

THE FACTS ABOUT TEXAS PUBLIC EDUCATION

SCHOOL VOUCHERS

In May 2022, Gov. Abbott pitched a school voucher policy that would allow families to use state dollars for private school tuition.¹ Abbott also indicated that if families like their students' schools then they will remain funded.² This could mean that "unfavorable" schools will lose funding as a result of school choice.

Vouchers are tax revenue that is "diverted from public schools to subsidize private school tuition." Vouchers can come in three forms: education savings accounts, tax credit scholarships, and traditional vouchers.⁴

Types of Vouchers ⁵	
EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT	This type of voucher enables parents to receive money to leave the public school system and enroll in a private school.
TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP	With this type of voucher, the state gives tax credits to corporations or individuals who have donated to funds that would pay for students to attend private schools.
TRADITIONAL VOUCHERS	This type of voucher would allow parents to apply directly for grants that they could use for their kids to attend private schools.

Across the state, Texans are split concerning Abbott's proposal. In a poll of 1,000 Texans, Change Research found that **46% support** Abbott's measure, **43% oppose it**, and **11% are unsure**. However, **82%** are concerned that this proposal would divert resources away from public schools and **57%** were concerned that this would create higher property taxes.

This measure is also concerning as private schools can discriminate against families and their students, lack accountability measures, and may not have an aligned curriculum that tracks student progress.⁸





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Although vouchers are often credited as an equity measure that assists low-income families, they may have the opposite effect. In 2016, the Government Accountability Office found that 13 out of 22 voucher programs surveyed did not place a cap on tuition. Thus, they can charge more than the voucher covers, placing low-income families at a disadvantage. Rural families are also at a disadvantage with vouchers since they may not have a school of choice in their area.⁹

≥ INVEST IN TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS €

PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE THE BEST MEASURE OF MEETING THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF TEXAS' STUDENTS. INSTEAD OF DIVERTING RESOURCES FROM TEXAS' 5.37 MILLION STUDENTS, THE STATE CAN CONTINUE TO SUPPORT POLICIES THAT OFFER "CHOICE" WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM.

THESE INCLUDE MAGNET SCHOOLS,
ALLOWING DISTRICT TRANSFERS, CREATING
OPEN ENROLLMENT POLICIES, AND
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- 1 McKinley, Edward, "Gov. Abbott pitches school voucher plan for Texas at San Antonio rally", May 9, 2022, https://www.houstonchronicle.com/politics/texas/article/Gov-Abbott-pitches-school-voucher-plan-for-Texas-17160820.php
- 2 (McKinley, 2022)
- 3 Raise Your Hand Texas, "Act Now for Our Future: 2019 Legislative Priorities-Keep Public Dollars in Public Schools", 2019, https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/02_ActNow_2019-legislative_one-pager_vouchers.pdf
- 4 (Raise Your Hand of Texas, 2019)
- 5 (Raise Your Hand Texas, 2019)
- 6 KXAN Austin, "New poll shows Texas split on school vouchers, but majority concerned it would pull funding from public schools", May 19, 2022, https://www.kxan.com/news/texas/new-poll-shows-texans-split-on-school-vouchers-but-majority-concerned-it-would-pull-funding-from-public-schools/
- 7 (KXAN Austin, 2022)
- 8 (Raise Your Hand Texas, 2019)
- 9 National Coalition for Public Education, Vouchers Do Not Adequately Serve Low-Income Students, https://www.ncpecoalition.org/low-income-students
- 10 (Raise Your Hand Texas, 2019)

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