



POLICY BRIEF



IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES BY EMPOWERING PARENTS

Students who are denied the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education are faced with the dire consequences of attending failing schools, a greater risk of exposure to crime, and lost earning potential.

- Students that complete high school have life-long opportunities to provide for themselves and their families. Alternatively, the lack of a quality education presents life-altering disadvantages.
 - Those without a high school diploma are more likely to end up in prison. The Bureau of Justice Statistics' reports that 75% of inmates in state prisons, 59% in federal prison, and 69% in jails did not complete high school.¹ Failing high schools have created a school-to-prison pipeline.
 - A male high school graduate that works until age 65 will earn on average nearly \$333,000 more over his life than a male student without a high school diploma.²
- Some school districts in the United States have found success in reducing crime and increasing education quality by giving parents the ability to choose a school that is best for their child.
 - For example, in North Carolina, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system ended their decades-long program to bus children to other schools in order to maintain racial balance and, instead, instituted a school choice system. The results after 7 years: Every student experienced an increase in quality of education and fewer students ended up in prison.³
 - A joint Harvard and Princeton study found that winning a New York charter school lottery reduced likelihood of male incarceration by “essentially” 100% and female teen pregnancy by 59% from the study's control average.⁴
- Parents should have the choice to use their portion of the \$709 billion taxpayers spend on education to send their children to schools that are prepared to educate their students.⁵
 - 69% of registered voters support giving parents the right to use the tax dollars set aside for their child's education to send them to a school that best meets their child's needs.⁶
- Empowering parents to choose schools provides students with the best opportunity to achieve the American Dream. President Trump and House Republicans are committed to providing opportunities for students to attend the school that is best for them.
 - President Trump has taken steps to reduce federal overreach in education and supported STEM education. The Administration is committed to assisting charter schools and improving the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.⁷

¹ The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Education and Correctional Populations,” NCJ 195670, <https://bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ecp.pdf>, January 2003.

² <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED501066.pdf>

³ Deming, David, Harvard University, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, “Better Schools, Less Crime?” https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/ddeming/files/deming_bslc_qje.pdf at p. 2071 (2011).

⁴ Dobbie, Will and Fryer, Roland, Princeton University and Harvard University, *The Medium-Term Impacts of High-Achieving Charter Schools*, https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie_fryer_hcz_01062015_1.pdf at p.3. (2014).

⁵ The U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, “Back to school statistics,” https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372#PK12_expenditures (Accessed on October 1, 2020).

⁶ “Support for School Choice Surges as Schools Start,” <https://www.federationforchildren.org/support-for-school-choice-surges-as-schools-start/>, September 23, 2020.

⁷ The White House, “President Trump is Fighting for Every Family’s Freedom to Choose the Best Possible Education for their Children,” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-trump-is-fighting-for-every-familys-freedom-to-choose-the-best-possible-education-for-their-children/>, February 4, 2020.