



Every Texan's Message to the Park Cities Republican Women May Meeting

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Public education is the tie that binds us together as Texans and Americans. Voucher programs threaten those ties by creating expensive bad policy that would further dismantle our most cherished democratic institutions. We all make choices as youth that, as adults, we work to correct. As Texans and Americans, we have invested in public education over the last century, in part, to correct harmful choices of a youthful nation.

Our founders knew the importance of education to the well-being of a democratic society, and the investment in public education has expanded the reach of our national promise.

- Vouchers, Education Savings Accounts, or so-called "School Choice" undermine our efforts to correct the ugly choices in our past and should be rejected.
- Vouchers are bad policy. Vouchers leave millions of Texas students out, lead to fly-by-night substandard schools, and create entitlement for students already attending private schools.
- Vouchers are not just bad policy; they are expensive and wasteful policy that, in Texas, are expected to cost taxpayers more than \$4 billion by the end of the decade. It is no surprise that even amidst our incredibly divided moment in American history, Texans who are on opposite sides of many policy debates find common cause under the banner of public education.

Honorable legislators who chose the well-being of their constituents and communities are under attack for simply doing what every American is asked to do: *vote their conscience*. The political fights to enact vouchers in Texas threaten our unity by using scorched-earth tactics in favor of expensive, bad public policy.

Texans repeatedly chose against diverting tax dollars to fund private school educations because we know our public schools are the lifeblood of our communities. As our founding fathers recognized, Texans know an educated populace is essential to maintaining the democratic freedoms we hold so dear. Not only do voucher programs reject the premise of offering equal access to educational opportunity for all 5.5 million Texas students, but they promise to serve less students for a higher cost with less accountability. On top of being unproductive and wasteful, voucher programs threaten to undo the work our schools have done to strengthen American democracy since the Civil Rights Movement.