

POLICY NOTE

Six common objections made by opponents of school choice and why they are false

By Liv Finne, Director, Center for Education

February 2023

Key Findings

1. Today there are 76 different school choice programs offered in 32 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
2. School choice programs improve academic outcomes for program participants and for students in the public schools.
3. School choice does not drain money from public schools; states that allow choice also increase funding to the public schools.
4. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled recently private school choice does not violate the constitution.
5. Research shows school choice programs do not threaten the independence of homeschooling families.
6. School choice is now a normal, non-controversial part of a modern public education system in most states.

Introduction

The term “school choice” refers to public policies that offer families options for accessing a range of publicly-funded educational services, including online programs, individual tutoring, home-based learning materials, and private schools.

School choice programs provide parents who opt-in direct public assistance in seeking alternatives to learning, rather than the old model of assigning a child to a traditional public school based on zip code. Although the dollar amount provided is typically less than per-student funding in traditional schools, for many families the sacrifice is worth it to gain access to a high-quality education for their children.

At the same time, school choice programs face strong political opposition from powerful unions, public school administrators, elected officials, and other interests that benefit from the traditional zip-code-based system. Opponents of school choice commonly make six objections in their effort to discourage parents from asking about or enrolling in programs that provide more learning choices.

This paper gives a brief summary of current school choice programs, reviews the six main objections made by school choice opponents, and provides fact-based information showing how these common objections are false.

Overview of school choice programs

School choice programs are voluntary. Families that are satisfied with the traditional public school in their zip code are not required to make any change in the education of their children.

Still, school choice programs are popular. Recent polls show 72 percent of respondents support giving families access to school choice. Black respondents (70 percent) and Latinos (77 percent) express high levels of supporter for school choice, according to polling. School choice also enjoys bipartisan support. A large majority Republicans (82 percent), and clear majorities of Independents (67 percent) and Democrats (68 percent) support it.¹

¹ “New Poll: Overwhelming Support for School Choice,” by American Federation for Children, June 28, 2022, at <https://www.federationforchildren.org/new-poll-72-support-for-school-choice/>.

The nearly-two year lockdown of public schools in 2020 – 2022 contributed significantly to the already-high level of school choice support. Popular support for school choice rose 10 percent in response to COVID school shutdowns.²

Today there are 76 different school choice programs offered in 32 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, serving over 600,000 students.³ The public benefit is described in findings by The American Federation for Children:

“The vast majority of studies show that school choice programs improve academic outcomes, for program participants and also for students in the public schools. School choice programs save taxpayers money. They also reduce racial segregation.”⁴

School choice programs provide public money to families to pay for a range of education expenses, including online programs, private school tuition, text books, art supplies, tutoring sessions, computers and other equipment, and transportation.

State-level school choice programs typically take one of four forms:

- Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), which average \$11,000 per student a year;
- School vouchers, which average \$6,000 per student a year;
- Tax credit scholarships, which average \$3,700 per student a year;
- Individual tax credits and deductions for approved educational expenses.

Here are examples of three popular state-level programs:

Arizona - In July 2022, Arizona lawmakers created a universal school choice program. Every family can ask to receive up to \$7,000, or 90 percent of per-student state funding an Education Savings Account in the form of an Education Savings Account. Thirty-two thousand families have signed up for the program.⁵

West Virginia – In 2021 lawmakers created the Hope Scholarship program, a universal school choice program that provides families who ask for it up to \$4,300 per child in financial assistance to pay for private school tuition and other educational expenses.

2 “POLL: Support for School Choice Spiked 10 Percent among Public School Families during COVID Shutdown,” Mairead Mcardle, *National Review*, September 23, 2020, at <https://www.nationalreview.com/news/poll-support-for-school-choice-spiked-10-percent-among-public-school-families-during-covid-shutdown/>.

3 “School choice makes homeschoolers and private schools more safe from government---not less,” by Dr. Greg Forster, Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs, February 1, 2022, at <https://www.ocpathink.org/post/school-choice-makes-homeschoolers-and-private-schools-more-safe-from-government-not-less>.

4 “Research shows favorable impact of private school choice,” by American Federation for Children, at <https://www.schoolchoicefacts.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/AFC-Growth-Fund-School-Choice-Research-Summary.pdf>.

