



# Finding Superman: Debating the Future of Public Education in America (0)

*Watson Scott Swail*

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“This book is an essential supplement for everyone who saw the movie *Waiting for Superman*. It makes clear that education improvement is more complex, and requires more change in policy and practice, than Superman ever envisioned. It is a roadmap for more comprehensive transformation of education.”

—**Michael W. Kirst**, Emeritus Professor of Education, Stanford University

“No one who hopes to participate in and contribute to the contemporary conversation about better teachers, better schools, and better learning for students can afford to pass up this collection. It is a book for educators, but more than that it is a book for all who care about our young people and our nation’s tomorrow.”

—**Stephen Joel Trachtenberg**, President Emeritus, The George Washington University and university professor of public service

“Using *Waiting for Superman* as their foil, Swail and a cadre of national education experts argue for more comprehensive education reform efforts that prepare young people for the rapidly changing demands of today’s economy and society. This collection, drawing on the authors’ years of experience in education reform and policy, challenges the ideas highlighted in *Waiting for Superman* and instead maps out reform strategies that will push our thinking into new realms.”

—**Betsy Brand**, Executive Director, American Youth Policy Forum

“*Finding Superman* brings together a who’s who of education reformers to probe the challenges and opportunities of educational quality in American public education. This volume shows that there are no simple solutions, no magic bullets that will fix our schools. Instead, the real Supermen (and women) can be found everywhere—in the poorest public schools, in charters, and in the homes of the very children whose success will determine our collective future as a nation.”

—**Jamie P. Merisotis**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lumina Foundation

In *Finding Superman*, some of the most prominent educational thinkers of our time examine the pressing issues of educational equity and excellence brought to light in Davis Guggenheim’s popular documentary, *Waiting for Superman*. The film’s portrayal of urban public schools as uniform failures and charter schools as the only viable alternative for our nation’s youth demands a closer look. Across the chapters of this important book, the contributors reveal the film’s untold stories. These include the many public schools that

are doing an excellent job of educating students, as well as the many charter schools that are doing no better than most public schools, despite their monetary advantages.

With chapters from educational luminaries that include **Milton Chen, Linda Darling-Hammond, Dan Domenech, Ben Levin, Arthur Levine, Ann Lieberman, John Merrow, Diane Ravitch, Peter Smith,** and **Watson Scott Swail**, *Finding Superman* demands a new perspective from readers on a topic of urgent importance to all of us. Achieving excellent schools for all children is not an easy task. As these authors remind us, it requires a more balanced dialogue and a fuller range of evidence to realize truly lasting change.

**Watson Scott Swail** is the President and Chief Executive Officer of The Educational Policy Institute in Washington, DC.

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