



VOUCHERS DON'T SAVE MONEY, THEY COST THE STATE MORE

While Governor Ducey and many lawmakers have said we can't afford to do more to strengthen public education, they have made private schools a high priority, dramatically growing the amount of tax dollars that are diverted away from public schools. The public dollars diverted from public schools through private school tax credits and ESA vouchers has grown from \$14 million in 1999 to \$239 million in 2018.

ESA students receive a voucher amount based on the school funding formula. But Governor Ducey and the Legislature have cut that amount for public district school students by an average of \$378, while ESA voucher recipients continue to get the larger amount. There are also 31 school districts that pay for public schools with local property taxes only. The state cost for a student in these districts who moves from a public school to an ESA voucher will go from zero to more than \$5,000.

VOUCHER EXPANSION DESIGNED PRIMARILY FOR WELL-OFF STUDENTS IN PHOENIX AND TUCSON

Most rural areas of Arizona have no private schools, and many low-income students won't be able to use the vouchers because their parents can't afford transportation, uniforms, books and fees, and tuition costs above the voucher amount. The voucher expansion gives no priority to students with special needs, and high-income students are the primary users. This means the richest families in our state who can afford to send their children to private school from kindergarten through high school can now get subsidies from our tax dollars every year.

VOUCHERS GIVE TAXPAYERS NO ACCOUNTABILITY, REMAIN VULNERABLE TO MISSPENDING

There is no requirement for private schools to report any academic information about ESA voucher students to the public, which includes information about test scores. Neither parents, nor taxpayers nor lawmakers get a school report card or a financial audit from the private schools that receive our tax dollars.

A 2016 audit from the Arizona Auditor General concluded that the Arizona Department of Education needed to "improve internal controls to reduce the risk of loss or misuse of program monies." The audit found 150 children remained in the program even after their parents attempted to misspend the funds, and the department had recovered only a small portion of misspent monies they had discovered.