

VOUCHER LAWS ACROSS THE STATES

RANKINGS AND SCORECARD 2014

STATE	IN	OH					WI			D.C.	NC		AZ	LA		FL		GA	OK	CO	UT	MS		VT	ME	
Voucher Program:	Choice	Cleveland	Autism	Choice	Peterson-Spec. Needs	Income-Based	Choice-Milwaukee	Choice-Racine	Choice	Opportunity	Opportunity	Disabilities	Empowerment Accts	Ed Excellence	Exceptionalities	McKay-Spec. Needs	Personal Schol. Acct.	Special Needs	Henry-Disabilities	Douglas Co.	Smith-Spec. Needs	Dyslexia	Speech-Lan-guage	Town Tuitioning	Town Tuitioning	
Year Enacted:	2011	1995	2003	2005	2011	2013	1990	2011	2013	2004	2013	2013	2011	2008	2010	1999	2014	2007	2010	2011*	2005	2012	2013	1869	1873	
ELIGIBILITY																										
School choice voucher programs are deemed better the more students that are eligible to receive scholarships.																										
Students: Voucher programs that are available to all students have a broader reach than those limited to only special needs students, only to students attending schools labeled "failing," or only to students in selected geographic areas, for example.																										
Available to any income-eligible student? (8 pts)	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	
Available statewide? (8pts)	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Available only to students with special needs or other student population subsets? (2 pts)	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Available only to students attending failing schools?(2 pts)	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	
Must have first attended a public school? (-1 pt)	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	
Program Reach Points (up to 20) <i>Total for states with multiple programs include points for those programs' unique additions to the reach of school choice vouchers</i>	19	14					16			16	11		11	10		9		9	9	7	10	6---		8	8	
Income: Less restrictive income eligibility criteria on voucher recipients allow more families to participate.																										
Family income cap:	100% FRPL/ 150% FRPL/ 200% FRPL*	200% poverty'	none	200% poverty	none	200/400% poverty****	300% poverty+	300% poverty+	100% FRPL	100% FRPL**	133% FRPL#	none	none	250% poverty	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	
Points - Targeted Programs (up to 5) <i>Maximum points for no family income cap for voucher eligibility</i>			5		5							5	5		5	5		5	5		5	5	5	5	5	
Points - Universal Programs (5-10) <i>Points within structure of: 5 pts for 100% poverty; 7 pts for 200%; 9 for 300%</i>	6	7		7		8	9	9	6	6	8			8									10			
Income Eligibility Points (up to 10) <i>In states with multiple programs, total represents a combination that accounts for each program's relative standing against similar programs</i>	6			9				8		6		9	5	9		5		5	5	10	5		5	5	5	
DESIGN																										
School choice voucher programs are deemed better the more vouchers that are available to students and the closer those vouchers come to covering the full cost of tuition at a chosen school.																										
Cap on number of vouchers allowed	none	6,380"	none	60,000	5% of students w/ disabilities****	2,000 new vouchers/year	none	none	1,000 new vouchers/year****	none	2,400##	500##	5,000 new vouchers/year	none	none	none	1,800###	none	none	500	none	none	none	none	none	
Points - Targeted Programs (up to 5) <i>Maximum points for unlimited targeted vouchers</i>			5		2							1	4		5	5		5	5		5	5	5	5	5	
Points - Universal Programs (5-10) <i>More points for greater % of school-aged children with access to vouchers</i>	10	7		8		6	10	10	6	6	5			10									5			
Number of Vouchers Points (up to 10) <i>In states with multiple programs, total represents a combination that accounts for each program's relative standing against similar programs</i>	10			8				8		5		5	4	10		5		5	5	5	5		5	5	5	
Funds expended (most recent year available; in millions)	\$81.1	\$28.8	\$47.0	\$72.6	\$26.1	\$4.6\$\$	\$160.7+++	\$7.6	\$3.2	\$13.8	n/a	n/a	\$10.2	\$24.5	\$0.5	\$168.9	\$0.0	\$13.6	\$1.3	n/a	\$3.9	\$0.3	n/a	\$32.3\$\$\$	\$44.9\$	
Maximum value of voucher:																										
Up to full tuition....	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	
...or if less:	90% of regular state aid support or \$4,700	\$4,250ele/\$5,700hs	\$20,000	\$4,250ele/\$5,000hs**	100% of per pupil special ed funding up to \$20,000	\$4,250ele/\$5,000hs	\$7,210ele/\$7,856hs++	\$7,210ele/\$7,856hs++	\$7,210ele/\$7,856hs++	\$8,256ele/\$12,385hs	\$4,200	\$6,000	90% of state funds that would've been spent on student	State and local per pupil funding (\$8,500 avg in '13)*	50% of state and local per pupil funding	Public funding that would have been spent on student	Varies by grade, disability & district (avg. est. at \$10K)	Public funding that would have been spent on student	100% of state/local funding child would have received	75% of state portion of per pupil aid	\$4,263 <3hrs or \$7,105 >3hrs	100% of state portion of per pupil funding	100% of state portion of per pupil funding	\$11,703ele/\$13,084hs	Avg. public per pupil cost: \$7,347ele/\$9,317hs	
Value of Voucher Points (up to 5) <i>Max. points if equal to lesser of tuition or full amount of public spending</i>	4			4				4		4		3	4	4		5		5	5	3	3		5	5	4	

