Amplifying Our Voice: Leading Boldly for Our Students, Our Professions, and Our Union

School Vouchers: Learn the History & Prepare for Future Battles

Robert Peterson, MTEA Retired
Susan Nogan, NEA HQ, Education Policy & Practice
COMPETENCY: ADVOCACY

• NEA Leadership Competency progression levels:
  • Level 1: Foundational and
  • Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building

• Leadership Competency themes within Advocacy:
  • Utilizes best practices in advocacy and political efforts
  • Interprets and acts on social and racial justice initiatives
  • Leads public education policy reform
COMPETENCY: COMMUNICATION

• NEA Leadership Competency progression levels:
  • Level 1: Foundational

• Leadership Competency theme within Communication:
  • Identifies and utilizes appropriate messages in acting as a compelling advocate for the organization
Indicate the NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority your session addresses:

• NEA Strategic Goal

-advancing opportunities that will identify, organize, and engage new and early career educators; amplify the voices of all educators, support our members’ professional growth, and promote social justice for our students, communities and our nation; and

-securing a pro-public education environment for students, educators, and families.

• NEA Organizational Priorities

-Racial Justice in Education
-My School, My Voice
Agenda

- History of Vouchers
- Voucher Types
- Impact - fiscal, rural, academic, special needs
- Accountability - fiscal and academic
- Potential federal vehicles
- Summary
The New York Times

HIGH COURT BANS SCHOOL SEGREGATION; 9-TO-0 DECISION GRANTS TIME TO COMPLY

McCarthy Hearing Off a Week as Eisenhower Bars Report

Soviets Bid Vienna Cease Intrigues
City Colleges' Board Can't Pick Chairman
Tax Projects Die in Estimate Board

1954
1954
1955

Economist Milton Friedman of the University of Chicago proposes voucher schools.

“Privately conducted schools ... can develop exclusively white schools, exclusively colored schools, and mixed schools.”
1956

U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd from Virginia calls for "Massive Resistance" to the Brown vs. Board desegregation ruling.
1959

Officials in Prince Edward County, Virginia close all public schools rather than comply with orders to desegregate.
1959

A new high school built three years earlier is closed to ensure no desegregation takes place.
1959

Tax-funded vouchers are provided to white students to attend private, white-only schools.
1959 - 1964

The African American community protests the white supremacist closings of all public schools in the county.
1959 – 1964

After five years federal courts force an end to the voucher program.
1972

President Nixon pushes and succeeds in getting an amendment in the Emergency School Aid Act to include a ban on the use of federal monies for busing “to overcome racial imbalance.”

1974

President Nixon manages to convince Congress to pass the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, which set forth the federal government's policy favoring neighborhood schools and rejecting racial balance as the goal of school desegregation.
1973

General Augusto Pinochet leads a CIA-sponsored military coup against the democratically-elected President Salvador Allende of Chile.
Milton Friedman’s theories gave him a Nobel Prize; and gave Chile General Pinochet.

– Eduardo Galeano.
1980

Milton Friedman convinces Pinochet to start a national program of private school vouchers.
1986

The conservative Milwaukee-based Bradley Foundation funds John Chubb and Terry Moe’s book, *Politics, Markets and America’s Schools* which modernizes the case for vouchers as a way to counter bureaucracy, promote consumer choice and stimulate educational reform.
The Power And the Money

Bradley Foundation Bankrolls Conservative Agenda

By Barbara Minor

Michael S. Joyce could easily be mistaken for a middle-aged Clark Kent: glasses, hair thinning at the top, a waistline that’s growing but not out of control, a well-tailored but bland suit and tie. Nothing in his appearance compels one to take a second look.

But beneath that Clark Kent facade lies someone who, while not a superman, is arguably one of the most powerful conservatives in American politics.

