



March 11, 2021

Support the SCHOOL Act, H.R. 1770 and S. 665

On behalf of FreedomWorks' activist community, I urge you to contact your representative and senators and ask them to cosponsor the Support Children Having Open Opportunities for Learning (SCHOOL) Act, H.R. 1770 and S. 665, if they haven't already done so. Introduced by Rep. Chip Roy (R-Texas) and Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) the SCHOOL Act would grant American families more choice in how their children are educated both during the COVID-19 pandemic and long after schools return to normal.

School choice can and should be the norm, not the exception. Under the SCHOOL Act, the majority of federal funds provided for K-12 education would be able to follow a child whether they choose to learn remotely or in person. The bill would give families the ability to choose between public school, private school, homeschooling, or online learning with the assurance that every child receives the same amount of federal funding regardless of where they are enrolled.

In the case of remote learning and homeschooling, funds would be made directly available to eligible children through education savings accounts. Now more than ever, policy makers should be enabling parents to choose what is best for their child. In a time of increased uncertainty, many parents are justifiably concerned for the education and welfare of their children.

As many public schools still refuse to reopen, many continuing to employ nonsensical and ineffective remote or virtual learning plans, families who are already faced with tough decisions should have the full ability to pursue an education that works for their children, and not be confined to government schools. For so many families, remote learning is unsustainable. As science from the CDC itself shows that reopening schools is safe, forcing families to keep their children enrolled in public school systems that refuse to reopen is tragic policy.

Federal funds provided under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act currently provide schools with funding for things like curriculum, education technology, and special education. Although these funds are typically tied to student numbers, funding does not follow students directly when they move amongst schools,

and cannot be used for remote education or homeschooling, except under certain special circumstances. With more students disenrolling from public schools every day, and for good reason, it is time for the federal government to encourage the freedom of school choice.

Another important aspect of the SCHOOL Act is that it would enable federally funded school food programs to follow students, even if they stay remote. With nearly 22 million low-income students taking part in the National School Lunch Program alone, parents shouldn't be forced to choose between feeding their children and endangering their health. Allowing families to directly access federal funds for their nutrition is the best way to ensure that no child falls through the cracks because of COVID-19 chaos or because they choose not to enroll in a public school.

Unfortunately, the problems we are seeing now in education as a result of COVID-19 are merely symptoms of deeper structural issues. The current school year, and fallout of the last school year, demonstrate better than ever how a one-size-fits-all approach to education is wholly unworkable and ultimately harms students.

As a champion of school choice, Sen. Paul has long supported policies that would enable parents to do what they know is best for their children. The SCHOOL Act is a solution, not only for the short-term issues caused by COVID-19, but for a structural issue that will undoubtedly remain beyond the pandemic.

For these reasons, I urge you to contact your representative and senators and ask them to cosponsor the Support Children Having Open Opportunities for Learning (SCHOOL) Act, H.R. 1770 and S. 665.

Sincerely,



Adam Brandon
President, FreedomWorks