



Parents for
Choice in Education

Press Contact:
Nancy Pomeroy
801.361.5284

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Utah Study Indicates Significant Savings From School Vouchers

Empirical Research Proves Millions Would be Saved

Salt Lake City, UT — February 1, 2007 — A study of the fiscal impact of school choice in Utah shows that a state school choice program could save approximately \$26 million each year.

Released today by the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation, (founded by Nobel laureate economist, Dr. Milton Friedman), Parents for Choice in Education (PCE) and the Utah Taxpayers Association, the study provides credible evidence that no local school district would suffer a net loss of funds as a result of the introduction of a school voucher program. It also identified the potential additional savings from school vouchers for each district throughout the state and suggests that as the percentage of children using vouchers increases education expenditures and tax rates decline.

“This is a win, win for Utah,” said Elisa Peterson, executive director of PCE. “Public schools increase per pupil spending, while taxpayers save money. More importantly, Utah families have the freedom to choose the school that matches their child’s unique learning needs.”

Mike Jerman, vice president of the Utah Taxpayer’s Association agrees.

“Vouchers are a cost effective way to address Utah’s enrollment projections over the next several decades. The voucher amount is much less than what Utah taxpayers are currently paying per student in the public school system.”

Key Findings

- Utah public schools receive \$6,325 in revenue per student, including \$3,508 from the state, \$2,220 from local sources, and \$597 from federal sources.
- A universal voucher program that allowed Utah parents to use a portion of their state education funding to attend schools of their choice, public or private, would reduce the need for more teachers and classroom space in the public school system, or, alternatively, help the state reduce teacher-student ratios.
- If 2 percent of public school parents participated in the voucher program — a participation rate well below the 5 percent rate achieved by Ohio’s new voucher

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- program in its first year of operation in 2006 — it would remove about 9,662 students from the public school system in the first year.
- Such a universal voucher program would result in a net fiscal savings of about \$700,000 in the first year, and the savings would grow as the program grew.
 - Because not all school revenue varies with enrollment levels, **local Utah school districts would retain about \$2,674 in revenue for each student who left with a voucher — a financial windfall that would total about \$26 million per year.**

The study was completed by Dr. Susan Aud, senior researcher, and professor teaching Quantitative Methods in Political Science Research in the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

For a copy of the study's results, methodology and conclusions please visit:
<http://www.friedmanfoundation.org/utahfiscal.pdf>

About the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation

<http://www.friedmanfoundation.org>

The Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation, dubbed "the nation's leading voucher advocates" by the Wall Street Journal, is a non-profit organization established in 1996. The best way to improve the quality of education, they believe, is to enable all parents to have a truly free choice of the schools that their children attend. The Friedman Foundation works to build upon this vision clarify its meaning to the general public and amplify the national call for true education reform through school choice.

About Parents for Choice in Education

www.choiceineducation.org

Parents for Choice in Education (PCE) is dedicated to the improvement of education in Utah through meaningful parental choice. We believe that publicly supported education is vital to the strength of our state and that real options should be made accessible and available to everyone regardless of income or geography. We believe in parents and their ability to make the best education choices for their children whether through public, charter, or private schools. We envision and work to achieve a vibrant education system, offered through diverse, competitive providers focusing on the child, not the system. Since its founding in November 2000, PCE has taken the lead role in advocating for school choice reforms in Utah

About the Utah Taxpayers Association

www.utahtaxpayers.org

The Utah Taxpayers Association advocates for lower taxes, sound tax policy, efficient use of tax dollars, and economic growth. Founded in 1922, the association promotes the interests of Utah's taxpayers through research and analysis and by working with policy makers to formulate sound public policy.

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