

The National Coalition
for
Public Education

SUMMARY OF ALL DEP'T OF EDUCATION DC VOUCHER EVALUATIONS

U.S. Dep't of Education, *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After Three Years* (April 2009); U.S. Dep't of Education, *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After Two Years* (June 2008); U.S. Dep't of Education, *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After One Year* (June 2007).

Using A Voucher Has Not Improved the Academic Achievement of the Targeted Students.

- In **all three years**, there was no significant academic impact in reading or math for students who came from “schools in need of improvement,” (SINI), even though these are the students for whom the statute gave top priority.
- In **all three years**, there was no statistically significant impact on math achievement overall from the offer or use of a voucher.
- In years one and two, the offer or use of a voucher did not improve reading achievement. In year three, the reading achievement of some students did improve. But, it is noteworthy that students coming from SINI schools and students who entered the program* in the lower third of the test-score distribution showed no improvement in reading. The two sub-groups of students who showed the most improvement in reading were students for which federal government intervention is the least justifiable: students who did *not* come from SINI schools and students who were in the *top* two-thirds of the test-score distribution when they entered the program.

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xviii, xxvi, xxiv-xxx, 35, and 40; 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 34-38; 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 44, 46, xviii, and xx.

Attending a Private Voucher School Has Not Had a Positive Impact on Student Safety or Satisfaction.

- In **all three years**, the offer or use of a voucher had no impact on students' reports of school safety.
- In **all three years**, the offer or use of a voucher had no impact on students' satisfaction with their school.

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 44-45; 49-50, xxvi, and xxviii; U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 42-43, 50; 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xx and I-4.

The Program Has Not Improved Student Motivation and Engagement or the Educational Experience.

- In **both years these factors were evaluated**, participation in the program caused no statistically significant impact on students' reports of “aspirations for future schooling”; “engagement in extracurricular activities”; “frequency of doing homework”; “attendance at school”; or “tardiness rates.”
- In **both years these factors were evaluated**, participation in the program caused no statistically significant impact on “how students rated their teacher’s attitude,” or the “availability of before-and-after-school programs.”
- The third year study demonstrated that participation in the program had no effect on the “**student/teacher ratio**.”

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 55-56 and xxxii; 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 57-58; xxvi; F-6.

The Vast Majority of Students in the Voucher Program Attend a Faith-Based School.

Percentage of Participating Students Attending A Faith-Based School	Year 1**	Year 2	Year 3
	82%	77%	82%

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 16; 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 14; 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 19.

The Voucher Program Has Decreased Student Access to Key Services.

Service	% of students <u>in</u> the program whose schools have the service as compared to students <u>not in</u> the program		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
ESL Programs	38% fewer	31% fewer	31% fewer
Learning Support/Special Needs	38% fewer	24% fewer	17% fewer
Tutors	no significant difference	10% fewer	17% fewer
Counselors	7% fewer	15% fewer	13% fewer
Nurse's Office	56% fewer	42% fewer	51% fewer
Cafeteria	14% fewer	14% fewer	9% fewer

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xxii, and 17; 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xvii, & 16; 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 21.

* In accordance with the reports, participation “in the program” includes all students *offered* a voucher, regardless of whether they used the voucher.

** These figures represent only those students actively *using* a voucher.

FINDINGS OF THE 2009 DEP'T OF EDUCATION DC VOUCHER EVALUATION

U.S. Dep't of Education, *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After Three Years* (April 2009).

Using A Voucher Has Not Improved the Academic Achievement of the Targeted Students.

- “The analysis revealed . . . [n]o significant achievement impacts in reading or math for students who came from SINI schools, [“Schools in Need of Improvement,”] the subgroup of students for whom the statute gave top priority.”
- “There was no statistically significant impact on math achievement, **overall** . . . from the offer of a scholarship nor from the use of a scholarship.”
- In year three, for the first time, the reading achievement of some students did improve. But, it is noteworthy that students coming from SINI schools and students who entered the program* in the lower third of the test-score distribution showed no improvement in reading. The two sub-groups of students who showed the most improvement in reading were students for which federal government intervention is the least justifiable: students who did *not* come from SINI schools and students who were in the *top* two-thirds of the test-score distribution when they entered the Program.

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xxvi, xviii, xxix-xxx, 35, and 40.

Attending a Private Voucher School Did Not Have a Positive Impact on Student Safety or Satisfaction.

- “[T]here was no evidence of an impact from the offer of a scholarship or the use of a scholarship on students’ reports” of school safety.
- Being offered or using a voucher had no impact on students’ reports of satisfaction with their school.

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 44-45, 49-50, xxvi, and xxviii.

The Program Did Not Improve Student Motivation and Engagement or the Educational Experience.

- There were no statistically significant impacts between students offered a scholarship and those who were not on their reports of “aspirations for future schooling”; “engagement in extracurricular activities”; “frequency of doing homework”; “attendance at school”; or “tardiness rates.”
- There were no also statistically significant impacts between students in the Program* and not in the Program on “how students rated their teacher’s attitude”; the “student/teacher ratio”; or the “availability of before-and-after-school programs.”
- 39% of the students who left their voucher school in the third year did so because the “child did not get the academic support he/she needed at the private school” and 25% left because the “child did not like the private school.”

