

# Vouchers Leave Students Behind



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**NEA believes in a strong and inclusive public education system that ensures that all students can succeed, regardless of their ZIP code. Vouchers harm students, communities, and undermine the public schools that educate 9 out of 10 American students. There is no valid evidence that such schemes improve the performance of either the students receiving them or those left behind in public schools.**

- ▶ **Regardless of what they're called, vouchers, tuition tax credits, education savings accounts and other related initiatives rob public schools of vital funding and resources**
  - Vouchers take dollars from our public schools to fund private schools at taxpayer expense.
  - Instead of taking funds away from public schools and handing them over to private schools, we should enhance opportunities that help equip all students for success and close opportunity gaps.
  - Vouchers do not create choice for parents, but rather choice for private schools — they can reject students based on economic status, academic achievement, disability, or even gender.
  - Vouchers do not decrease education costs. Rather, tax revenue that would ordinarily fund public schools would instead pay for vouchers, thus limiting the capacity of public schools, and costing taxpayers more since many voucher students already attended private school.
  
- ▶ **Vouchers harm students most in need by not providing the same rights and protections as public schools, and eliminate accountability for taxpayers**
  - Vouchers can undermine federal education programs that help level the playing field for those most in need — students who live in poverty or face other barriers to academic success.
  - Students with special needs who use vouchers lose many rights granted by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and may not have the protection of an individualized education plan.
  - Vouchers deprive students of the rights and protections they are awarded at public schools. Despite receiving public money, private schools that participate in vouchers programs are not subject to the same civil rights laws, and do not face the same accountability and transparency standards that must schools must meet, including those in Title VI, Title IX, and IDEA. Students who attend private schools using vouchers are stripped of the First Amendment, due process, and other constitutional and statutory rights offered to them in public schools.
  
- ▶ **Instead of taking away funds from our public schools and handing it over to private schools, we should focus on lifting up all students**
  - Congress should invest in smart strategies that help to improve the success of all students, including creating more opportunities and equity for students, classes small enough for one-on-one attention, modern textbooks and resources, and a well-rounded curriculum for every student.
  - Congress should respect and listen to the voices of educators — those who know the names of the students they educate — when making decisions that impact student success.