



Michael Moates, Ed.D.
mmoates@rosehealth.org

5 February 2025

Subject: School Choice Must Come with Fairness, Accountability, and Equal Opportunity

Wichita, Kansas – As a strong proponent of school choice, I believe that parents should have the ability to select the best educational environment for their children. However, choice should not come at the expense of fairness, accountability, or civil rights. If private schools choose to accept federal funding, they must be required to follow the same non-discrimination protections that apply to public institutions—particularly regarding the enrollment of students with disabilities. Just as colleges must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, K-12 private schools receiving taxpayer dollars should not be permitted to exclude students based on disability or other protected characteristics.

Furthermore, I firmly support the continued existence of the U.S. Department of Education. While education decisions should involve local input, there must be federal oversight to ensure that all students—regardless of income, ability, or zip code—have access to a high-quality education. Dismantling the Department of Education would create a patchwork system where students in underserved communities are left behind.

Funding should follow the student, but it must do so equitably. If public dollars are supporting school choice, then those dollars should be allocated fairly to ensure that every student has access to the same resources, whether they attend public, private, or charter schools. We cannot allow a system where public schools are left struggling while private institutions benefit without accountability.

Additionally, school choice should not be a revolving door. To maintain stability for students, teachers, and schools, students should only be permitted to switch schools once per year, except in extreme circumstances or when necessary to protect a constitutional or civil right. Allowing students to hop between schools at will undermines educational continuity and creates unnecessary disruption for both students and educators. School choice should be about long-term academic success, not short-term convenience.

Competition in education is a good thing—but only when the playing field is truly even. If we want to promote excellence in education, we must do so in a way that upholds fairness, protects students' rights, and ensures that all children—regardless of where they go to school—have the opportunity to succeed.

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