



Vouchers: The answer is still NO.

- All school privatization schemes — vouchers, educational savings accounts (ESAs), tax credit scholarships — hand out tax dollars to a few students with little or no accountability and no evidence they improve educational quality.
- Despite the claims of some voucher advocates, school privatization is not a civil rights issue. To the contrary, vouchers and private schools were used for years to perpetuate segregation. The Texas Constitution makes no provision for private schools but requires the Legislature to maintain a system of free public schools (Article 7, Section 1).
- The Texas Constitution also prohibits spending public tax dollars for religious institutions (Article 1, Section 7), and many private schools in Texas have religious affiliations.
- Vouchers, ESAs or tax credit scholarships would not give many middle class or low income Texas families a “choice” of schools because they would pay for only part of the cost of tuition at the best private schools and would not cover transportation costs. Instead, they would subsidize tuition payments for wealthier Texans.
- Vouchers, ESAs or tax credit scholarships would take tax dollars from under-funded public schools, where the vast majority of Texas school children will continue to be educated. Texas already pays about \$2,300 less per year to educate a child than the national average, according to the National Education Association.
- Virtual vouchers abuse the value of technology to take tax dollars from public schools for the benefit of private, for-profit online companies. Fulltime online instruction has been shown to be ineffective, and recent research from the National Education Policy Center shows that virtual schools consistently perform much worse than traditional public schools in graduation rates, progress reports and state performance rankings. Virtual vendors often escape public accountability while receiving tax dollars to duplicate courses offered in traditional public schools.

