Public School Systems Vs. A Voucher System

Theresa E. Grotrain

Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne

Follow this and additional works at: http://opus.ipfw.edu/stu_symp2000

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation

http://opus.ipfw.edu/stu_symp2000/27
Throughout history, society has struggled to achieve equal educational opportunities for all students. A new effort in current debate to accomplish this goal proposes the creation of education vouchers: publicly provided funds granted to all students so that they may enroll in the certified school of their choice. Proponents of such a plan argue that voucher systems will increase school efficiency, increase student achievement, and provide an education that responds to the desires of parents. However, as proponents' studies may claim these arguments true, opponents to the voucher system present a strong counter-argument in their claims that comparing privately operated schools to public schools on these grounds is an unfair comparison because each operates under different terms. Furthermore, as opponents look to the future of schools operating under a voucher system, they give warning that such a system would likely work against the democratic goal of equal education as it would provide an environment for students to re-segregate. Within the literature, opponents' studies and claims seem to provide effective and worthwhile counter-arguments that a voucher system would, indeed, create more problems than it could solve. Even certain educators teaching within voucher school systems claim that the "system", itself, was not the reason for improvement, but the increased teacher autonomy in re-organizing the school's atmosphere actually led to the positive changes. In order to promote and maintain the democratic ideals of our nation as a whole while simultaneously providing an educational environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed, it appears that increasing the educator's control over school organization may be an option worth considering before vouchers.