



## Every Kid Deserves Ahmed Mohamed's School Choice

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A young man who was pulled from his Texas public school in handcuffs for bringing in a homemade clock a teacher feared was a bomb has withdrawn his enrollment and is considering admission offers from a bevy of other schools. In the meantime, 14-year-old Ahmed Mohamed is planning visits to the White House, United Nations, and Mecca.

“Ahmed said, I don’t want to go to MacArthur,” Ahmed’s father told the *Dallas Morning News*. “These kids aren’t going to be happy there.”

It shouldn’t take a well-publicized overreaction like this for a young person to access schools that won’t treat him so absurdly and where he feels welcomed. All young people should be free to choose among a number of good schools, just like Mohamed can now. Of course, the ideal rarely happens, but this reality could actually exist. It requires some basic changes to the structure of public education, changes most Americans already support.

The Cato Institute maintains a Public Schooling Battle Map that records incidents such as this one in Texas. It illustrates the public discord that inevitably results when people who think contradictory things are required both to fund and send their children to schools that must, impossibly, attempt to accommodate all these opposing viewpoints. That’s a recipe for at least trampled toes, if not several wrecked years of a family’s life.

School choice makes for a better country by eliminating the coercion that produces social conflicts like these. Research also shows that students who attend private schools are more tolerant and civically minded. One can bet the farm that very few private school teachers would have treated Mohamed in this way. And even if they did, if children had school choice it wouldn’t take an international outcry to allow them to leave for a more fitting school.