

Appendix A
“Public Schools and Democracy”
Sources compiled by Carol Noggle

This Appendix, labeled “Public Schools and Democracy” contains resources from writers comparing public and private schools vis-à-vis Democracy.

1. Benjamin Barber says we cannot do without public schools:

Democracy’s Future The lesson seems obvious: We cannot do without **public schools**. A nation of fractious individuals schooled in avoidance ceases to be a nation. A democracy of consumers focused on their private interests ceases to be a democracy. A community of multicultural fragments celebrating only difference ceases to be a community. A republic of privately schooled narcissists blind to what they share ceases to have *res public* and hence is no longer a republic.

Public education *is* redundant: To be civilized is to understand the nature of commonality, to be learned is to grasp the rights and responsibilities of liberty, to be educated is to comprehend the meaning of citizenship. If liberal education is education in the arts of liberty, then there can be no liberal education without **public** education.

Finally, the future of liberal education is the same thing as the future of **public** education, which is, in turn, the same thing as the future of democracy. *[America as a commercial society of individual consumers may survive the destruction of public schooling. America as a democratic republic cannot.]*

<http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=14096>
<https://janresseger.wordpress.com/2017/05/02/13314/>

2. The Brookings Institute, Brown Center for Education Policy: November 21, 2017: _

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2017/11/21/american-education-event-examines-persisting-tensions-in-public-schools/>

How did America’s public school system come to be? According to Johann Neem, author of “Democracy’s Schools: The Rise of Public Education in America,” the founders of the American republic had three fundamental goals for the public school system: to educate citizens, to develop human beings’ capabilities, and to unify a diverse nation. Neem feels that in the midst of the many disputes that mark the politics of education today, we are increasingly drifting from the core purposes of public education. Johann Neem: Neem in WAPO: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/08/20/early-america-had-school-choice-the-founders-rejected-it/?utm_term=.c284e6bf0194 Johann N. Neem is a senior fellow at the University of Virginia’s Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture and a professor of history at Western Washington University. He is author of [Democracy’s Schools: The Rise of Public Education in America](#)

3. Nikole Hannah-Jones, staff writer for the New York Times “Have We Lost Sight of the Promise of Public Schools?”

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/21/magazine/have-we-lost-sight-of-the-promise-of-public-schools.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fnikole-hannah-jones&action=click&contentCollection=undefined®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlace ment=3&pgtype=collection

4. Bonnie Honig, professor of political science and modern culture and media at Brown University, author of forthcoming book, “Public Things: Democracy in Disrepair.” *The Nation*, 10/13/14 “Our Public Education System Needs Transformation, Not ‘Reform’”

“A truly progressive vision for public education... should focus on taking back that stream of money going to charter chains and corporate tax cuts and redirecting it toward schools anchored in strong communities and using proven methods for teaching kids....”

5. Bob Herbert, “The Plot Against Public Education”, *POLITICO Magazine*; 10/6/14

“How millionaires and billionaires are ruining our schools.”

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/10/the-plot-against-public-education-111630>

6. Diane Ravitch, "The Life and Death of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education" © 2010, 2016 (Basic Books, Paperback)

P. 220, 221 "Do we need neighborhood schools? .. create a sense of community. Business leaders like the idea of turning the schools into a marketplace... but the problem... is that it dissolves communities and replaces them with consumers. "Going to school is not the same as going shopping."

7. Diane Ravitch, "The Reign of Error: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and the Danger to America's Public Schools" © 2013, 2014, Vintage Books

p. 178: Will charter schools contribute to the increasing segregation of American society along lines of race and class? What is the rationale for authorizing for-profit charters or charter management organizations with high-paid executives, since their profits and high salaries are paid by taxpayers' dollars?

8. Sarah M. Stitzlein, University of Cincinnati, Philosopher re Public Schools
American Public Education and the Responsibility of Its Citizens, Oxford Press, 2017

"How to Define Public Schooling in the Age of Choice?" 9/5/17, <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/09/06/how-to-define-public-schooling-in-the.html>

"For-profit Charter Schools and Threats to the Publicness of Public Schools" 2013,
<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1015716.pdf>

Principles of Public Schools

Why do Public Schools have highest priority? Why do we want our children in Public Schools?

Virginia's Constitution **REQUIRES** a system of free public elementary and secondary schools for all children of school age throughout the Commonwealth, and shall seek to ensure that an educational program of high quality is established and continually maintained. (*VA Constitution Article VIII, Section 1.*)

The 2017-18 LWV-VA "School Choice Task Force" recommends this statement of Principles of Public Schools.

"Public schools should prevail as the highest priority for school choice in Virginia based on their role and responsibility in sustaining democracy."

To be defined as "public" there are expected responsibilities.***

"A school is truly public if

... it is *open* to the public... all children

... it *serves* the public

(and prepares citizens to maintain government)

...it is *responsive* to the public

(who can participate in voting on school governance and can change policies)

...it is a *creator* of the public

(by cultivating citizens to exchange ideas, prepare for discourse, respond to ideas, and work across differences)

...it *sustains democracy* by developing skills for participating and enacting freedom-oriented decision-making."

***Extracted from Sarah M. Stitzlein's publication:

American Public Education and the Responsibility of Its Citizens, Oxford Press, 2017 and at
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/09/06/how-to-define-public-schooling-in-the.html>