5 “Not quite universal, but families flocked to universal voucher program,” by John Brown, Cronkite News, December 10, 2022, at <https://news.azpm.org/p/newsc/2022/12/10/214078-not-quite-universal-but-families-flocked-to-universal-voucher-program/#:~:text=regardless%20of%20need,-The%20Arizona%20Department%20of%20Education%20said%20about%2032%2C000%20schoolkids%20applied,the%20state's%20general%20education%20fund.>

The District of Columbia created the Opportunity Scholarship program in 2004. It provides an average of \$10,095 on request to low-income families so they can send their children to private schools, including private religious schools.⁶

Washington state is behind the nation and the world in offering school choice programs. In 2022 lawmakers introduced four school choice bills. Opponents on the Senate and House education committees, however, blocked the bills from consideration.

The Washington Education Association (WEA) union collects \$47 million a year in dues from teacher salaries.⁷ The union was active in the legislature in lobbying against the four school choice bills. Mandatory dues are the primary source of the union's income, thus union officials have a strong incentive to prevent families from gaining access to a school choice program in Washington state.

The following sections review the six most common arguments opponents make against school choice.

Common objection 1: “Parents can’t make good education decisions for their children”

Opponents of school choice often say parents can't make good decisions for the education of their children, and therefore families must be required to stay in the system of automatic school assignment based on zip code. The National Education Association (NEA) union recently said:

“Educators love their students and know better than anyone what they need to learn and to thrive.”⁸

Many parents find this view narrow-minded and insulting. Parents make all other life decisions for their children, in the areas of health, nutrition, hygiene, shelter, scheduled activities, social contacts, sports and personal safety. In addition, parents make the initial decision about whether a child will enroll in a public school in the first place, so they are certainly capable of deciding which school or educational program is best for their child.

Virginia Walden Ford, a parent who helped create the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, described the negative attitude she faced from opponents of choice:

6 “The ABCs of School Choice, 2022 Edition,” by EdChoice.org, at <https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022-ABCs-FINAL-WEB-002.pdf>.

7 Washington Education Association, “IRS Form 990, 2019,” accessed November 18, 2022 at https://pdf.guidestar.org/PDF/Images/2020/910/460/2020-910460645-202111939349301196-90.pdf?_gl=1*1o1arem*_ga*MTQzMzk2MjkyNi4xNjY2MjE0MDEw*_ga_5W8PXYYGXB*MTY2ODc5MjEzOC4yLjEuMTY2ODc5MjE3OS4xOS4wLjA.&_ga=2.269179953.191700404.1668792142-1433962926.1666214010&_gac=1.46418261.1666214029.CjwKCAjwwL6aBhBIeiwADycBIBORluZtIAmNPAV8z_xG2nM3eZh05jEr5LV3Fjy8Gi3bLLYr80KFhoCNWAQAvD_BwE.

8 National Education Association Tweet, November 12, 2022 at <https://twitter.com/neatoday/status/1591587398109929473>.

“[Opponents say] poor parents are simply too stupid to choose the right schools for their children. Only rich parents are capable of making good educational choices for their kids.”⁹

Yet parents make key decisions about their children’s education every year. In 2021 the families of 1.5 million students, or three percent of total enrollment, removed their children from the public system, largely in response to lengthy COVID-related closures.¹⁰ In Washington state some 39,000 students have withdrawn, a loss to the public system of nearly 3.5 percent, one of the highest out-transfer rates in the nation.¹¹

At the same time, homeschooling, private school, and public charter schools attendance have increased, based on parent choices. The number of homeschooled students in Washington increased by 54 percent, from 20,844 in 2019-20 to 32,052 in 2021-22.¹² Private school enrollment increased by 20 percent, from 73,608 in 2019-20 to 88,058 in 2021-22.¹³

Enrollment in Washington’s 16 public charter schools jumped by 28 percent, from 3,041 students in 2019-20 to 4,715 students in 2021-22.¹⁴ Charter public schools serve primarily low-income, minority families.

