



Stop NC School Voucher Expansion!

Two matching bills ([HB823](#) & [SB406](#)) making their way quickly through the NC General Assembly along with the [House](#) and [Senate](#) budget proposals will have a **devastating effect on NC students, public schools, and communities**. Instead of adequately funding teacher salaries and public schools, supporters of these bills/budgets are choosing to fund discriminatory private schools and subsidize the wealthy.

WHAT DO THE BILLS AND BUDGET PROPOSALS DO?

They dramatically increase voucher funding. In 2021-22, \$79.5 million was spent on Opportunity Scholarship (OS) vouchers. After adding a marketing budget, the funds spent increased to more than \$130 million in 2022-23. If this expansion is not stopped, in 2023-24, more **than \$250 million** will be allocated to private schools. The allocation grows to **more than \$520 million/year** by 2032-33. *At the same time, even after the NC Supreme Court ruled that they must fund it, voucher proponents in the General Assembly refused to release funds for the Comprehensive Remedial Plan (Leandro), which would help public schools across the state.*

They allow discrimination. In NC, private schools that accept vouchers are only legally prevented from discriminating against students on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Unlike public schools, which welcome and are legally bound to serve ALL students, private schools are not legally prevented from discriminating on the basis of religion, gender, and disability status.

They reduce accountability. Currently, private schools accepting voucher students are required to test students on an annual basis (though they select which test and don't have to take EOG or EOC tests) and report scores to the state. However, the scores are not public record. **The House budget drops the state reporting requirement**, making it impossible for the state or the public to know if students are learning anything at all.

They expand eligibility to all families regardless of income. The OS vouchers were initially provided to low-income families only. Over the years, income level eligibility has gone up and with the proposed expansion, families at all income levels will be eligible to receive state funds. So wealthy families, with no financial need, will be receiving state funds denied to public schools.

They allow students who have never attended public school to receive vouchers. Families who have never sent their child to public school will be eligible to receive state funding. This adds a **NEW taxpayer burden** when the state starts subsidizing families' private school tuition bill. With this eligibility expansion, NC is expected to trend like other states where up to 89% of voucher recipients have never attended public school.

DON'T BE FOOLED. KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHERS!

Links to resources and data for facts are found below

Myth: *Private school education is better for student academic achievement.*

Fact: Most vouchers-accepting private schools harm student academics. In studies with thousands of students, in multiple states, academic performance drops, sometimes even more than pandemic learning loss when students leave public school and go to private school. The negative effects are the worst for low-income students and students of color.

Myth: *OS vouchers won't drain money from public schools.*

Fact: Multiple studies have shown devastating effects on education budgets for states that have expanded vouchers. A recent study by the Office of State Budget and Management showed that nearly every district in North Carolina will experience a drop in funding due to the voucher expansion. And across the nation, rural school systems are especially hard hit by voucher expansions.

Myth: Students of color benefit from private school vouchers.

Fact: Vouchers increase school segregation, harming all students. Vouchers mostly serve white students; the roots of modern day vouchers are in the era of segregation when white families did not want their children to attend integrated schools. The largest negative academic effects of vouchers are for low income students and students of color.

Myth: There is a market demand for OS voucher expansion.

Fact: So much of the money allocated to the OS voucher program has been left *unspent* that in the 2021 budget, \$500,000/year was directed to marketing the vouchers. In the 2023 House budget, the marketing budget increases to \$1,500,000/year.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Call/email your state representative and senator. Let them know you oppose voucher expansion! You can find a [list of House and Senate members and their contact information here](#).

Call/email your school board members and business leaders. Ask them to put pressure on your state officials to halt voucher expansion.

Watch [our webinar on the harmful effects of vouchers](#) and share it with others!

RESOURCES

- [TIME](#) article “How School Voucher Programs Hurt Students” by Joshua Cowen, Ph.D. It has links to multiple reports and articles on voucher effects.
- Office of State Budget and Management [Impact Analysis](#)
- Link to [review by Economic Policy Institute](#) on the negative impact of school vouchers.
- Link to our [Important Research and Other Resources page](#). Scroll down to *School Privatization and Vouchers*. It includes links to numerous studies of voucher effects.
- Webinar with Dr. Cowen on [impact of school vouchers](#) on student success.



Contact Your Lawmakers



Research & Resources
Scroll to *School Privatization*

On the web at: publicschoolsfirstnc.org • Email us at: info@publicschoolsfirstnc.org

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