

Factsheet: Vouchers Are Not the Solution for Educational Improvement

- **Voucher programs hurt student outcomes**

- Evaluations in [Louisiana](#), [DC](#), [Indiana](#), and [Ohio](#) found negative impacts on student achievement. For instance, Louisiana's program [lowered math scores](#) more than [COVID](#).
- The [Educational Choice for Children Act](#) (ECCA) doesn't allow requirements for schools accepting vouchers — including assessing students against grade-level standards — which would leave private schools unaccountable for providing a high-quality education to all students and would leave the public in the dark about student outcomes.

- **Vouchers take money out of low- and middle-income families' pockets**

- Vouchers rarely cover full private school costs, creating barriers for lower-income families. In Arizona, the average voucher ([\\$6,000-\\$9,000](#)) is not enough to cover average private school costs ([\\$10,446](#)).
- Private schools often raise tuition — in some cases by [as much as 25%](#) — following the expansion of voucher programs. The average family cannot afford to pay for these additional costs.

- **Vouchers allow wealthy families to receive subsidized tuition while avoiding taxes**

- Most vouchers go to students already in private schools, taking public funds that could support public schools to subsidize existing private school students.
 - Nationwide, an average of 70% of students using vouchers were previously enrolled in private school.
- School voucher programs [disproportionately benefit](#) the most advantaged students, who are overwhelmingly white and wealthy.
 - Arizona's wealthiest families use ESAs at [five times the rate](#) of the state's poorest families.
 - In North Carolina, [two thirds](#) of voucher recipients are white, despite representing [less than half](#) of the state's public school population.
- ECCA's proposed tax credit structure would allow wealthy families to [avoid taxes](#), such as those on the sale of stocks.

• Vouchers erode student civil rights protections

- Vouchers don't provide students with school choice; they provide schools with taxpayer-funded student choice.
- ECCA's mandate to not impose requirements on schools accepting vouchers means there can be no rules that prohibit private schools from using admissions policies and [discriminatory practices](#) that exclude students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students, students with different religious beliefs, or students of color.
- Many states require parents accepting vouchers to [waive their rights](#) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which ensures students with disabilities can access high-quality educational experiences.
 - An investigation in [Wisconsin](#) revealed that 15% of the investigated schools accepting vouchers had policies that appeared to discriminate against students with disabilities.
 - A federal evaluation of Washington, [DC's](#) voucher program found the main reason cited for not using vouchers was not being able to find a school that would provide needed accommodations.

• Rural communities are disproportionately harmed by voucher programs

- Vouchers [don't serve rural communities](#); instead, they drain much-needed funds without expanding educational options for students.
- Many rural states [rely more on Title I funds](#) than others, so any efforts to cut Title I to allow funds to be used for private schools could disproportionately impact rural communities.
- Rural students often [don't have private schools nearby](#), so voucher programs are hard, if not impossible for them to use.
 - Just [34%](#) of rural students have any private schools within five miles, compared to 92% of urban students.
 - In [Tennessee](#), 42% of rural school districts have no private schools at all.

• Voters from All Parties Want More Federal Spending on Public Schools, Not Less

- Voters in All4Ed's OpinionatED 2024 election [exit poll](#) prefer increasing federal funding for public schools over private school vouchers. This includes 68% of all voters and majorities of Republicans (58%) and Trump voters (55%).
- Vouchers should not be forced upon states who don't want them. In 2024, voters in [Kentucky](#), [Nebraska](#), and [Colorado](#) all rejected vouchers at the ballot box.

When asked to choose, majorities of Democratic and Republican voters prefer increasing funding for public schools over vouchers.

Which approach do you favor more?

