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**Brown University** is a leading research institution with distinctive undergraduate and graduate academic programs, a world-class faculty, and a tradition of innovative and rigorous multidisciplinary study.

**Harvard University** is the oldest institution of higher learning in the United States. As part of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, the Program on Education Policy and Governance (PEPG) draws upon a global network of distinguished scholars, faculty members, and students to provide instruction and conduct research on ways to improve the quality of American education policy and governance.

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**The National Bureau of Economic Research** (NBER) is a private, nonpartisan research organization dedicated to promoting a greater understanding of how the economy works. As one of seventeen programs, the Economics of Education Program was created to recognize the large and rapidly growing body of economic research on education.

**The Northwest Evaluation Association** (NWEA) provides research-based educational growth measures, professional training, and consulting services to improve teaching and learning. Partnering with districts, states, and other education organizations, NWEA delivers computerized assessment services to over 1,200 education agencies and 3.8 million students. As such it is the single largest provider of adaptive testing in the nation.

**Stanford University** is one of the world's leading research and teaching institutions. As the nation's top-ranked graduate school in education, the School of Education seeks to continue as a world leader in ground-breaking, cross-disciplinary inquiries, shaping educational practices, their conceptual underpinnings, and the professions that serve the enterprise.

**The University of Notre Dame** is an independent, national Catholic university renowned for its teaching and research, scholarship and publication, service and community. Recently ranked among the best of rising private research universities, the University seeks to cultivate in its students not only an appreciation for the pursuit of truth and knowledge, but also a disciplined concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice.

## Welcome

Dear Participant,

Welcome to the National Center on School Choice's second national conference, "School Choice & School Improvement: Research in State, District and Community Contexts," sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences.

President Obama has listed education as one of the country's top priorities, emphasizing choice as a possible strategy for reform. But the specifics about which choice options work best, and in what contexts, have not yet been determined. At this year's conference on Vanderbilt University's Peabody campus, we will learn from education experts how various communities, districts and states implement choice and experience its effects. The conference program will feature keynote speeches by Paul G. Vallas, superintendent of the Recovery School District in New Orleans, and Henry M. Levin, the William Heard Kilpatrick Professor of Economics and Education and director of the nonpartisan National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Thank you for joining us for this event. We hope the research and policy discussions will give you fresh insights into the effectiveness and promise of choice as practiced in the United States and abroad.

Sincerely,

Mark Berends  
Director, NCSC

Marisa Cannata  
Principal Investigator, NCSC

Ellen Goldring  
Associate Director, NCSC

## Acknowledgements

We are thankful to the following individuals and organizations for their part in making this event possible:

Vanderbilt University's Chancellor **Nicholas S. Zeppos** and the **Office of the Chancellor, Dean Camilla Benbow** and **Peabody College, Professor Stephen N. Elliott** and the **Learning Sciences Institute**, and **Professor Timothy C. Caboni** and the **Peabody Professional Institutes**, for serving as hosts.

**The United States Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences** for supporting the National Center on School Choice.

**The institutional partners of the NCSC**—the Brookings Institution, Brown University, Harvard University, Indiana University's Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Northwest Evaluation Association, Stanford University, the University of Notre Dame's Center for Research on Educational Opportunity, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Wisconsin Center for Education Research—for their exemplary research in the world of education and choice.

**Paul Vallas, Henry Levin, Herb Walberg**, the authors, chairs, and discussants, for bringing their expertise to conference proceedings.

**Genevieve Zottola, Kit Lively, Janet Roberts**, and other NCSC staff for handling the many details that make such an event possible.



# SCHOOL CHOICE & School Improvement:

*Research in State, District and Community Contexts*

*National Invitational Conference*

# Sunday, October 25

6:30 – 8:00PM WELCOME RECEPTION

# Monday, October 26

7:30 – 8:30 REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

Overview **Mark Berends**, University of Notre Dame, **Ellen Goldring**, Vanderbilt University

9:00 – 10:30 PANEL I. EFFECTIVENESS OF VOUCHERS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Papers *The Second Year of the Longitudinal Educational Growth Study of the Milwaukee Parental Choice (Voucher) Program*  
**John F. Witte**, University of Wisconsin-Madison, **Patrick J. Wolf**, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, **Joshua M. Cowen**, University of Kentucky, **David J. Fleming**, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*The Effects of Means-Tested Vouchers on School Choice and Student Outcomes: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Florida's Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program*  
**David Figlio**, Northwestern University

*School Vouchers in the Nation's Capital: Third Year Results from an Experimental Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program*

**Patrick Wolf**, University of Arkansas, **Babette Gutmann**, Westat, **Michael Puma**, Chesapeake Research Associates, **Brian Kisida**, University of Arkansas, **Nada O. Eissa**, Georgetown University

Discussants **David Myers**, American Institutes for Research

10:30 – 10:45 BREAK

10:45 – 12:15 PANEL II. PARENT CHOICE

Papers *Parent Involvement in Urban Charter Schools: A New Paradigm of the Status Quo*  
**Priscilla Wohlstetter**, University of Southern California, **Joanna Smith**, University of Southern California

*Who Chooses and Why: The Choice and Experience of Indianapolis Parents*

**Marc Stein**, Johns Hopkins University, **Ellen Goldring**, Vanderbilt University, **Xiu Cravens**, Vanderbilt University

*Do Students Choose Schools with Higher Accountability Ratings?*

**Michael Henderson**, Harvard University

Discussants **Jeff Henig**, Teachers College, Columbia University

12:15 – 1:45 LUNCH

1:30 – 3:30 PANEL III: COMPETITION EFFECTS OF CHOICE

Papers *Using Household School Choice to Determine Competition and Academic Quality: Evidence from the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program*  
**Nicholas Mader**, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*How Does District Resource Allocation Change in Response to School Choice Competition?*

