



Vouchers, Public Education, Entitlements and Subsidies

Vouchers are NOT a new entitlement.

Vouchers are not a new entitlement but rather a new means to deliver the constitutionally mandated K-12 education entitlement while promoting competition, parental choice, and savings to taxpayers.

Vouchers will NOT grow government.

In FY2005, Utah's school districts spent more than \$6,200 per student. For most households, this amounts to a subsidy since they do not pay enough taxes to cover the costs of educating their children. H.B. 184's largest voucher (\$3,500) is significantly less than the amount taxpayers spend on traditional public schools.

Taxpayer-subsidies are a fundamental component of ALL public education.

- Without taxpayer support for public education, most students from middle and low-income households would not have access to adequate education.
- Most Utah households do not pay enough taxes in their lifetimes to cover the costs of educating their children.
- High income households subsidize middle and lower income households. The top 1% of households pays about 20% of all income taxes. The top 10% pays almost 50% of all income taxes.
- Wealthy districts like Park City (high income, high property valuation) and Salt Lake City (high valuation) subsidize middle and low income districts like Alpine, Davis, and Ogden.
- Even children whose parents can afford to educate their children without taxpayer support receive a "free" public education.

Vouchers are NOT a subsidy for private schools

Vouchers – like traditional public education and charter schools — are a subsidy for families, but vouchers are not a subsidy for participating schools, which are paid for providing a service.

- Food stamps are a subsidy for families receiving them but not for the grocery stores that accept them; grocery stores are being paid to provide a service.
- School district bonds for school construction are a subsidy for the families attending the school but not for the contractors that build the school; contractors are being paid to deliver a service,
- Pell Grants are a subsidy for the students who receive them but not for the colleges and universities the students attend; colleges are being paid to deliver a service.

Vouchers REDUCE the education subsidy

Vouchers do subsidize choice, but at a lower cost than traditional public education. Since traditional public education itself is a subsidy for most households – particularly those households who will be eligible for the maximum voucher amount – this is a moot point. So-called public school choice and charter schools are also subsidized choices. Since subsidizing education benefits society, subsidizing parental choice and improving educational outcomes at a lower cost is even more beneficial.

Utah Taxpayers Association

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