

Problems in schooling in waiting for superman

[Education](#), [School](#)



Waiting for Superman is a documentary that highlights schooling issues, while examining possible solutions for these. His first critique of schooling originates from the lack of money paid to full-time teachers. This reduces teachers' interest in educating and while it may be a passion for many teachers, the harsh reality is that they are overworked and underpaid. However, the documenter proposes not that teacher salary is increased, but interestingly believes that tenure be eliminated. Tenure is one of the few incentives teachers receive to offset their meager pay. Tenure basically ensures that a teacher can't be fired during their lifetime. However, in a Simpsons cartoon clip, it shows how a teacher can become complacent with mediocrity once tenure has been granted. They have no problem with students having low test scores annually and have no motivation to improve as an instructor.

Guggenheim also discusses the charter school model and shows how he feels as if it's the panacea to schooling issues, as they can hire non-union teachers that can't be granted tenure and provide a more personalized experience for the students. They tend to be smaller and teachers are more committed to seeing student's succeed. Later, I will critique why I feel as though these schools are definitely not the solution to schooling problems, especially in an area as DC. The movie concludes with showing how many vulnerable parents are at the fate of the blind lottery system, which is the determinant of the type of education their child receives.

Lastly, Guggenheim talks about how failed neighborhoods correlates to failed schools. An interesting statistics mentioned is that the price it takes to keep the 60% of Oliver High School students in prison is the same price that it

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costs to send a child to private school. This can be attributed to the neighboring community of this school. The students lack motivation to learn and receive an education. This could be because of the stigma present in their community, lack of parental guidance, violence in the area, etc. However, the reputation of the surrounding area definitely impacts a school and teachers' willingness to work there. Instructors generally want to teach in a good location; however, the trash trend exists. With this, the worst teachers are just traded amongst these already subpar schools.

Noddings seems to focus on the fact that children should not be at blame for academic failures and that testing and experimentation should not be utilized as students aren't scientific subjects. She seems to realize that students develop at different rates and that without adequate teachers, there's no hope for schools. This is a commonality among the documenter and Noddings. If teachers were properly prepared and qualified to teach their courses, this would be a quick solution to improving individual schools.

Noddings also believes that providing choice and having democracy in schools would solve many issues as well. However, in many cases, parents dominate students' choice. Noddings also suggests that we move towards providing a universal education to students. I agree with this suggestion. If a universal education was provided, I believe that a fairer playing field would be established.

As it relates to eliminating tenure, I definitely agree that it would ensure that teachers are 100% committed to their students, but it really should not be eliminated. Since teacher pay is so low, there has to be some type of

incentives to entice teachers to certain schools, so providing this type of job security is really a recruitment tool. I also believe that increasing teacher salary is not the solution, as this would cause others to go into this field for the wrong reasons. Anyone can become a teacher but only a few can actually teach, and these people should be all the way committed to student achievement. Being a teacher requires more than providing support in the classroom; it means being there at after the final bell, supporting at sporting events, and forming those meaningful and attempting to find out as much about their home life as possible. Many aren't committed to that, as it is a great responsibility, and raising teachers' salary would attract uncommitted and unprepared teachers in the classroom setting, furthering the disparity between these and charter schools.

The charter school model that is highlighted in this film, while a positive step towards creating education reform, is definitely not the solution to all education problems in DC. The end of the documentary definitely played on my emotions as I watched the children and their families not being accepted into their respective charter schools. It made me realize that it's not fair that a good education is given to those who simply get chosen in a lottery. What happens to the rest of the motivated students who just need an opportunity to flourish and cultivate their educational passion? They become trapped in a system of failure, attending public schools that are serving more of an injustice than anything else to the students. Yes, charter schools are a good idea, but if they are not available to more students and there isn't a more selective process for these schools, then this really can't be offered as a feasible solution.

In conclusion, problems in schooling are a very complex issue that cannot be solved purely by speculation. Without implementation and actually trying to improve schools and systems, these issues will continue to persist. The documentary is called Waiting for Superman and after watching, I feel as though we'll be waiting forever for this superman to come, unless initiative is taken to combat these educational disparities. It makes no sense that one of the students was 1 in 792 for a school lottery with only 40 spots. A good education should be provided to all who seek it, not just those fortunate to be drawn in a pick, regardless of academic level.