School Choice and the Opportunity Gap

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About NCSL

- Instrumentality of all 50 state and territorial legislatures
- Bipartisan
- Provides research, technical assistance and opportunities to exchange ideas
- Advocates on behalf of legislatures before the federal government

NCSL is committed to the success of state legislators and staff. Founded in 1975, we are a respected bipartisan organization providing states support, ideas, connections and a strong voice on Capitol Hill.
Legislative Attention
States Considering School Choice Legislation Since 2009

Source: NCSL 2014
Public School Choice Options

- Intradistrict Open Enrollment\(^1\) - 30 states
- Interdistrict Open Enrollment\(^1\) - 44 states
- Magnet Schools - 30 states
- Charter Schools - 42 states
- Virtual Schools\(^2\) - 30 states
National School Choice Policy Landscape

Charter Schools

Source: NCSL 2014
Private School Choice Options

- Traditional Vouchers - 13 states
- Scholarship Tax Credits - 14 states
- Personal Tax Credits/Deductions - 7 states
- Education Savings Accounts - 1 States
National School Choice Policy Landscape

School Vouchers

Source: NCSL 2014

States with Vouchers
National School Choice Policy Landscape

Scholarship Tax Credits

Source: NCSL 2014
National School Choice Policy Landscape

Personal Tax Credits/Deductions

Source: NCSL 2014
National School Choice Policy Landscape

Source: NCSL 2014
National School Choice Policy Landscape

Private School Choice

Source: NCSL 2014
Homeschooling

• Considered to be protected by the US Constitution
  - Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972)

• Level of state regulation varies widely
Charter School Student Demographics

Research on Student Performance

• Test Scores Nationally
  – Charter students on par with similar traditional students
    • Wide variance among states
  – Vouchers students in D.C. performed better in first few years but overtime leveled with public school students\(^3\)
  – Low income and minority students in both charter and voucher schools perform better than similar students in neighborhood schools
Research Cont'd

Graduation Rates Nationally

• Charter students are more likely to graduate high school\(^4\)

• Vouchers students are more likely to graduate high school\(^5\)
Supporting Organizations

- Walton Family Foundation
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Broad Foundation
- National Alliance for Public charter Schools
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers
- Students First
- Democrats for Education Reform
- Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice
- American Federation for Children
Opposing Organizations

• National Education Association
• American Federation of Teachers
• Americans United for the Separation of Church and State
• National School Board Association
References


Questions to Consider:
Academic Performance?
Access and Equity?
Accountability?
School Competition?
Funding?
Legal/Constitutional Issues?