

The #publicmoneypublicschools coalition is dedicated to stopping private school vouchers in the 2017 Nevada legislature.

Our coalition agrees that we must use Nevada's scarce public funds to make targeted investments in the public schools that serve the vast majority of Nevada's 460,000 students. We also bring unique perspectives to the debate about why vouchers are bad for Nevada's students, families and taxpayers:



Educate Nevada Now led the legal team that represented public school parents who filed *Lopez v. Schwartz*, which [successfully argued](#) in the NV Supreme Court that vouchers would have unconstitutionally diverted funds away from public schools.

Our most vulnerable children need access to quality neighborhood public schools, not vouchers. The [average private school in Nevada](#) charges between \$8,000 and \$10,000 a year – much more than the proposed \$5,700 voucher for low-income families – meaning vouchers would largely be a subsidy for [affluent families' private school tuition](#). Only [28 of the 4,000 families](#) that applied for vouchers in 2015 were from Nevada's poorest zip codes.

Vouchers would drain resources from Nevada's already underfunded public schools. The \$60 million proposed for vouchers is desperately needed by our public schools to improve education for all students, such as access to quality pre-K and [additional weighted funding for at-risk populations](#) such as English Language Learners, students from low-income families, special education students, and gifted students.

NSEA represents 40,000 educators across the state. We are committed to public education, our students, and communities. That's why we believe public money needs to be invested in strong public schools to benefit every Nevada student.



The proven way to give every student an opportunity for success is through a well-funded public education, not a risky voucher program like ESA private school vouchers.

Private education will remain out of reach for most low-income students, English language learners, and children with disabilities.

Vouchers pose a real threat to education in rural areas. Rural teachers and school leaders are especially concerned about vouchers. A [voucher program could devastate rural areas](#) with small student populations.

Private schools aren't held to fiscal and academic standards. When controlling for outcomes such as family income, race, and location, [studies show](#) that public school students on average out-score students from private and charter schools. [Studies also show](#) that students who use vouchers to transfer to private schools experience a significant decrease in achievement.

Students, parents, and taxpayers lose with the voucher program. Vouchers would increase class sizes and reduce education programs for students by taking away needed revenue for public schools.

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The ACLU of Nevada filed *Duncan v. State* to challenge the use of taxpayer dollars for private, religious schools and to challenge the use of public dollars spent to the detriment of public school students. The Nevada Supreme Court's ruling leaves the door open for future challenges to vouchers in Nevada.

Public dollars should not finance private schools that discriminate in admissions and employment based on religion, exclude students of certain faiths, require applicants to sign Statements of Faith, or charge students of other faiths higher tuition. The First Amendment Right gives individuals the right to practice the religion of their choice, however, it does not give them the right to discriminate with public money.

Private schools in Nevada discriminate against students and employees based on **sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, and more**. Some students in Nevada have already spoken out about discrimination based on [sexuality](#) or [political beliefs](#). Public money should not be used to fund these discriminatory practices.

Nevada's law that requires public schools to prevent, stop, or curtail bullying on their campuses (NRS 388.121 et al) does not apply to private schools. Only public schools must uphold civil rights and legally protect their students from harassment so they can "be free from physical, emotional or mental abuse."

Low-income students would not benefit from private school vouchers. Many private schools are far more expensive than the amount a family will get for a voucher. Most private schools are far from poor neighborhoods and do not offer transportation. Also, many low-income families rely on free or reduced lunch that private schools do not offer.



Private schools can pick and choose their students, public schools cannot. This is a recipe for disaster with private schools often discriminating against students. Private schools often don't offer the additional resources and services necessary for the most vulnerable students to succeed, and these schools can simply [reject students with these needs](#).

Widespread use of private school vouchers could re-segregate Nevada's public schools, as Betsy Devos' school choice program [has in Michigan](#).

Vouchers are ripe for misuse. One Henderson private school has already encouraged parents to lie about their income on the state [application form](#). An Arizona lawmaker who pushed vouchers [set up a for-profit corporation to benefit financially](#) from them. [Other states](#) have seen voucher abuse, as well.