

A WIN-WIN SOLUTION PART II: ACADEMIC OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS



What opponents say: School choice harms public schools by skimming off the best students who rise to the top and would be most attractive to private schools, therefore does not improve academic outcomes.

What the facts say: School choice improves academic outcomes both for the participating students and for public schools.

What the studies show: Thirty-three empirical studies have been conducted on how school choice programs affect academic outcomes in public schools. Of these studies, 31 find that choice improves academic outcomes at public schools. One of the remaining studies finds that choice has no visible impact on public schools, and one finds a negative impact.

Location	Author	Year	Results		
			Positive Effect	No Visible Effect	Negative Effect
Louisiana	Egalite	2016	X		
Louisiana	Egalite	2014	X		
Indiana	Egalite	2014	X		
Florida	Figlio & Hart	2014	X		
Florida	Bowen & Trivitt	2014			X
San Antonio	Gray et. al.	2014	X		
Florida	Rouse et. al.	2013	X		
Florida	Chakrabarti	2013	X		
Florida	Figlio & Hart	2011	X		
Florida	Winters & Greene	2011	X		
Ohio	Carr	2011	X		
Milwaukee	Mader	2010	X		
Milwaukee	Greene & Marsh	2009	X		
San Antonio	Merrifield & Gray	2009	X		
Ohio	Forster	2008	X		
Florida	Forster	2008	X		
Milwaukee	Chakrabarti	2008	X		
Florida	Chakrabarti	2008	X		
Milwaukee	Chakrabarti	2008	X		
Florida	Rouse et. al.	2007	X		

Note: This table shows all empirical studies using random-assignment methods.

Location	Author	Year	Results		
			Positive Effect	No Visible Effect	Negative Effect
Milwaukee	Carnoy et. al.	2007	X		
San Antonio	Diamond	2007	X		
D.C.	Greene & Winters	2007		X	
Florida	Figlio & Rouse	2006	X		
Florida	West & Peterson	2006	X		
Florida	Greene & Winters	2004	X		
Florida	Chakrabarti	2004	X		
Milwaukee	Greene & Forster	2002	X		
San Antonio	Greene & Forster	2002	X		
Maine	Hammons	2002	X		
Vermont	Hammons	2002	X		
Milwaukee	Hoxby	2001	X		
Florida	Greene	2001	X		

Note: This table shows all empirical studies using random-assignment methods.

Conclusion: As the first studies on how school choice affects public schools emerged, some speculated that the improvements they found in public schools might be caused by other factors besides a positive impact from school choice. Those alternate theories included a statistical phenomenon known as “regression to the mean,” and the possibility that the worst students were leaving public schools. Subsequent research rigorously tested these alternative hypotheses and found them to be unsupported. These theories were extensively discussed in the original 2009 edition of this report; readers seeking a review of them should consult that edition.

Source: Greg Forster, *A Win-Win Solution: The Empirical Evidence on School Choice*, 4th ed. (Indianapolis: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, 2016).