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False Choice

Posted By [Don Boudreaux](#) On December 9, 2010 @ 9:45 am In [Education,Other People's Money,Taxes](#) | [No Comments](#)

[Matt Miller is furious that Pres. Obama won't raise taxes on any Americans](#) ^[1]. The reason for Miller's anger is, of course, the children – in particular, America's K-12 students who perform poorly in math. Far better for the children, Miller asserts, that government raise taxes and spend the money improving education than to let that money remain with the people who earn it.

This thesis rests on several dubious assumptions, but none more questionable than the one that equates higher government spending on education with better education.

[Over the past forty years, Washington's inflation-adjusted *per-pupil* spending on K-12 education has more than doubled. Yet as the Cato Institute's Neal McCluskey reported last month, "There's been essentially no change in high school math achievement for the last nearly four decades.](#) ^[2]"

To shovel yet more lucre into public-school bureaucracies is to reward failure. And to do so by raising taxes on income earners is to punish success. That formula just doesn't compute

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[1] Matt Miller is furious that Pres. Obama won't raise taxes on any Americans:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/08/AR2010120803040.html>

[2] Over the past forty years, Washington's inflation-adjusted *per-pupil* spending on K-12 education has more than doubled. Yet as the Cato Institute's Neal McCluskey reported last month, "There's been essentially no change in high school math achievement for the last nearly four decades.": http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=12593

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