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 25, 55-56, and xxxii.

The Vast Majority of Students in the Voucher Program Attended A Faith-Based School.

- In year three of the Program, 82% of students in the Program attended a faith-based voucher school.

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 16.

The Voucher Program Decreased Student Access to Key Services.

Service	% of Students Offered or Using a Voucher with Access to the Service	% of Students Not Participating in the Voucher Program with Access to the Service
ESL Programs	26%	57%
Learning Support/Special Needs	71%	88%
Tutors	50%	67%
Counselors	69%	82%
After-School Programs	86%	92%
Nurse’s Office	30%	81%
Cafeteria	79%	88%

Source: 2009 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xxii, and 17.

* In accordance with the report, participation “in the program” includes all students *offered* a voucher, regardless of whether they used the voucher.

FINDINGS OF THE 2008 DEP'T OF EDUCATION DC VOUCHER EVALUATION

U.S. Dep't of Education, *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After Two Years* (June 2008).

Attending a Private Voucher School Did Not Improve Students' Academic Achievement.

- There were "no significant impacts of the program, either positive or negative, overall on student achievement after 2 years."
- There were "no significant achievement impacts for students who came from SINI schools, ["Schools in Need of Improvement,"] the subgroup of students for whom the statute gave top priority."

Source: 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 34-38.

Attending a Private Voucher School Did Not Have a Positive Impact on Student Safety or Satisfaction.

- "[T]here was no evidence of an impact from the offer of a scholarship or the use of a scholarship on student's reports of dangerous activities."
- "[T]here was no evidence of an impact of the offer of a scholarship or the use of a scholarship on . . . [student] reports of satisfaction with their school."

Source: 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 42-43, 50.

The Program Did Not Improve Student Motivation or Engagement or the Educational Experience.

- Participation in the program* led to no statistically significant impacts on a student's "aspirations for the future"; "frequency of doing homework"; "time spent reading for fun"; "engagement in extracurricular activities"; or "attendance" or "tardiness rates."
- Participation in the program led to no statistically significant impacts on "how students rated their teacher's attitude"; "the challenge of their classes"; "the availability for advanced learners" or "the "availability of before-and-after-school programs."
- 54% of the students who left their voucher school in the third year did so because the "child did not get the academic support he/she needed at the private school" and 21% left because the "child did not like the private school."

Source: 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 57-58; xxvi; F-6.

The Vast Majority of Students in the Voucher Program Attended A Faith-Based School.

In year two of the program, 77% of students in the program attended a faith-based voucher school.

Source: 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 14.

The Voucher Program Decreased Student Access to Key Services.

Service	% of Students Offered or Using a Voucher With Access to the Service	% of Students Not Participating in the Voucher Program With Access to the Service
ESL Programs	19%	50%
Learning Support/Special Needs	55%	79%
Tutors	63%	73%
Counselors	74%	89%
Nurse's Office	36%	78%
Cafeteria	72%	86%

Source: 2008 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xvii, 16.

* In accordance with the report, participation "in the program" includes all students *offered* a voucher, regardless of whether they used the voucher.

FINDINGS OF THE 2007 DEP'T OF EDUCATION DC VOUCHER EVALUATION

U.S. Dep't of Education, *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts After One Year* (June 2007).

Attending a Private Voucher School Did Not Improve Students' Academic Achievement.

- There was no positive impact “on student achievement in general after 1 year.”
- “[T]here were no statistically significant impacts of the program on reading or math achievement in the first year.”
- “No statistically significant achievement impacts were observed for the high-priority subgroup of students who had attended a SINI [“School in Need of Improvement”] public school under *NCLB* before applying to the program.”

Source: 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 44, 46, xviii, and xx.

Participating in the Voucher School Did Not Have a Positive Impact on Student Safety or Satisfaction.

- Participating in the voucher program* had a substantial positive impact on parents' views of school safety but not on students' *actual* school experiences with dangerous activities.
- Students participating in the voucher program “are no more or less satisfied with their schools” than those attending public schools.

Source: 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at xx and l-4.

The Voucher Program Decreased Student Access to Key Services.

Service	% of Students Offered or Using a Voucher With Access to the Service	% of Students Not Participating in the Voucher Program With Access to the Service
ESL Programs	19%	57%
Learning Support/Special Needs	51%	89%
Counselors	75%	82%
Nurse's Office	29%	85%
Cafeteria	74%	88%

Source: 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 21.

The Vast Majority of Voucher Students Attended Faith-Based Schools.

- In year one, nearly two-thirds of students in the program attended a Roman Catholic School, 17 percent attended a non-Catholic faith-based school, and only 18 percent were enrolled in nonsectarian private schools.

Source: 2007 U.S. Dep't of Ed. Report at 19.

* In accordance with the report, participation “in the program” includes all students *offered* a voucher, regardless of whether they used the voucher