



Corey DeAngelis: COVID-19 Is Super-Spreading School Choice

Lockdowns are forcing students, parents, educators, and even taxpayers to look for all sorts of alternatives to the status quo.

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The lockdowns in response to COVID-19 have upended no part of our lives more than education, where virtually no K-12 schools are open for business with full-time, in-person instruction. The result is something approaching pandemonium for students, parents, and educators alike, all of whom are scrambling to make sense of a system that no longer seems capable of doing what it's supposed to do.

The one constant? Critiques of school choice—especially by wealthy, well-connected liberals such as Samantha Bee, the host of the popular commentary show *Full Frontal* on TBS. In a recent segment called "[How The School Choice Debate Is Failing Our Public Schools](#)," Bee took a dark view of alternatives to traditional public schools, warning that "private and charter schools can be especially problematic because some states have virtually no oversight over them."

As a matter of fact, Bee is wrong, especially about charter schools, which are always overseen by either local or state education officials. But her anxiety—and that of other defenders of the status quo—is understandable: The lockdowns and forced shift to mostly virtual learning are driving massive interest in alternatives to the residential-assignment public schools most Americans have attended for decades. Angry pushback from teachers unions about going back into classrooms and the desultory quality of learning via Zoom is activating parents in a way that white papers on school reform never did.

For today's podcast, Nick Gillespie speaks with [Corey DeAngelis](#), the director of school choice for Reason Foundation, the nonprofit that publishes this website and podcast. They talk about why COVID-19 will almost certainly spur long-lasting interest in school choice and the success of the new collection DeAngelis co-edited with Neal McCluskey of the Cato Institute, *School Choice Myths: Setting the Record Straight on Education Reform*. In a wide-ranging conversation, they also discuss presidential contender and former Vice President Joe Biden's open antagonism toward school choice, especially charter schools, and whether President Donald Trump's warm embrace of choice is actually a mixed blessing for reformers.