

TYPES OF VOUCHERS

VOUCHERS

A voucher, sometimes called a “scholarship,” is a handout of taxpayer dollars for private school tuition: The government writes a check for tuition at a private school.

TUITION TAX CREDITS (TTCS)

Under this scheme, individuals or corporations receive a tax credit in exchange for giving money to an intermediary organization, often called a “scholarship organization.” Then, the “scholarship organization” writes a check for tuition at a private school. In short, rather than collecting taxes and then giving a portion to a private school (a voucher), the government forgoes those tax dollars so long as the money goes to a private school (a TTC). The end is the same—money is funneled to private schools and away from public schools.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAS)

ESAs are simply vouchers by another name. Rather than giving the taxpayer funds directly to the private school like traditional vouchers, the government deposits taxpayer funds into an “education savings account” that the parents can use for various educational purposes, including tuition at private, religious schools. The result is the same: ESAs divert desperately-needed federal resources away from the public school system to private schools.

TITLE I PORTABILITY

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is designed to provide extra funding to public schools serving students in areas with high concentrations of poverty. Title I “portability” proposals want to dismantle the existing program and turn it into a private school voucher: the money to help these public schools would instead “follow the child” to private schools. Some schemes would—initially—“follow the child” only to public schools, but even those programs would dilute the power of the funds and reduce their effectiveness.