**David Arsen**, Michigan State University, **Yongmei Ni**, University of Utah

*Effects of Charter Competition on School Operations and Conditions in Traditional Public, Magnet, and Private Schools*  
**Marisa Cannata**, Vanderbilt University

*School Sector, Social Capital, and Student Non-Cognitive Skills: Evidence from a National Longitudinal Study*

**Paul E. Peterson**, Harvard University, **Martina G. Viarengo**, Harvard University

Discussants **Thomas Dee**, Swarthmore College

1:30 – 3:30 PANEL IV. URBAN DISTRICT CHOICE

Papers *Inter-district Choice as a Policy Solution: Examining Rochester's Urban-Suburban Inter-District Transfer Program*  
**Kara Finnegan**, University of Rochester, **Tricia Stewart**, University of Rochester

*Student Achievement and School Choice: A Case Study of Intra-District Transfers*

**Kristie J.R. Phillips**, Brigham Young University, **Charles Hausman**, University of Kentucky, **Elisabeth S. Larsen**, Brigham Young University

*Magnet Schools, Peer Effects, and Student Achievement*

**Dale Ballou**, Vanderbilt University, **Keke Liu**, Vanderbilt University

*Resource Allocation and Information Management in Charter Schools: Connections to Student Success*

**Kenneth K. Wong**, Brown University, **Francis X. Shen**, Harvard University, **Beth Purvis**, Chicago International Charter School

Discussants **Jane Hannaway**, The Urban Institute

3:30 – 3:45 BREAK

3:45 – 5:15 PANEL V: CHOICE IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS

Papers *Parental Choice in the Netherlands: Rising Concern about Segregation*

**Helen F. Ladd**, Duke University, **Edward B. Fiske**, Education Writer, Editor, and Consultant, **Nienke Ruijs**, University of Amsterdam

*Private Education Provision and Public Finance: The Netherlands*  
**Harry Anthony Patrinos**, World Bank

*The Impact of School Choice on Student University Entrance Rank Scores in Australia*

**Chris Ryan**, Australian National University, **Louise Watson**, University of Canberra

Discussants **Patrick McEwan**, Wellesley College

6:30 – 7:00 REFRESHMENTS AND COCKTAILS

7:00 – 9:00 DINNER AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS,  
**Paul Vallas**, New Orleans Superintendent

# Tuesday, October 27

7:30 – 8:30 REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

8:30 – 10:00 PANEL VI: CHOICE OPTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY

Papers *Match.com: School Choice Matching Systems in New York City and Boston*

**Thomas Toch**, Education Sector, **Chad Aldeman**, Education Sector

*White Parents, Diversity and School Choice Policies: Where Good Intentions, Anxiety and Privilege Collide*

**Amy Stuart Wells**, Teachers College, Columbia University, **Allison Roda**, Teachers College, Columbia University

*The Challenges of Choice: Latin American Immigrants and High School Choice in New York City*

**Carolyn Sattin-Bajaj**, New York University

Discussant Paul T. Hill, University of Washington

8:30 – 10:00 PANEL VII: CHOICE OPTIONS IN CHICAGO

Papers *Educational Choice & Student Participation: The Case of Supplemental Educational Services Provision in Chicago Public Schools*  
**Matthew P. Steinberg**, University of Chicago

*Using Choice: Decision Processes and School Selection in Chicago*  
**W. David Stevens**, University of Chicago, **David W. Johnson**, University of Chicago, **Marisa de la Torre**, University of Chicago, **Alissa Bolz**, University of Chicago

*The Effect of School Choice on Student Academic Achievements: Randomized Lotteries*  
**Amy Myers**, Baylor University

Discussant **Elaine Allensworth**, University of Chicago

8:30 – 10:00 PANEL VIII: CHARTERS IN INDIANAPOLIS

Papers *Taking Charge of Choice: How Charter School Policy Contexts Matter*

**Claire Smrekar**, Vanderbilt University

*Barriers and Openings to Innovation in Indianapolis Charter Schools*

**Jonathan Plucker**, Indiana University

*Classroom Instruction in Charter and Traditional Public Schools: Content, Cognitive Complexity and Alignment to State Standards and Assessments*

**Mark Berends**, University of Notre Dame, **Marc Stein**, Vanderbilt University, **John Smithson**, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Discussant **Bruce Fuller**

10:00 – 10:15 BREAK

10:15 – 11:45 PANEL IX: CHARTER SCHOOL EFFECTS IN VARIOUS CONTEXTS

Papers *How Charter Schools Affect the Distribution of Students by Ability and Race/Ethnicity: An Examination across Eight States*

**Ron Zimmer**, Michigan State University, **Brian Gill**, Mathematica, **Kevin Booker**, Mathematica, **Stéphane Lavertu**, University of Wisconsin **John Witte**, University of Wisconsin

*Charter Schools and the Gender Gap*

**Jennifer L. Jennings**, Columbia University, **Sean P. Corcoran**, New York University, **Juli Simon Thomas**, Columbia University

*Charter School Effects in an Urban School District: An Analysis of Student Achievement Growth*

**Maria Mendiburo**, Vanderbilt University, **Mark Berends**, University of Notre Dame, **Anna Nicotera**, Vanderbilt University

Discussant **Julian Betts**, University of California-San Diego

11:45 – 1:15 LUNCHEON WITH SPEAKER

**Henry Levin**, Teachers College, Columbia University

To register visit: [Vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice/conference.com](http://Vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice/conference.com)

For questions, contact **Jenny Zottola**: [SchoolChoiceConference@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:SchoolChoiceConference@vanderbilt.edu)

Phone: 615.887.9374