Joyce, 51, was named in an Atlantic Monthly article in January 1986 as one of the three people most responsible for the triumph of the conservative intellectual movement. The Chicago Tribune noted a year ago that he may be the voice of the GOP’s future. A confidant of former Reagan appointees and current presidential hopefuls such as William Bennett and Jack...
1988

Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson introduces voucher bill and fails to gain support.
1989

The Bradley Foundation funds a forum at MATC in Milwaukee focusing on black community leaders.

Howard Fuller argues in favor of vouchers. Chubb and Moe also present at the forum.
1990

Wisconsin Assembly person Polly Williams introduces new voucher legislation as a small, experimental program. Soon after she begins to tour the nation funded by conservative foundations and think tanks promoting school vouchers.
Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson signs the voucher bill but uses his line item veto to cut out the sun set provision. The law only allows money to go to non-religious schools.
1994

The Bradley Foundation provided $1,000,000 to Charles Murray to write the book, *The Bell Curve*.

A key policy in this white supremacist book is the promotion of private school vouchers.
New Teacher Blues
How I Survived My First Year
By Bill Bigelow

It was a Friday afternoon and the end of my sixth period freshman social studies class. As two of my students walked out the door, I overheard as one turned to the other and said, “Do you know what this class reminds me of? A local TV commercial.” It was a crushing comment. I knew exactly what she meant. As hard as I was working, the class still felt ragged, amorphous — well-intended, but sloppy. Her metaphor, invoking the image of a salesman trying too hard, was perfect. As the last student filed out, the best I could do was remember the words of Lee Hays of The Weavers, “Like kidney stones and the Nixon presidency, this too will pass.”

At the 1994 National Coalition of Education Activists conference in Further...
Wisconsin Debates Religious Vouchers

Controversy Ignites ‘Battle of the Century’

Barbara Miner

Republican Gov. Tommy Thompson has launched a set of initiatives that, while wrapped in populist rhetoric of parental choice and property tax relief, would propel Wisconsin into the national forefront of the debate on quality public education.

The most significant initiative is Thompson’s plan to allow public tax dollars to go to private religious schools. The proposal, part of his 1995-97 budget, is being closely watched by conservatives across the country who so far have been unsuccessful in convincing voters that more than 200 years of the separation of church and state would be abandoned under the guise of...
1998

The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the state government could use tax payer money to send children to parochial and other religious schools. The enrollment in voucher schools skyrocket over the next few years.
LESSONS FROM THE HEARTLAND

A TURBULENT HALF-CENTURY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN AN ICONIC AMERICAN CITY

BARBARA J. MINER
THE SUPREME COURT: SCHOOL TUITION; SUPREME COURT, 5-4, UPHOLDS VOUCHER SYSTEM THAT PAYS RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS' TUITION

By LINDA GREENHOUSE  JUNE 28, 2002
Largest voucher program of any U.S. city, over one billion public tax dollars spent on schools that are not obligated to serve all children.
Voucher Types

- Vouchers
- Neovouchers
- Education Savings Accounts
Vouchers

- **Special Needs:** AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, OH, OK, UT, WI
- **Low-income:** IN, MD, NC, OH, WI
- **Low-performing school:** DC, LA, OH
Neovouchers

Donation
A taxpayer donates money to a private non-profit organization.

Voucher
That organization bundles the donations and issues them to parents as vouchers.

Tax Credit
The taxpayer receives a tax credit from the state.

Tax Expenditure
State tax revenue is reduced
Education Savings Accounts

- Targeted or universal
- Academic accountability
- Fiscal accountability
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Voucher Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>$845.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>$459.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>$208.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>$168.7 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>$152.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>$124 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impact

- Fiscal
- Rural
- Academic
- Special Needs
Accountability

- Fiscal
- Academic
- Civil Rights
Potential Vehicles

- Tax reform
- Appropriations
- ESSA Implementation
- Stand-alone legislation
Session Outcomes

The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:

• Communicate NEA organizational position on vouchers

• Educate the community and parents about the history of vouchers, their original purpose and how they harm public schools where the majority of our children attend schools

• Understand the different types of vouchers, regardless of what they are called
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Closing

• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session by using the NEA Summit Mobile App!

• Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment