

QuickPoint! – Poll: 72% Believe Parents Should Have School Choice

By Kathryn Hickok

The last two years have made it clear: Oregon parents deserve real choices in their children’s education.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, government and teachers’ union policies have disappointed and angered parents whose students’ academic needs haven’t been met by their assigned public schools. In addition, the online public instruction options available while schools were closed allowed parents to witness actual classroom teaching. These experiences have led parents to demand a meaningful say in where and how their kids are educated, and the ability to choose among a variety of education options.

As parents “vote with their feet” for schools they believe are the best fit for their children, public opinion increasingly favors their ability to do that. A February [poll by RealClear Opinion Research reports overwhelming public support](#) for school choice. Participants were asked if parents should have “the right to use the tax dollars designated for their child’s education to send their child to the public or private school which best serves their needs.” Black respondents supported school choice at 70%, Hispanics at 77%, and all respondents at 72%.

As Oregonians move forward from their pandemic education experiences, legislators and policymakers should value all learning options that empower students to succeed. Education funding should “follow the child” so parents can choose schools that best meet their students’ needs. It’s time to fund students, not systems, and serve all children better through school choice.

Kathryn Hickok is Executive Vice President at Cascade Policy Institute and Director of Cascade’s Children’s Scholarship Fund-Oregon program. CSF-Oregon has provided private scholarships worth more than \$3.5 million to lower-income Oregon children to help them attend tuition-based elementary schools since 1999.

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Please contact:

Cascade Policy Institute
4850 SW Scholls Ferry Rd.
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

Phone: (503) 242-0900
Fax: (503) 242-3822

www.cascadepolicy.org
info@cascadepolicy.org

4850 SW Scholls Ferry Road
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

t: 503.242.0900
f: 503.242.3822
info@cascadepolicy.org
www.cascadepolicy.org

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