

# PARENTS ACROSS AMERICA



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Lively discussion at PAA's NPE session

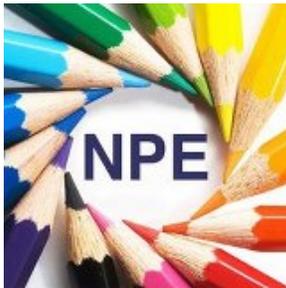
## Greetings!

Catch up with the news from the [Network for Public Education conference!](#) See below.

## PAA ACTION OF THE WEEK

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### Help us thank NPE

Many thanks to the Network for Public Education for another successful event. PAA joined with friends and allies across the U.S. for two days of shared anger, encouragement, and inspiration in Oakland Oct. 14-15.

NPE is the only group that brings together hundreds of public school advocates in an annual conference. While working on a very tight budget, they also provided a variety of scholarships and other financial breaks to help with conference fees. [NPE deserves our support.](#)

In addition, they provide useful resources such as the ["School Privatization Toolkit"](#) which answers these questions and more:

- Are charter schools truly public schools?
- Do charter schools and school vouchers "hurt" public schools?
- Do charter schools get better academic results than public schools?
- Do charter schools profit from educating students?
- Do school vouchers help kids in struggling schools?
- Are online charter schools good options for families?
- Do charter schools and vouchers save money?

Please join us in [donating](#) as much as you can to this important organization. Now more than ever.

## PAA TWEET OF THE WEEK

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Congratulations to #NPE17CA for a great conference. Thank you for bringing us together for lively discussion, commiseration, and inspiration. Please [donate](#) to NPE today.

## Report from Oakland

It started out pretty smoky – winds from the Santa Rosa fires reached us in Oakland, and several of our leaders were delayed getting into San Francisco due to poor landing conditions.

While we missed them at our planned PAA dinner on Friday, things took a pleasant turn when Diane Ravitch and NPE executive director Carl Burris shared a quick meal with PAA's Khem, Deb and Julie and Julie's husband Larry.



From left\_ FairTest's Monty Neill\_ Julie Woestehoff\_ Steven Norton\_ Mary Battenfeld's sister and Mary\_ Deb Mayer\_ Zerlina Smith\_ Khem Irby\_ and Pamela Grundy

We had a few more at a fun dinner on Saturday night >>>>>

Our all-PAA session on Saturday vividly demonstrated how PAA helps connect, equip and empower parents to more effectively address the national privatization agenda as well as their local struggles, producing a stronger national voice of progressive parents to counter the false narratives about parent "choice."

Our panel included moderator Dora Taylor (PAA-Puget Sound) and (from left to right below) Mary Battenfeld (QUEST- Boston), PAA Board of Directors member Zerlina Smith (PAA-Chicago), Khem Irby, PAA president and founder of PAA-Greensboro (NC) and The Mothers' Agenda (NYC), and PAA interim director Julie Woestehoff providing tech support.



Mary Battenfeld\_ Zerlina Smith\_ Khem Irby\_ Julie Woestehoff

By sharing stories and strategies, we encouraged parents and others to keep fighting, and to model the ways we learn from each other and are able to put that knowledge to work.

We also broke into small groups for discussion led by our panelists and PAA leaders Deb Mayer (PAA-Oregon) and Steven Norton (Michigan Parents for Schods).



You can view the power point presentation from this session [here](#).

You can view the power point from the FairTest-led session on assessment alternatives, with Julie Woestehoff, [here](#).

Several sessions are also available to view on [NPE's Facebook page](#).

## Successful screening of "Backpack"

Some conference attendees were also able to go to a screening Thursday evening of the Matt Damon-produced documentary "Backpack Full of Cash," which exposes the attack on public education by privatization forces. Leader of PAA-Bay Area Eileen Brown organized the screening and moderated the event. She reported that some 200 people were there.

The film features PAA founding members Helen Gym and Karran Harper-Royal. Both are highlighted on a special [page](#) on the film's web site. Reviews of the film were rave!

Screenings cost a reported \$650. PAA is working on funding sources to help cover that cost. You can contact the production team for more information about bringing a screening to your area, and see a schedule of upcoming showings around the US [here](#).

### JOIN US!



If you share [our overall goals](#) of progressive, positive education reform and more parent input in education policy making, we invite you to affiliate with us if you are an existing group, or to form a new PAA chapter. The more of us there are, the stronger our voice will be at every level. [Here's how!](#)

If you have questions, comments, suggestions or stories to share, please e-mail us at [info@parentsacrossamerica.org](mailto:info@parentsacrossamerica.org) or visit [www.parentsacrossamerica.org](http://www.parentsacrossamerica.org).

Looking for regular updates on key education stories? Join the PAA News List by e-mailing [PAAnews-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:PAAnews-subscribe@yahogroups.com).

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