



## Teachers need school choice as much as students do

Bill Bumpas

February 16, 2021

A proponent of educational freedom contends the response of the educational system in America to the pandemic has shone a "brilliant light" on the long-existing necessity of school choice.

One way to reduce school lockdowns and get students back into schools is for teachers' unions to stop blocking choice, says Neal McCluskey of the [Cato Institute](#). He uses the Chicago Teachers Union as an example.

The CTU has staunchly opposed the reopening of schools. Thousands of teachers in the Windy City, he argues, have followed the direction of that union and refused to return to in-person instruction. While he acknowledges that some teachers are concerned about safety, he says the CTU is using the lockdown as leverage to get more funding.

McCluskey, who is associate director of Cato's Center for Educational Freedom, contends school choice could be a solution, in part, not only for students but for teachers as well. Right now, he says, public school teachers who might prefer to work in-person are stuck.

"Those who want schools open, including teachers who are willing and able to teach in-person and who want to teach in person, they also – in school choice – have the freedom to go to schools that are open," he tells One News Now.

Not only that, he [writes](#) that given that choice and no longer stuck with a "monopoly employer," teachers would have the power to demand higher salaries, or better perks, than what their unions decide to accept.

CTU members have since signed an agreement to return to school. Most students will head back in March, according to the Chicago Sun Times.