

# EDUCATION NEWS & NOTES

## School Choice Week Draws Parents And Kids

(NAPSA)—Rich Thompson is among the thousands of parents who marched at the Georgia State Capitol on a cold day last January and plans to do the same later this month in pursuit of a dream for his children: educational freedom.

Thompson, an Atlanta resident, has enrolled his two daughters in a charter school. But for him, it's not enough.

"I am for all forms for school choice, and I want more choices," Thompson said. "If a charter school is good for a child, a parent should get that choice. But if it is a private school, a faith-based school, a special needs school—whatever the school—they should have that option, too."

Throughout most of America, most children only have the option of attending their neighborhood public school. Their school is assigned to them based on their parents' address. Only those who are most fortunate and can afford a private or religious school can obtain another form of education.

That's why National School Choice Week launched in January 2011 and will occur again this year during the week of January 22—to raise awareness that most children cannot decide where they want to attend school, even if they have a particular need or interest.

In 2011, more than 200 organizations partnered to host events large and small. Some hosted rallies, town hall meetings, movie screenings, concerts, expos, book clubs, cookouts and even a grandmas' coffeehouse for charters—all to mark National School Choice Week.

"Parents truly know what type of education is best for their kids," Thompson added. "And school



**Parents generally know what kind of schooling is best for their kids—and there's a group that's helping them get it.**

choice is not about a particular demographic but helping all kids. It's about raising the bar. In my social circle, the traditional schools aren't pushing kids where they need to go. They need to be challenged more."

In 2011, National School Choice Week made headlines throughout the country, including recognition by Al Roker on NBC's *Today Show*, coverage on Fox News and an address from actor Bill Cosby. There were rallies and events in almost every state, including as far away as Hawaii and Alaska, as the message for more educational options reached 24 million Americans.

During the week of January 22–28, similar events are planned throughout the country as parents and advocates come together to strategize about ways to get more educational options for our children.

To find out where there will be National School Choice Week events from January 22–28 or to plan an event of your own, go to [www.schoolchoiceweek.com](http://www.schoolchoiceweek.com).