debate (<http://parentsacrossamerica.org/amendment-fix-parent-trigger/>).

#### ***PAA's position***

Although Parents Across America strongly supports true parent empowerment, we oppose the parent trigger process. While the parent trigger allows parents to voice discontent with a school, it gives them no opportunity to choose among more positive reforms, and fails to promote the best practices for parent involvement from the ground up. In addition, the process creates huge potential for abuse, disruption and divisiveness to school communities. The push for parent trigger laws across the U.S. raises deep concerns. As with other deceptively simple-sounding solutions, this law is likely to cause more problems than it solves.

Parents Across America instead supports a process in which parents are authentically involved at the ground level in developing strategies for improvement. These strategies might include smaller classes, more parent involvement, or other reforms that have been proven to work and are aligned with the individual needs of the school and its students.

#### ***PAA's recommendations***

- We urge lawmakers to **oppose proposals like the Parent Trigger** that would exploit parents' legitimate concerns in order to hand public property over to private hands.
- Please also see PAA's position paper, “The Empowerment Parents Want: The LSC Model for School Reform” (<http://parentsacrossamerica.org/empowerment-parents-want-lsc-model-school-reform/>)

For more detail on PAA's position opposing parent trigger laws, please see <http://parentsacrossamerica.org/paa-parent-trigger/>.

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