



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. 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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