

Who is PEFNC?

Founded on July 5, 2005, Parents for Educational Freedom in North Carolina (PEFNC), is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to finding ways to effectively better an educational system for all children in North Carolina.

OUR VISION

Believing that each child is unique and parents should be free to choose an education that best meets the needs of their children, PEFNC envisions an education system that maximizes parental choice.

About Us

In light of increasing dropout rates, low attendance rates and other problems in North Carolina's educational system, PEFNC believes that parental school choice can give parents the financial and legal freedom to choose an education that is best for their children. PEFNC is committed to bringing about a change in the educational system by creating greater awareness of the need for parental choice, by serving as a resource for school choice information and by building diverse partnerships to support expanded educational options for North Carolina families.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to inform parents of the benefits of expanded educational options, and we seek to empower parents, regardless of race, national origin, income or religion, to exercise the freedom to meet their children's needs.

PEFNC supports all programs that provide parents and children with greater educational options and builds awareness of the need for even more educational options in North Carolina, including an option not currently available to families in our state: the opportunity for families to educate their children privately and/or non-traditionally through tax credits or equal opportunity scholarship programs.

Today, states such as Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin and even the District of Columbia all have enacted parental school choice programs. These states recognize that expanding educational opportunities for their children is a more meaningful and comparatively inexpensive solution to getting these children off the streets, off government welfare and into a life of independence and self-reliance.



PEFNC hopes North Carolina will also add its name to the list of states that have taken bold steps in providing parents greater freedom to choose and children more options which will improve education for all in our state.



**Parents for Educational Freedom
in North Carolina**

WWW.PEFNC.ORG
1-888-97-PEFNC

Is there a demand among North Carolina citizens for more parental school choice?

Yes. The numbers of families choosing private and home school environments are at historic levels. In fact, according to the North Carolina Department of Non-Public Education, there are 68,707 students who are currently home-schooled, as opposed to only 33,860 students at the turn of the century (2000-2001) who were home-schooled. In addition, close to 93,000 students attend private schools. Accordingly, roughly 11% of our state's students attend conventional non-public and home schools, and the numbers continue to grow. These numbers show that there is unquestionably high demand among our citizens for more educational options.

Does school choice drain money from public schools?

In a typical school choice program, the amount of money spent on each participant is less than what would have been spent on that student in public schools. Although schools have a small amount of fixed costs that remain after students leave, the financial savings generated for public schools by school choice programs far outweigh the relatively small effects of fixed costs.

Are there other states that have parental school choice programs?

School choice programs have been in effect in the U.S. for more than 100 years. To date, there are currently 24 school choice programs in 13 states as well as the District of Columbia. Across the nation, nearly 140,000 students are participating in school choice programs because their parents have been given the freedom to choose schools that best fit their needs. Research on school choice programs consistently shows that participating students perform better, parents are more involved with their children's education and public schools improve in response.



How would school choice generally affect public schools?

School choice improves public schools because it makes them more accountable. When parents have the ability to send their children to the schools they think are most effective, then less effective schools are forced to improve if they want to continue serving students. When parents are the ultimate decision-makers – instead of the system – in terms of where and how they wish to educate their children, public schools perform better. Competition begets better performance in any setting, and this concept also applies in education.



Will school choice cause a resurgence in segregation?

There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that school choice will re-segregate schools. In fact, the United States Department of Education has stated explicitly that “private school students are more likely to be in racially mixed classes than are public school students.” In addition, established school choice programs in Milwaukee, Cleveland and Washington, D.C., among others, have

seen more integration and less racial homogeneity. Further, in the 13 states that have enacted parental school choice, the students that have benefited the most in those programs have been mostly minority and low-income children.

Will school choice benefit the neediest children or those who don't really need it?

Parental school choice does benefit disadvantaged children. According to Harvard researcher Paul Peterson, the majority of students who have choice in the U.S. were scoring in the bottom third of all students while in public schools. Additionally, many school choice programs require that participating schools accept scholarship students randomly and are in fact means-tested. States can have great latitude when setting up these programs, and most states with school choice programs want to serve as many students as they can, including those most needy.