



86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TEXAS PTA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

KEEP PUBLIC DOLLARS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Demand policies that prevent taxpayer dollars from funding private schools through a voucher system that lacks transparency and educational accountability.

BACKGROUND

Education Savings Account Programs (ESA) Programs

- A form of voucher program that allows eligible parents to use a portion of funds the state expends for their child's public school education to fund private school tuition, distance education, and homeschooling materials and curriculum. The remainder of the funds, generally around 30%, is kept by the public school the student previously attended.

Tax Credit Scholarship Programs

- Corporations can earn franchise tax credits by donating money to a scholarship program that uses the contributions to pay private school tuition for students. As Texas does not have an income tax, a reduction in franchise tax revenue would widen the gap of available revenue to fund public schools.

VOUCHERS ARE NOT A SOLUTION FOR STATEWIDE QUALITY EDUCATION

Provides Choice for Some, Not All

- The cost of a private school education often exceeds the value of a voucher; therefore, low-income, at-risk students are left to shoulder the burden of additional expenses such as transportation, non-discounted lunch programs, assessment of special needs, access to additional remediation programs, and the full cost of tuition.
- Students that require additional support can be excluded because private schools are not required to provide special education services mandated by federal and state laws.
- Vouchers disproportionately benefit students living in urban areas due to limited access to private schools in rural Texas.
- Private schools have a profit motive to admit students with the fewest educational challenges.

Lacks Transparency and Accountability

- When public dollars are funneled to private schools, the taxpayer loses any oversight of how those funds are allocated and whether a quality education is being provided for that payment.

Vouchers Drain Funding for Constitutional Mandate

- The Texas Constitution requires the Legislature to fund an efficient system of free, public schools.
- Policymakers have significantly reduced the state's share of funding for K-12 education over the past eight years, creating a shoestring budget in many school districts.
- Public schools educate more than 95% of students in Texas, and the limited public funds available must be dedicated to maintaining a quality school system that educates the overwhelming majority of our students.

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