

MANY TEACHERS SUPPORT SCHOOL CHOICE

The Facts About School Choice



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A common myth spread by opponents of school choice is that all teachers and other education professionals are opposed to vouchers and tax credit programs. This is simply not the case.

A fall 2008 *Education Next*/Harvard University poll found that 65 percent of public school teachers indicated support for tax credit programs that include both public and private schools.⁹ Forty-six percent of teachers — a plurality — support tax credit programs for parents who send their children to private schools.

In addition to demonstrating teacher support for tax credit programs, the poll's results indicated that teachers' views on school vouchers are not cut and dried. A full 34 percent of public school teachers favor universal vouchers to bring competition to schools, while 21 percent "neither favor nor oppose." Fewer than half of teachers expressed opposition to vouchers.

Furthermore, the 2007 *Education Next* poll found that 51 percent of public school employees support allowing students in schools failing under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to transfer to private schools, compared to 29 percent who oppose it.¹

From the Field

Teachers voicing their support for school choice

"As a public school teacher, a lot of people assumed that I would just defend the status quo. But the reality is, I've been a supporter of school choice since before I started teaching. And as a teacher, I have come to realize that the system is broken and that children really do get left behind."

- **David Casas**, Georgia state representative and public school teacher.²

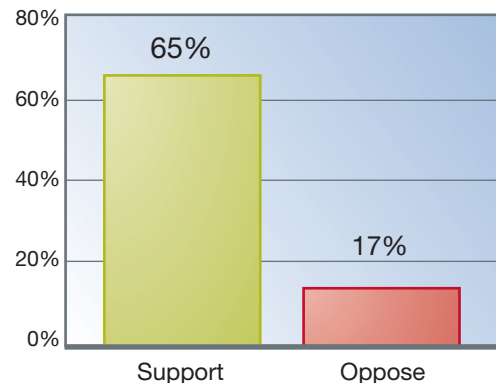
"Even though I regard my coworkers with the utmost respect and admiration, I knew my school was not the best place for my son."

- **Lynette Estrada**, Florida public school teacher and parent of McKay Scholarship recipient.³

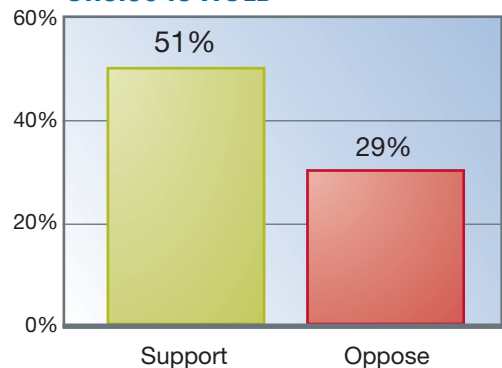
"I don't think the enemy is educators or parents or public schools or private schools. The enemy is ignorance and poverty and hopelessness and despair."

- **Doug Tuthill**, President of the Florida School Choice Fund and former head of Pinellas Teachers Union,

Public School Teachers Strongly Support Tax Credit Programs



Public School Employees Support Adding Private School Choice to NCLB



September 12, 2008.⁴

"Democratic representative Bill Heller—who as a public-school teacher worked with disabled students—joined the Florida legislature after the 2001 vote, but voted against expanding the program last year.... He voted for the final bill this year. 'I wanted to go out and see what was happening to the kids on these scholarships. My district had 58, and I visited several of their schools and talked to parents,' he says. 'I saw that it was an alternative for a child who might not have been successful in a public school—not a means of operating a separate system of education.'"

- **National Review**, October 20, 2008.⁵

1. William G. Howell, Martin R. West, and Paul E. Peterson, "What Americans Think about Their Schools: The 2007 *Education Next* – PEPG Survey," *Education Next*, Fall 2007, p 12-26.
2. Alliance for School Choice
3. Alliance for School Choice, *The Promise of Special Needs Scholarships*, 2007.
4. Ron Matus, "Foes join voucher group," *St. Petersburg Times*, September 13, 2008.
5. Robert Verbruggen, "Pro-Choice," *National Review*, October 20, 2008.