Lastly, the courts have affirmed that parents have a fundamental legal right to direct the education of their children. In *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, “the child is not the mere creature of the state” and that parents are the primary decision-makers about a child’s future.¹⁵

The superior attitude of choice opponents is off-putting to parents, further undermining support for the public system. A 2022 Gallup poll shows Americans’ confidence in public education has fallen to 28 percent, close to the all-time low of 26 percent measured in 2014.¹⁶

9 [Setting the Record Straight on Education Freedom; School Choice Myths](#), Edited by Corey A. DeAngelis and Neal P. McCluskey, (CATO Institute, Washington D.C. 2020), Chapter Twelve by Virginia Walden Ford, pages 177-186.

10 “New Federal Data Confirms Pandemic’s Blow to K-12 Enrollment, With Drop of 1.5 Million Students; Pre-K Experiences 22 Percent Decline,” by Kevin Mahnken, *The 74 Million*, June 28, 2022, at <https://www.the74million.org/article/public-school-enrollment-down-3-percent-worst-century/>.

11 Washington State Caseload Forecast Council, accessed November 22, 2022, at https://www.cfc.wa.gov/Monitoring/ComSch_Enrollment.pdf. Total enrollment in October 2022 was 1,061,081, 39,529 less than October 2019, when enrollment was 1,100,610.

12 “Home-based Instruction Annual Reports, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22,” by Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, at <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/learning-alternatives/home-based-instruction>.

13 “Private School Enrollment, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22,” by State Board of Education, accessed November 28, 2022 at <https://www.sbe.wa.gov/our-work/private-schools>.

14 “Enrollment Analysis: 2020-2022, Washington State,” by Katherine Bateman, Center for Reinventing Public Education, August 2022, at <https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/CRPE-WA-Enrollment-Brief-1-08262022-Publication.pdf>.

15 *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510 (1925), at 535.

16 “Confidence in Public Schools Turns More Partisan,” by Lydia Saad, Gallup News, July 14, 2022 at <https://news.gallup.com/poll/394784/confidence-public-schools-turns-partisan.aspx>

Common objection 2: “Allowing parents choice will drain money from public schools”

A common objection to school choice is that letting families use public resources to pay for online courses, tutoring or private tuition will “drain” money from the school district budgets. This claim is most frequently made by people employed by or who otherwise benefit from school district spending.

This claim is not true, for several reasons.

First, school choice programs typically provide only a fraction of a state’s per-student education funding. In Washington, state-provided funding is \$12,587 per child, or barely 70 percent of the total state, local and federal revenue of \$18,175 per child.¹⁷ Even if the full level of state were allocated to parents who ask for it, the total amount of federal grants and local levies would remain in the school district budget, without any of the expense of educating that child.

Yet most choice programs do not provide full state funding to parents who request it. For example, in Washington parents who choose a charter public school receive only \$15,000, while the remaining average of \$3,000 goes to a school district the child is not attending.

Second, budget data shows that public education funding increases every year, even in states with school choice programs. The data shows lawmakers increase public school funding even as they allow parents who want options make other choices. Here are three examples:

- In Pennsylvania, the families of 66,000 students participate in the state’s two popular school choice programs. At the same time the state has dramatically increased funding to the public system over the last ten years.¹⁸
- In Ohio, 62,000 student participate in eight different school choice programs, while lawmakers there have steadily increased funding for the public schools, and even provided property tax relief as well.¹⁹
- In the District of Columbia, students can receive an Opportunity Scholarship averaging \$10,000 a year to attend a private school, while at the same time lawmakers have increased funding for the District’s 115 traditional public schools and 68 public charter schools every year.²⁰

When Washington state voters passed a charter school law in 2012 critics said the popular measure would “draw money away from public schools.” They were wrong.

17 “Statewide Workload/Staffing/Finance, 2021-22, K12 Public Schools: District Staffing and Finance Data,” Washington State Fiscal Information, at <https://fiscal.wa.gov/K12/K12FinanceStatewide>.

18 “Pennsylvania Education Spending Soars to All-Time High,” by The Commonwealth Foundation, June 9, 2022 at <https://www.commonwealthfoundation.org/research/pa-education-funding-all-time-high/#:~:text=State%20support%20of%20public%20education,per%20student%20public%2Dschoo%20funding..>

19 “Overview of School Funding,” by the Ohio Department of Education, accessed November 29, 2022, at <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Finance-and-Funding/Overview-of-School-Funding>.

