

Alliance of Baptists Statement on Public Education

*For consideration at the Annual Gathering on May 2-4, 2014 in Portland, Maine
Submitted by Cathy Tamsberg*

With gratitude for God's radical hospitality that invites all persons to participate in the building of God's commonwealth of love and justice, we express our support for public education in the United States.

In these days our public educational institutions are increasingly challenged by reductions in funding and political support. Yet our public schools are the primary avenue for most children – especially those living in poverty – to become participants in our nation's economic, political and community life as educated and informed citizens. Although private education makes important contributions to our common welfare as the appropriate choice for some students, strong, effective public educational institutions are vital to the health of our democracy and the building of a just society.

Therefore, as people of faith gathered as the Alliance of Baptists, we commit ourselves to finding ways to support public schools in our communities and in our society as a whole. We will develop creative strategies for expressing our gratitude to those who are called to educate our children through public institutions and we will advocate for adequate local, state and federal funding and support for public education.

Acknowledging that some of our schools fail to meet the needs of their students, we commit ourselves to becoming engaged in strengthening our public schools so that all children, regardless of their life circumstances, can develop the skills and qualities they need to become the healthy, capable persons God has called them to be.