

The
Florida Education Monthly

May 2007

Presented by: **The James Madison Institute**

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School choice has saved \$444 million

New study analyzes fiscal impact of the nation's school choice programs

Friedman Foundation

INDIANAPOLIS—A landmark new study finds that school choice programs throughout the country generated nearly \$444 million in net savings to state and local budgets from 1990 to 2006. Contrary to opponents' predictions, the analysis also finds that instructional spending per student has consistently gone up in all affected public school districts and states.

"School choice saves. It saves children, and now we have empirical evidence that it saves money," said Robert Enlow, executive director and COO of the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation. "In the face of \$444 million in savings, another excuse to deny children a quality education has vanished before our eyes."

Released by the Friedman Foundation, "Education by the Numbers: The Fiscal Effect of School Choice Programs, 1990-2006" provides the first comprehensive analysis of how the nation's school choice programs have affected state and public school districts. Of the 12 voucher and tax-credit scholarship programs that began operations before 2006, every program is at least fiscally neutral, and most produce substantial savings. Seven more programs have been created since 2006.

"Programs giving parents freedom to choose in their child's education are growing rapidly in number and size," said Dr. Susan Aud, author of the study and a Friedman Foundation senior fellow. "And a program's fiscal impact has become an important political issue. This brings empirical evidence to that debate."

For complete article click here:

<http://www.friedmanfoundation.org/friedman/newsroom/ShowNewsReleaseItem.do?id=20087>

This study is new tool in the progress towards educational freedom across the country with empirical data to validate how school choice actually saves taxpayer dollars—a concept that has been fiercely challenged by many teachers unions across the country.

Civics Exam

Schools of choice boost civic values

Hoover Institution

By Patrick J. Wolf

Do assigned public schools have a comparative advantage over public schools of choice and private schools in steeping their charges in the civic values necessary for democratic citizenship? The theoretical argument in favor of such an advantage is both intuitive and popular. As free government schools, open to all on equal terms, public schools make an important statement about equality, a fundamental democratic value. Former education secretary Richard Riley aptly captured this perspective, noting that civic values are “conveyed not only through what is taught in the classroom, but by the very experience of attending [a public] school with a diverse mix of students.”

Many supporters of school choice argue that neighborhood assignment to public schools results not in what public school advocates celebrate but in just the opposite: schools that are less likely to contain a diverse mix of students and that are more internally segregated along racial lines than are schools of choice. In recent years, a number of empirical studies of the effects of school choice on civic values have been published. As the extent of school choice in American education continues to grow—the latest data from the Department of Education show that 26 percent of American students attended a school other than their closest neighborhood public school—it is time to take stock of the evidentiary record on whether assigned public schooling better prepares students for their responsibilities as citizens in a democracy.

For complete article click here: <http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/7460537.html>

Here we are presented with the facts that going against the notion of public schools of creating better citizens is being proven true. When there is an environment of more diversity, pluralism and greater expectations of the students, students come to meet those expectations because they are provided with the tools they need to do so.

Tuition veto worries universities

Daytona Beach-News Journal

By Mark Harper and Jim Saunders

TALLAHASSEE -- Gov. Charlie Crist on Thursday vetoed a 5 percent tuition increase at Florida's colleges and universities, setting off a flurry of questions.

One of them: Can universities charge tuition at all next year?

Senate Higher Education Appropriations Chairwoman Evelyn Lynn, R-Ormond Beach, said Crist's tuition vetoes caused confusion when he eliminated the budget language that spelled out how much students will be charged per credit hour.

The universities are questioning whether they can even charge tuition at all, Lynn said, adding: "They don't want to do anything illegal."

Jerry McDaniel, Crist's budget director, contends the change means tuition will revert to its current amount, \$73.71 per credit hour for universities and \$51.35 per credit hour for community colleges.

Meanwhile, lawmakers were questioning whether the governor's veto of tuition hikes was even legal.

For complete article click here: <http://www.news-journalonline.com/NewsJournalOnline/News/Headlines/frtHEAD02052507.htm>

Governor Crist has decided to effectively deny the universities the right to raise tuition rates this year. It places universities and colleges in an interesting position on how they can charge tuition, especially if there is pending litigation to challenge the veto.

Task force to give Crist recommendations for campus safety

Associated Press

By Brendan Farrington

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- A university safety task force formed after the Virginia Tech shootings is making a broad range of recommendations, including a focus on mental health issues that goes way beyond simply helping college students.

The state should improve mental health services for students in grades kindergarten through 12 and ask the federal government for help in increasing anti-bullying efforts and prevention programs for alcohol and substance abuse and domestic violence, the panel's report says.

Also, the Department of Children & Families needs to improve its mental health programs and expand services. Bob Butterworth, who heads DCF, chairs the task force.

"Especially in the area of substance abuse and mental health, they have not been adequately funded," said Jim Sewell, a former Florida Department of Law Enforcement regional director who served as a task force adviser. "Secretary Butterworth is working on that with the governor's office. I think we'll see some things like that would go beyond campus."

The report was being finalized late Wednesday afternoon and was due to Gov. Charlie Crist Thursday. Crist formed the task force after a student with a history of mental problems killed 32 people and wounded 25 before taking his own life at Virginia Tech April 16.

For complete article click here:

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070523/APN/705232056>

This Task Force was created in response the tragic events at Virginia Tech and charged with evaluating campus safety in the state of Florida. Hopefully, their final recommendations will be a healthy balance of only necessary changes.

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