



House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Alongside families across the country, the National Parents Union (NPU) thanks you for convening tomorrow's hearing on school choice and postsecondary options. Parents understand better than anyone that the stakes for our children's education have never been higher, and we appreciate your willingness to elevate this urgent conversation.

Just last week, the release of the latest NAEP scores provided yet another sobering reminder that our education system is failing to deliver the results our children deserve. Too many students are leaving high school unprepared for college, career, or life, and families are left with few tools to hold schools accountable when quality is lacking. It is for this reason that parents in the National Parents Union strongly support public school choice. Families want meaningful, measurable results, and if a school is not delivering those results, families should not be stuck in a low performing school with no other public school options.

We have seen public school choice work—whether through high-quality open enrollment policies, public charter schools, or magnet schools—and we have seen a bipartisan group of states embrace these strategies. These options have not only expanded opportunities for children but have also been broadly popular with parents across party lines.

- 83% support a universal enrollment platform to simplify school applications.
- 83% support open enrollment in all public schools, not just those tied to a home address.
- 83% support expanding virtual public school options in rural and small communities.
- 82% support transportation policies that allow children to attend the public school of their choice.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about the rapid growth of unaccountable private school choice programs. While parents understand the appeal of more options, we cannot support approaches that do not show measurable results, fail to meet transparency

standards regarding admission, or remain inaccessible to families who cannot afford tuition costs even with tax credits or scholarships. A system that leaves behind low-income families or allows discrimination has no place in American education.

As parents contemplate the fact that 7 out of 10 of the kids in the class of 2024 were not reading on grade level when they graduated high school, they worry about the remedial classes and extra costs associated with being behind when their children enter college. This, paired with the increased cost of higher education, has created a strong desire for a wider range of options that prepare students for long-term success, starting in high school:

- 94% support offering all high school students the option to take career, technical, and trade classes.
- 93% support offering dual credit opportunities to earn college credit in high school.
- 86% support requiring schools to provide transparent data on student achievement, discipline, and enrollment.
- 84% support automatically enrolling academically prepared students in AP courses, while still allowing opt-out.

As an example, we have included testimony from our Organizing Director, Christy Moreno, who has navigated these postsecondary challenges firsthand for her children. Her story echoes those of parents across the country: we need an education system that prepares students earlier, provides transparent data to families that empowers them to make choices about their child's education, and ensures pathways into affordable, high-quality postsecondary options.

As NPU President Keri Rodrigues recently noted, *"Parents want public education to kick into high gear with a clear focus on improving student outcomes and better preparing kids to be competitive in a global economy. The economic mobility of future generations is going to be entirely dependent on whether students have access to an education that is highly-personalized and one that adapts to their circumstances—not the other way around."*

We urge the Committee to take seriously both the crisis revealed by the NAEP scores and the solutions parents are calling for. Parents are clear: we need better outcomes, more high-quality public school options, stronger accountability, and a postsecondary system that is both accessible and affordable.

Thank you for your leadership in holding this important hearing, and for ensuring that parents' voices are at the center of the debate about school choice and postsecondary opportunity.

Sincerely,
Ariel Taylor Smith

Senior Director of Policy and Action
The National Parents Union

