

# Vouchers Do Not Improve Academic Achievement

Repeated studies of voucher programs across the country show that vouchers do not improve students' academic achievement and can result in worse test scores for students.

Vouchers do not improve student achievement and, in many states, lead to a decline in achievement. Recent studies of the Louisiana,<sup>1</sup> Indiana,<sup>2</sup> and Ohio<sup>3</sup> voucher programs have demonstrated that students who used vouchers experience worse academic outcomes than their peers. In addition, studies of long-standing voucher programs in Milwaukee,<sup>4</sup> Cleveland,<sup>5</sup> and the District of Columbia<sup>6</sup> found that students who received vouchers showed no improvement in reading or math over those not in the program.

Voucher programs also fail to offer participating students greater educational resources. Students in the District of Columbia voucher program, for example, were less likely to have access to key services such as English as a Second Language programs, learning supports, special education supports and services, and counselors than students who were not part of the program.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, a survey of the Milwaukee voucher program conducted in 2013 found that out of 110 Milwaukee voucher schools surveyed, 39 reported having no art, music, physical education, library, or technology specialist teachers.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan N. Mills & Patrick J. Wolf, Univ. of Ark., [The Effects of the Louisiana Scholarship Program on Student Achievement After Four Years](#) (Apr. 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Megan Austin et. al., Russell Sage Foundation J. of the Social Sciences, [Voucher Pathways and Student Achievement in Indiana's Choice Scholarship Program](#) (2019).

<sup>3</sup> David Figlio & Krzysztof Karbownik, Fordham Institute, [Evaluation of Ohio's EdChoice Scholarship Program: Selection, Competition, and Performance Effects](#) (July 2016).

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Patrick J. Wolf, School Choice Demonstration Project, Univ. of Ark., [The Comprehensive Longitudinal Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program: Summary of Final Reports](#) (Apr. 2010).

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Jonathan Plucker et al., Ctr. for Evaluation & Educ. Policy, Univ. of Ind., [Evaluation of the Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program. Technical Report 1998-2004](#), 166 (Feb. 2006).

<sup>6</sup> E.g., U.S. Dep't of Educ., [Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts Three Years After Students Applied](#) (May 2019); U.S. Dep't of Educ., [Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts Two Years After Students Applied](#) (June 2018); U.S. Dep't of Educ., [Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After One Year](#) (June 2017).

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Dep't of Educ., [Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Final Report](#) (June 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Erin Richards, [Report: Choice Schools Lack Specialty Teachers](#), Milwaukee J. Sentinel (Feb. 13, 2013).



The **National Coalition for Public Education** comprises more than 50 education, civic, civil rights, and religious organizations devoted to the support of public schools. Founded in 1978, NCPE opposes the funnelling of public money to private and religious schools through such mechanisms as tuition tax credits and vouchers.