20 “Table GA0-1, District of Columbia Public Schools, FY 2022. FY 2021, FY 2020, FY 2019,” by District of Columbia Public Schools, at https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/ga_dcps_chapter_2022s.pdf.

Public school funding in Washington state has more than doubled since 2012. The education budget rose from \$9.9 billion in 2012 to \$18.7 billion in 22, with per-student funding rising from \$9,915 to \$18,175.²¹

School choice has not cut school district jobs either. In 2021-22, Washington's 295 school districts employ 123,810 people, a record high. Only 63,700 of these, or just 51 percent, are classroom teachers. The remaining 60,000 employees are non-teaching staff.

To say that school choice programs "drain" money from school districts is simply false.

None of these discussions address the fact that the purpose of public education is not to spend money or provide nice-paying jobs for adults. It is to give children access to a good education, in whatever way that service may be provided. Even if school choice programs did "drain" money from school district budgets, the programs would still be achieving their public purpose: giving children a great start in life with a good, publicly-funded education.

Common objection 3: "Washington's state constitution bans religious school choice"

This assertion is not true.

Choice opponents claim that the Blaine Amendment to the Washington state constitution makes it illegal for public money to go to a religious school.

The Blaine Amendment was added to Washington's constitution in 1889 as a condition of statehood. A product of 19th century bigotry, the Amendment was drafted by Congressman James Blaine of Maine as a measure directed against Catholic families who might choose to attend a local parish school.

On June 21, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court ended this form of discrimination by ruling in *Carson et al. v. Makin* that a state cannot bar families who choose a religious school from participating in a generally-available tuition assistance program.²²

Further details can be found in the study, "U.S. Supreme Court anti-discrimination ruling means the end of Washington's Blaine Amendment."²³

Common objection 4: "Parent-based school choice is a threat to homeschooling"

21 "Workload, Staffing, Finance, Statewide Report, 2016-17 through 2021-22," by Office of Financial Management, at <http://fiscal.wa.gov/K12.aspx>.

22 *Carson, et al. v. Makin*, U.S. Supreme Court, Slip Opinion No. 20-1088, Decided June 21, 2022, at https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/20-1088_dbfi.pdf.

23 "U.S. Supreme Court anti-discrimination ruling means the end of Washington state's Blaine Amendments," by Liv Finne, *Washington Policy Center*, August 23, 2020, at <https://www.washingtonpolicy.org/publications/detail/us-supreme-court-anti-discrimination-ruling-means-the-end-of-washington-states-blaine-amendments>.

Some choice opponents say that homeschooling parents will lose some or all of their independence as educators if other families are allowed access to publicly-funded school choice programs.

This claim is not true.

Thirty-two states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have long-standing school choice programs. In some states school choice has been available for over 20 years. In none of these areas have homeschooling families lost independence or been limited in any way.

School choice advocates note that choice programs create a new community that benefits from education freedom and which has every incentive to protect it. In practice, school choice parents are natural allies of homeschoolers, especially in protecting against politically powerful unions that seek to deny education independence to all families.

A study by Dr. Greg Forster found in a review of 76 school choice programs in 32 states that school choice programs do not limit access to homeschooling, and that in these states learning choices tended to expand for everyone.²⁴

Objection 5: “School choice will cause private schools to lose their independence”

School choice opponents say that if private schools accept public funds as directed by parents, private schools will lose their independence from government control. That is, school choice funds come “with strings attached.”

This is only a concern when state lawmakers over-regulate the program. For example, in some states vouchers for private schools are heavily regulated, adding complex rules over accreditation, open admissions and a mandate to administer state tests. Private schools naturally want to avoid these forms of government interference and control.

Other forms of choice, however, are much less regulated, allowing greater freedom to parents. Tax credit scholarships are managed by specific grant-making organizations, not government agencies, and are therefore much less heavily regulated.

Education Savings Accounts (ESA), modeled on the successful Health Savings Account (HSA) concept, provide direct education funding to families who ask for it. Any legitimate education expense the parents incur, including private school tuition, textbooks, and private tutoring, is allowed without restriction.

In Arizona, for example, the state’s universal school choice program explicitly protects private schools from government interference.

“15-2404. State control over nonpublic schools; prohibition; application.”