- Most programs requiring previous-year public school enrollment allow an exception for students just entering kindergarten, and many do so for military families.
 * Recent program expansion puts the voucher amount at approximately \$3,000 for non-special education eligible recipients (military families, foster care kids, students in failing schools), and ranging from about \$10,000 to more than \$20,000 for special needs students depending upon the disability and service regimen prescribed.
 * The voucher program in Douglas County, CO, has been held up in court by opponents keeping the program from moving forward; appeals have been filed.
 ^ Indiana's program has varied eligibility requirements: for a full voucher, family income cannot exceed 100% of FRPL eligibility; for a partial voucher, family income cannot exceed 150% of FRPL; students qualify for a full voucher if they have an IEP and family income does not exceed 200% of FRPL or if they attend an F-rated public school and family income does not exceed 150% of FRPL.
 -- Mississippi's special-needs programs are further restricted to identified selected disabilities. A minor point reduction was imposed as a result.
 # North Carolina's program limits eligibility for full vouchers to families with income less than 133% of FRPL; vouchers limited to 90% of tuition and fees or \$4,200 if income exceeds 100% of FRPL. In 2014-15 only, eligibility is limited to families at or below 100% of FRPL eligibility. Once prior year voucher students are funding, 50% of remaining funds must be for students with incomes not exceeding 100% FRPL.

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AUTONOMY																												
School choice voucher programs that do not unreasonably impinge upon the autonomy of private schools are deemed better than those that do.																												
Imposes testing and/or other mandates that drive the state's chosen educational programming? (-3 pts)		yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no		
Imposes educational content/course requirements? (-3 pts)		yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no		
Imposes excessively burdensome or intrusive financial reporting mandates? (-1 pt)		no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no		
Imposes excessively burdensome or intrusive academic reporting and/or performance mandates? (-1 pt)		yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no		
Inhibits or prohibits new private schools from being created to serve voucher students? (-1 pt)		no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	
Other provisions that encroach upon autonomy? (-2 pts)		yes (gov't observation)	no	no	no	no	no	yes (opt-out of religion; financial training; outside evaluation)	yes (opt-out of religion)	yes (opt-out of religion)	yes (gov't site visits; outside evaluation)	no	no	no	yes (open enrollment)	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no		
Autonomy Points (-11-0)		-8						-6						0												0	0	
Certain provisions and nuances of state school choice voucher programs can particularly contribute to the relative strength or weakness of the program.																												
Other Points (-5 to 5)														3													-5	-5
TOTAL POINTS (max. 50 pts. possible):																												
		31																										
STATE		IN																										
GRADE		A																										

