

Stopping Vouchers and the Privatization of Public Schools

An ATPE Legislative Priority



The issue:

Private school vouchers, Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), tax credits, and opportunity scholarships are all forms of proposed subsidies that would allow federal or state funds to be used to cover the cost of private education programs or even home schools. Private entities looking to cash in on state and federal education budgets are also vying for opportunities to take over the management of existing public schools.

Why it matters:

Private school vouchers in any form divert money from our already cash-strapped public school system, potentially at a cost of billions of dollars a biennium to Texas taxpayers. This places further strain on a school system that has an obligation to educate every child regardless of behavioral issues, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities. Private, parochial, and home schools aren't held accountable in the same manner as public schools that receive state funding. Private schools aren't required to accept all students, and they may not offer students and parents the same protections that state and federal laws require in our public schools.

Taxpayers cannot afford to support both public and private school systems and want assurances that their tax dollars are spent appropriately. Similarly, parents and taxpayers deserve to have their local schools governed by a locally elected school board that operates transparently and is accountable to its voters. We should not allow dubious privatization plans to divert our focus away from giving all students access to a high-quality public education.

ATPE opposes the privatization of public schools. We urge lawmakers to reject any voucher, scholarship, tax credit, education savings account, or similar program that directs funding away from the public school system and toward unaccountable, often inferior educational settings. We also oppose using public tax dollars to pay private entities to operate Texas public schools and take over the authority and accountability that have been vested in locally elected school board trustees.



Learn more about ATPE's Legislative Priorities at

www.atpe.org/advocacy.

Contact ATPE Governmental Relations for additional information at (800) 777-2873 or government@atpe.org.