



Parental Choice versus School Choice Position Statement August 2022

The term “school choice” is inadequate to describe the proper emphasis on parental authority needed in American education. Parents are a child’s first teacher, and they should have absolute say in what and how their children learn. Parental authority over their children's education must be restored.

USPIE suggests redefining education choice from “school choice” to “parental choice.” Parental choice includes curriculum choice where classical, technology-free, and other non-Common Core curricula are available.

The current definition of school choice means a parent is simply empowered to choose which government-regulated school their child will attend. USPIE posits that this is no choice at all. Regulations can require schools to link into the federal government’s workforce development database, impose bad standards like Common Core, impose Marxist pedagogies like critical theories, and require inappropriate sex education like sexual orientation and gender identity.

Recently, the federal government began requiring all schools receiving “Free and Reduced Lunch Money” to allow boys to use the girls’ bathroom and locker room if they identify as a girl, and vice versa. This is an example of the coercive power of government money.

School choice options such as charter schools, vouchers, Title 1 portability and education savings accounts are being proposed across the country as a means to move away from government-controlled education. However, in all these models, government remains in control, which undermines true choice. In a 1980 court case affirmed by the US Supreme Court, the federal government prevailed over Hillsdale College asserting that when an educational institution accepts students who receive government funds, it is subject to government regulation.

USPIE’s primary mission is to close the U.S. Department of Education, eliminate all federal education mandates and return local, community, and parental control of education. Thereby, USPIE is opposed to Title I portability, vouchers, education savings accounts and all federally regulated choice options.

USPIE supports the parental choice option of increasing the federal Child Tax Credit for parents who do not choose to enroll their children in government schools. USPIE supports similar tax credits on the state level. Even if not initially, all other parental choice options implemented with government funding have the potential to become regulated and could harm private, home and Christian schools.

USPIE endeavors to help parents find ways to take advantage of independent, private, and home school alternatives to government schools, and is open-minded. However, USPIE opposes school choice options based on “money follow the child” legislation.