ALSO...																										
STATE	ME	WI				VT	D.C.	IN	OH				FL			LA		GA	AZ	UT	OK	MS		CO*	NC	
	Town Tuitioning	Choice-Milwaukee	Choice-Racine	Choice	Town Tuitioning	Opportunity	Choice	Cleveland	Autism	Choice	Peterson-Spec. Needs	Income-Based	McKay-Spec. Needs	Personal Schol. Acct.	Ed Excellence	Exceptionalities	Special Needs	Empowerment Acct.	Smith-Spec. Needs	Henry-Disabilities	Dyslexia	Speech-Language	Douglas Co.	Opportunity	Disabilities	

PARTICIPATION																										
Excepting anomalies (such as Maine and Vermont) and new programs (such as North Carolina), strong voucher programs are validated by strong participation.																										
Total number of students using vouchers, 2013-14		5,646	24,938	1,180	500	2,608	1,638	19,809	6,337	2,623	16,987	2,103	992	27,040	0	6,775	245	3,400	761	650	290	73	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
As % of total age 5-17 population:		2.9%	2.8%	2.7%	2.3%	1.7%	1.5%	0.9%	0.8%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total Participation Points: <small>2 points for each 0.5% increment or part thereof</small>		12	12	12	10	8	6	4	4	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0									

North Carolina's programs do not impose caps on the number of vouchers available, but the number is restricted by the appropriation cap on the programs. The estimated number of Opportunity vouchers is derived by dividing the \$10.8M program by the \$4,200 cap on voucher size, and for the Disabilities program by dividing the \$3M appropriation by the \$6,000 voucher size.

Florida's new Personal Learning Scholarship Accounts are budgeted at approximately \$1.8M, and the average deposit award is estimated to be around \$10,000, resulting in an estimated 1,800 students to be served.

* Ohio's Cleveland program gives priority to students in families below 200% of the federal poverty line.

** Ohio's Cleveland program does not impose a cap on the number of vouchers available, but the number is restricted by the appropriation for the program. The estimated number of vouchers is derived by dividing the \$29M funding level by the \$4,544 average voucher size awarded.

*** Ohio's Choice program allows voucher size to exceed the cap for students in families under 200% of federal poverty up to full tuition.

**** This totals approximately 12,000 vouchers

***** Family income below 200% federal poverty line for full scholarship, with priority given to families at or below poverty line; 200%-400% poverty line qualifies for partial scholarship.

^^ Families qualifying for free lunch program in the prior year are allowed to have an income up to 300% of federal poverty and still qualify. Priority given to students attending NCLB-sanctioned schools.

+ An additional \$7,000 in income is allowed for families with married parents.

** 2014-15 rates; 2013-14 vouchers were \$6,442

+++ \$20M authorized for the program

**** 500 vouchers allowed in 2013-14, the program's first year. The number of vouchers awarded in any one district is capped at 1 percent of the district's enrollment.

\$ Estimate (5,646 students participating win an average voucher amount of \$7,850).

\$\$ The program is currently budgeted at \$8.5M.

\$\$\$ Estimate (2,608 students participating win an average voucher amount of \$12,400).

SOURCES:
Relevant state laws.
The ABCs of School Choice, The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, 2014, www.edchoice.org.
2013-14 School Choice Yearbook, Alliance for School Choice, April 2014, http://allianceforschoolchoice.org/yearbook/.
Catt, Andrew, Public Rules on Private Schools, The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, May 2014
School Age Population Projections: State Population Estimates 2000-2030, Population Ages 5-17 Years, ProximityOne, http://proximityone.com/st0030sa.htm
U.S. Census Bureau, population data at: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html
Author's calculations.