²⁴ “School choice makes homeschoolers and private schools more safe from government---not less,” by Dr. Greg Forster, Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs, February 1, 2022, at <https://www.ocpathink.org/post/school-choice-makes-homeschoolers-and-private-schools-more-safe-from-government-not-less>.

“A. This chapter does not permit any government agency to exercise control or supervision over any nonpublic school or homeschool.

“B. A qualified school that accepts a payment from a parent pursuant to this chapter is not an agent of the state or federal government.

“C. A qualified school shall not be required to alter its creed, practices, admissions policy or curriculum in order to accept students whose parents pay tuition or fees from an empowerment scholarship account pursuant to this chapter in order to participate as a qualified school.”²⁵

Lastly, school choice programs provide the best possible safeguard for any private school that may have concerns about its independence – participation is voluntary. Private school administrators themselves, not state bureaucrats, decide whether they think a particular school choice program comes with too many restrictions.

Such schools are not required to participate, and they are not penalized if they don't. Instead, school choice programs are based on the private voluntary decisions of both administrators and parents about what is best for children.²⁶

Common Objection 6: “Giving parents school choice threatens democracy”

Opponents of school choice say requiring most children to attend a traditional public school based on zip code is essential to maintaining democracy in the United States, and that giving parents access to a school choice program threatens American democracy.

The evidence shows this claim is not true.

School choice programs currently exist in well-established democratic countries like Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, South Korea, Spain, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. In addition, as noted, 32 states and the District of Columbia offer school choice programs. There is no realistic claim that these countries and states are not democratic.

Historically, the United States was a stable, functioning democracy long before government-run public schools became common in the late 19th century. No member of the founding generation of the first mass democracy in the modern world attended a traditional public school.

In response school choice opponents say that government-run “common schools” are needed to mold children from diverse backgrounds into a common society. Today, this concept is widely discredited.

As explained by Professor Patrick Wolf of the University of Arkansas:

²⁵ House Bill 2853, Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, passed by the Arizona State Legislature and signed by Governor Doug Ducey, July 7, 2022, at <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/55leg/2R/bills/HB2853P.pdf>.

²⁶ *Setting the Record Straight on Education Freedom: School Choice Myths*, Edited by Corey A. DeAngelis and Neal P. McCluskey, (CATO Institute, Washington D.C. 2020), Chapter Nine by Lindsay Burke and Jason Bedrick, pages 129-144.

“Public schools are not and never have been “common schools,” equally welcoming of students of all backgrounds. The leaders of the common-school movement in the 19th century explicitly sought to convert Catholics and conservative Protestants into more socially acceptable mainstream Protestants.

“The public schools have continued to be mechanisms for promoting one particular view of the good life over all others, to create a unity of beliefs, but they have failed to do so. There have been at least 2,133 disputes involving people’s basic values and identities in public schools nationally since roughly 2005.”²⁷

This finding is supported by empirical research that shows students who are homeschooled or who attend private schools have all the knowledge, motivation, and desire for civic engagement necessary to support a democratic society. Polling shows there is no difference in voting patterns, understanding of issues or civic volunteerism between private school graduates and citizens who attended traditional public schools.²⁸

Instead, it is some public schools that have adopted harmful ideas, like Critical Race Theory (CRT), that pose a threat to teaching democratic values.²⁹ The problem is made worse by learning loss, lower academic standards and falling test scores that have led many parents to withdraw their children from the traditional public system.³⁰

Given the seemingly never-ending controversies in public education, one could argue that parent engagement and school choice promote the concepts of fairness, equality, and democracy better than many contemporary public schools. Expanding school choice programs may actually be the best way to protect American democracy from this growing political threat.

Conclusion

An objective review of both education data and the direct experiences of programs in other states shows that the most common arguments made to deny families access to school choice are false.

Contrary to common assertions in the political debate, school choice programs do not drain money from school district budgets, are not banned by Washington’s constitution, and do not pose a threat to parents who choose to homeschool. Similarly, choice programs do not cause private schools to lose their independence, but they are a way for policymakers to show respect for the most important decisions parents make about their children’s lives and education.

27 [Setting the Record Straight on Education Freedom; School Choice Myths](#), Edited by Corey A. DeAngelis and Neal P. McCluskey, (CATO Institute, Washington D.C. 2020), Chapter Three by Patrick J. Wolf, pages 39-58.

