



Trump speaks out in support of school choice

Amelia Hamilton

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Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has laid out his educational policy plan, and it includes strong support for school choice.

“As your president, I will be the nation’s biggest cheerleader for school choice,” **he said**. “It’s simply a matter of putting students first, and not the education bureaucracy.”

Under Trump’s proposal, \$20 billion of existing federal money would go to support school choice efforts for low-income children around the country.

“The parents will be so happy,” **he said**. “Number one, we’ll have safe streets; and number two, they’ll walk their children to schools they want to be at.”

School choice advocates have spoken out in support of the proposal. “We know that millions of children, mostly low-income and minority children, remain trapped in K-12 schools that are not meeting their needs,” **said Betsy DeVos**, chairwoman of the American Federation for Children. “We applaud the Trump campaign’s focus on school choice and laying out common sense proposals to help all children access a quality education. Empowering parents with school choice, including private school choice, has helped millions of children succeed in school, and it is long past time we had a K-12 system that allowed parents to choose the best educational environment for their child.”

Hillary Clinton’s campaign was quick to **speak out** against the plan, saying it would “decimate public schools across America,” despite **studies** that show school choice strengthens public schools.

Democrats who support school choice praised the program, and called for Hillary Clinton to get on board.

“While I do not support Donald Trump, his speech on school choice demonstrates that he is giving serious thought to education issues and I strongly challenge Hillary Clinton to do the same,” **said Kevin P. Chavous**, a former Democratic elected official and founding board member of the American Federation for Children. “As a lifelong Democrat and education reformer, I urge Hillary Clinton to show more openness and creativity when it comes to embracing school reform, choice and charter schools. So far, Mrs. Clinton has largely been a representative of the interests of teachers unions and the status quo, which is in opposition to parents and students and will serve to be on the wrong side of history.”

The CATO Institute had a mixed reaction. While it supports Trump's call for increased school choice, the institute doesn't believe it's in the purview of the president to mandate it.

“Donald Trump is right to emphasize school choice: It is the key to empowering parents to get the education that is best for their unique children, and for educators to teach how they want and try new, innovative approaches,” **said Cato's Neal McCluskey**, “but this is not something that should come from Washington. The federal government has no constitutional authority to meddle in education, and as it has proven over the last several decades — including by coercing states to adopt the Common Core — once it starts paying for education it starts controlling it, telling everyone what to do and how to do it.”