

PARENTS ACROSS AMERICA



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Greetings!

The tax plan before Congress includes several poison pills for public education. The time to make our voices heard is now - see below for details.

PAA ACTION OF THE WEEK

3 Fixes for Tax Plan

PAA sent a fax to all members of Congress asking for the following 3 fixes for the tax plan:

- **oppose expansion of 529 accounts** which would allow the wealthy to use tax dollars to pay for their own private school tuition instead of their fair share of public education;
- **restore deductions for state and local taxes** which support public schools so that families are not double-taxed, and
- **put back the small tax break on teachers' out-of-pocket classroom expenses**, a small gesture of support for these local heroes.



We based this demand on experience and on the results of our summer 2017 parent survey. While we found that **adequate school funding** is the most important issue for parents, the Congressional tax proposals would **redirect scarce resources to private and religious schools and other voucher-type programs, undermine local and state school funding mechanisms, and take away teachers' tax breaks on materials they purchase for their classrooms.**

This is unacceptable to most parents.

We believe that funds directed toward privatization efforts such as expanded charter and online schools or vouchers would be **better used by public schools, which are clearly accountable to the public, have an overall better track record, and are open to serve all children.** Tax incentives for local school fund generation are critical to public education budgets. And removing the small teacher tax break for out-of-pocket classroom expenses is an unnecessary slap in the face to some of our nation's most valuable professionals.

Congress may very soon have a compromise tax plan - make sure your voices are heard as they write that final language.

Call your [Senators](#) and [Representatives](#) NOW; make the three points above.

PAA TWEET OF THE WEEK



3 fixes for Congress tax plan: 1) don't expand 529 private school tuition tax breaks 2) restore state/local tax incentives 3) give back small teacher supplies deduction (come on!)
<https://tinyurl.com/ya5fe7rp>

PAA NEWS



PAA affiliate Dear JCPS featured in FairTest success report

Be sure to check out FairTest's new [report](#) on recent victories in the testing resistance movement. Some examples:

- States with high school exit exams dropped from 25 to 13 since 2012.
- Various states cut tests for Kindergarten and high school. Districts across the nation, including locales with many students of color and low-income families, ended their tests.
- Seven states halted the use of student scores to judge teachers.
- Ten states now allow parents to opt their children out of some or all exams.
- Increasing implementation of performance assessments by states and districts.
- New Hampshire's pioneering program now involves half the state's districts.

Also highlighted in the report are case studies of successful local efforts including those in Jefferson County, Kentucky, and our local affiliate Dear JCPS (pp. 33-35). The coalition held public forums to discuss local residents' and educators' vision for quality schooling, which has resulted in a 35% reduction in mandated testing and more activity around teacher-made and performance assessment.

Good work, everyone!

PAA "Reclaiming" t-shirts still available

Last July, the indomitable Congresswoman Maxine Waters used the procedural strategy of "reclaiming my time" to prevent Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin from running out the clock with non-responsive testimony in an [appearance](#) before the House Financial Services Committee. Rep. Waters' repetition of the phrase "reclaiming my time" in the face of a powerful person's attempts to brush her off struck a nerve with many, sending those three words viral.

PAA has created a t-shirt to honor that sentiment, one that you can order now (see below) to support PAA and make a bold statement about public education at the same time!

PAA wants to reclaim some of our time and our children's time that has been wasted by promoters of school "choice," wealthy education hobbyists like Bill Gates, mass school

closures, standardized testing, mayoral control of schools, and all of the other ignorant and ill-advised school "reforms" pushed on us over the past 25 years.

We have big plans for the coming year and hope you will support us today and join us along the way. Here's how:

1. Pay for the t-shirt using the [Donate button](#) on our home page - \$25 each (\$20 for the shirt and \$5 for shipping).
2. Both the PayPal and credit card payment choices give you the option to *leave a message* and provide us with your *mailing address*. Please use the message feature to tell us what size t-shirt you want. We will need your mailing address to send it to you.
3. If you prefer to pay by check, please send it with your mailing and size information to Parents Across America, c/o Siegel and Assoc, 53 W. Jackson Blvd, Suite 405, Chicago IL 60604. Please allow up to 8 weeks for this form of payment.
4. Of course, you can also use our Donate button to make a donation without ordering a t-shirt. Or do both!



Thank you!

JOIN US!

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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 or visit www.parentsacrossamerica.org.

Looking for regular updates on key education stories? Join the PAA News List by e-mailing PAAnews-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

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