**Vouchers: “Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families”**

This Executive Order is designed to syphon federal money for public schools into unaccountable private hands. It’s a likely illegal scheme to diminish real choice and deny classrooms resources. This order diverts federal money used to level the playing field for poor and disadvantaged kids and hands it directly to unaccountable private operators—a handout for the rich.

**What it Says**

This [Executive Order](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/expanding-educational-freedom-and-opportunity-for-families/) directs:

* The Department of Education (ED) to issue guidance within 60 days regarding how states can use formula funds to support k-12 vouchers.
* ED to include “education freedom” as a priority in discretionary grant programs
* The Department of Labor and ED to recommend expansion of vouchers using discretionary grant programs
* The Department of Health and Human Services toissue guidance on whether and how states receiving block grants, such as the Child Care and Development Block Grant, can use them to expand vouchers, including private and faith-based options.
* Department of Defense to review and submit steps- to implement for 2025-26 school year- how Defense funds can be used by DODEA families to attend private, faith-based, or public charter schools.
* Department of the Interior to review and submit steps- to implement in 2025-26 school year- how federal funds can be used by BIE eligible families to attend private, faith-based, or public charter schools, and to report on current performance of BIE schools.

**Key Concerns**

1. **Vouchers Don’t Work**
	* Voucher programs are deeply damaging to efforts to offer an excellent public education for all U.S. children. Vouchers divert needed resources away from public education and research continues to tell us: vouchers do not improve achievement.
	* Directing agencies to share how they will provide parents (whether those in the military or on Indian lands) how they can send their child to a non-public school only works if there are non-public schools that receive federal funding that are open to them. Currently, we have no voucher programs for military-connected or Native American students and families have very limited options for students outside DoDEA and BIE schools.
	* During the first Trump Administration they published an [ESEA flexibilities resource](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/www.ed.gov/media/document/essa-flexibilities-document-publicationpdf-1__;!!ES5OBA!kA0Wvv6DZSMN5EW2Gdh9iSKHYF5YqmG2rzTkNluvVXtLAK2awkQiib7rs0VSkJRlQKa-KcJjXNjR$) – we will have to wait to see if the guidance the Secretary puts out is simply a rehash of that resource or if it attempts to circumvent the law to further open up ESEA dollars for school vouchers.
	* It is an unrealistic attempt to direct government to do things they don’t have the power to do because it “sounds good.” The directive to issue guidance from HHS is also recycled policy from the last administration; parents can already use federal child care funding for private and religious institutions.
2. **Handout for Billionaires**
	* We already know that vouchers go mostly to wealthy families whose kids are already in private school. This order hijacks federal money used to level the playing field for poor and disadvantaged kids and hands it directly to unaccountable private operators—a handout for the rich.
	* This is simply another example of the Trump Administration looking to cut funding for public services even as they continue to push tax cuts for billionaires.

 **What This Means for Educators, Parents and Families**

* This order is counter to what voters want. They overwhelmingly rejected billionaire-backed voucher scams in November—even in states Trump won—because they know vouchers hurt student achievement, bankrupt state budgets and deny opportunity to rural and urban communities.