28 Ibid, pages 39-58.

29 Senate Bill 5044, Concerning professional learning, equity, cultural competency, and dismantling institutional racism in the public school system, signed by Governor Inslee May 5, 2021, at <https://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary?billnumber=5044&year=2021>.

30 “Washington public school officials lower academic standards as they implement Critical Race Theory,” by Liv Finne, Washington Policy Center, Policy Brief, September 21, 2021, at <https://www.washingtonpolicy.org/publications/detail/washington-public-school-officials-lower-academic-standards-as-they-implement-critical-race-theory>.

Most importantly, school choice programs do not “undermine democracy” as opponents frequently claim. This mean-spirited and insidious accusation has been made repeatedly, while both the historic expansion of American democracy and contemporary experience have again and again proven this objection to be wrong.

As American society becomes more complex and sophisticated, and as new technologies provide ever-wider choices and access to information, there is a natural movement by parents to want more choices in education. For many families the 19th-century model that seeks to deliver education like a government utility based on zip codes is no longer adequate under today’s modern conditions.

For that reason there is growing trend of parents seeking more control over education options for their children, which has recently propelled the creation or expansion of school choice programs in eighteen states.³¹ The factual de-bunking of the common assertions that opponents make against school choice shows family access to choice is now a normal, and in most states non-controversial, part of a modern public education system.

³¹ “Eighteen states have expanded school choice programs to benefit children and families,” by Liv Finne, Washington Policy Center, Policy Brief, November 3, 2021, at <https://www.washingtonpolicy.org/publications/detail/eighteen-states-have-expanded-school-choice-programs-to-benefit-children-and-families>.



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Published by
Washington Policy Center
© 2023

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206-937-9691

Appendix

Below are two case studies of how school choice policies in Florida have directly benefited Black families, as reported by the American Federation for Children:³²

Case Study 1:

Spotlight: Khaliah Clanton-Williams

Khaliah Clanton-Williams is an education choice pioneer twice over. In 1999, her mother, Tracy James, secured a Florida Opportunity Scholarship, making Khaliah one of the first students to use what was then the first, modern, statewide school choice scholarship in America. (Their story [here](#).) Now Khaliah is using the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities to create a home education regimen for her son, Kyrian, who is on the autism spectrum. With the scholarship, Khaliah has been able to purchase core academic classes through Florida Virtual School, home education curricula, and a variety of therapies. This customized program for Kyrian was not available in a public or private school, Khaliah said, and she and her husband would not have been able to afford it without the scholarship.



“A lot of people are deciding things need to change in education. When you’re talking about education for minority students, and then education for minority students with special needs, it really complicates things. My grandmother used to say the best place for a child to learn is home, and she was right. With an education savings account, we have the ability to line up the programs and services we know are best for our son.”

– Khaliah Clanton-Williams

Case study 2:

Spotlight: Iman Alleyne

Iman Alleyne pulled her son out of a public-school kindergarten five years ago to homeschool him and inadvertently shifted into a new career. Now the former public-school teacher leads [Kind Academy](#), an inclusive, nature-based micro-school in South Florida, and teaches a popular Black history class through the online [Outschool](#) platform. When Alleyne told other Black teachers on a Facebook discussion group what she was doing, “They were like, whaaaat? Tell us more!” District schools work for many children, Alleyne said, but parents should have the power to direct education funding to other options if they don’t. Doing so, she said, will accelerate the evolution of an education system that is more responsive to the families it serves. Check out a video podcast with Iman Alleyne [here](#).



“Having teachers that look like you is a huge deal for people,” Alleyne said. Black parents want teachers “who will take that curriculum and say, ‘This is your greatness, too. I want you to see your greatness in it.’ I think that’s a big part of it for a lot of Black families. We need educators who are creating schools that are for us, and by us.”

– Iman Alleyne

32 “Controlling the Narrative: Parental Choice, Black Empowerment and Lessons from Florida,” by Denisha Merriweather, Dava Hankerson, Nathaniel Cunneen, and Ron Matus, American Federation for Children, Black Minds Matter, and Step Up for Students, accessed December 6, 2022 at <https://www.reimaginedonline.org/controlling-the-narrative-parental-choice-Black-empowerment-lessons-from-florida/>.