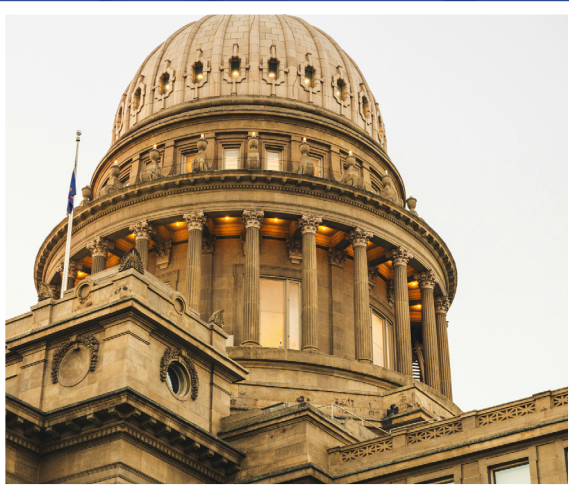




HOW TO PUSH BACK ON PROPONENTS OF SCHOOL VOUCHERS.

First, review fact sheets, articles, and the most updated talking points prior to your meeting or conversation. Otherwise, here are the most frequently used “pro” arguments for vouchers. Be prepared to ask questions and ask your legislator to think critically about how these programs will play out over time.

Belief: “I believe that students shouldn’t be trapped at their public schools based on their zip code.”

How does the proposal guarantee that a private school would accept all children? Do the private schools provide transportation, meals, or specialized services or are parents expected to absorb those costs, in addition to tuition? Does the proposal protect children against discrimination based on their race, religion or ability? How does the proposal ensure access to that of families who live in one of the 20 counties without a private school?

Belief: “Competition is healthy for the public schools.”

How can there be fair “competition” for public schools to compete, directly, with unregulated private schools? Would you consider it a level playing field of competition when public schools accept all kids, while private schools can hand pick their students?

Belief: “I believe that parents are the only form of accountability a private school needs.”

Parents rights aren’t protected in law for private schools like they are in public schools. For example, are they required to provide process on discipline? Provide access to all learning materials, and the ability to object to assignments based on its content? Participation in curriculum adoption? Conduct business and instructional operations in public? The simple answer is “no” because there are very few regulations on private schools. Further, shouldn’t there be evidence that learning is occurring? Accountability and transparency are core values of Idahoans – are you comfortable providing upwards of a million dollars without any transparency or oversight for how those funds are used?

Belief: “This will save the state a lot of money.”

In other states with private school support programs, that is patently untrue. First, voucher programs all started off as “small, pilot programs” and have increased tremendously over time.

Further, a majority of students using vouchers in these states had no prior enrollment in public school. Evidence shows that these programs essentially create a taxpayer-subsized tuition-forgiveness for families who were already paying tuition – without any strings attached.

SCHOOL VOUCHERS: BUDGET BUSTERS by DESIGN

Once enacted, voucher programs expand dramatically. It’s no accident. Policymakers are quickly pressured to expand eligibility to universal status. States can’t afford to pay for two separate systems of schooling – one public and one private.

STATE	ORIGINAL FUNDING	NEXT THING YOU KNOW...
New Hampshire	First year (2021): \$300,000	Year 3: \$25 M
Arizona	First year (universal eligibility 2023): \$33 M	Year 2 (projected): \$850-\$950 M
Indiana	First year (2011): \$15.5 M	Projected 2024: \$600 M
Ohio	First year (2023): \$397.8 M	Estimated 2023-24 school year: \$966.2 M
North Carolina	2014: capped at \$10.8 M	Projected by 2027: \$144.8M/year

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Belief: “Kids get a better education in private school.”

What evidence supports that? Studies show that students perform worse academically using private school vouchers than their peers in public schools. Worse, most students using vouchers aren’t required to take achievement tests, so there is no actual evidence of learning occurring.