

# The Dangers Public Schools Face

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI  
Education Committee

A PDF of these slides is available on the [LWVSWMO.org](http://LWVSWMO.org) website.



Education Committee Members Presenting, April 2026:  
Cindy Mueller, Sue Walker, Rebecca Callaway, Donna Thompson

# Our Presentation

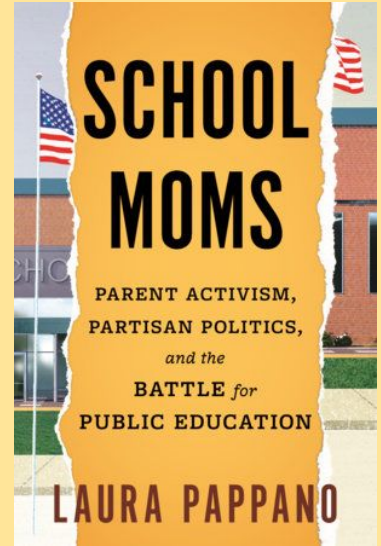
- Importance of Public Schools / League support
- Who wants to dismantle public schools? Christian Nationalism / Project 2025
- Ways to attack schools: CRT, DEI, LGBTQ
- Run off the teachers
- Ruin the Funding
- Legislate the ridiculous (or unfunded)
- Case Study: Ohio
- Vouchers—state & federal
- Rural Schools; 4-day school day
- Some Success Stories—the Fight Continues

Look for  
Video Clips



# Public Schools Matter

*“Public schools gather everyone. All are invited. There is no test you need to pass, no amount of money or influence or fame you must possess to be allowed in. Do you know how rare that is in America today?”*



[Southern Poverty Law Center:](#)

“Public education is the cornerstone of our democracy.”

“What does ‘Public Education is the Cornerstone of our Democracy’ Really Mean?”

[NEA Today 9/25/24](#)

# Public Schools Matter

- Community involvement /partnership
- Sometime biggest employer
- Economic anchor
- Friday night lights and chili suppers
- School plays, Book Fairs, Concerts
- PTO, Room Mothers, and Booster Clubs

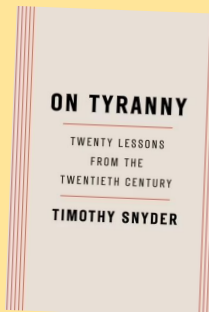


Advocate for full funding  
of public education.

**DEFEND INSTITUTIONS**

like courts, schools, media,  
unions, etc.!

-Timothy Snyder's *On  
Tyranny*, Ch 2



# LWV supports Public Schools

The League of Women Voters believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children from pre-K through grade 12. A quality public education is essential for a strong, viable, and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right.”



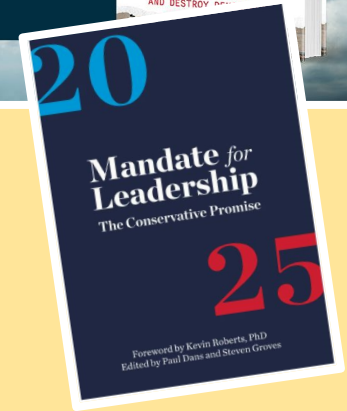
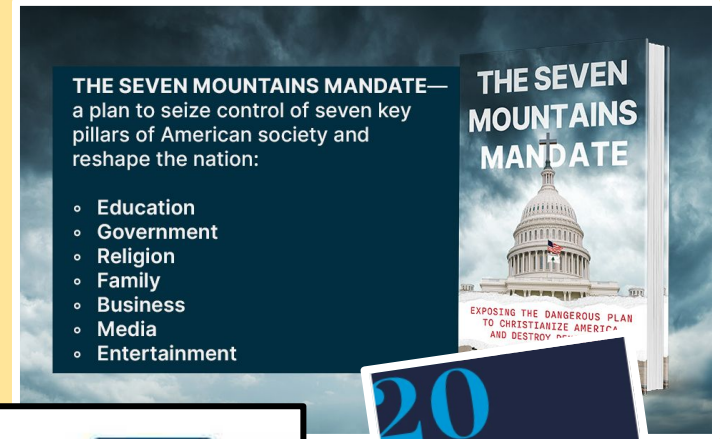
*LWVMO believes that parents who choose not to use the public schools do so of their own volition and that public funds should not be used to support homeschooling or private schools and academies, including religiously affiliated schools.*

New LWVMO Policy adopted 2025: [Link to full Voucher Slide Show](#)

# Opposing forces

- Same **billionaires** who funded “Moms for Liberty”
- Christian Nationalists like Herzog Foundation
- Heritage Foundation (Project 2025)
- Show-Me Institute (Sinquefield)
- Southeastern Legal Foundation (GA firm Involved in Spfd anti-DEI lawsuit)
- Americans for Prosperity (Koch)
- American Federation for Children (DeVos)
- American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC)
- ETC

● **Politicians FUNDED by those above!**



Barn Raiser: [“The Dark Money Defunding Public Schools 9/5/24](#)

Firstfocus: [1/30/25 “School Vouchers and the Threat to Public Education](#)

NBC 3/30/23 [Group Helps Fuel Rapid Expansion of Public Money for Private Schools](#)

Bucks County Beacon [1/12/24 Dark Money School Vouchers are Having a Moment](#)

# Project 2025 & Education

[PROJECT 2025](#) (link to full pdf)

Page 5:

*In our schools, the question of parental authority over their children's education is a simple one: **Schools serve parents, not the other way around.** That is, of course, the best argument for universal school choice—a goal all conservatives and conservative Presidents must pursue. But even before we achieve that long-term goal, parents' rights as their children's primary educators should be non-negotiable in American schools. **States, cities and counties, school boards, union bosses, principals, and teachers who disagree should be immediately cut off from federal funds***

# Parent Choice! Personal Liberty! Do your own research!



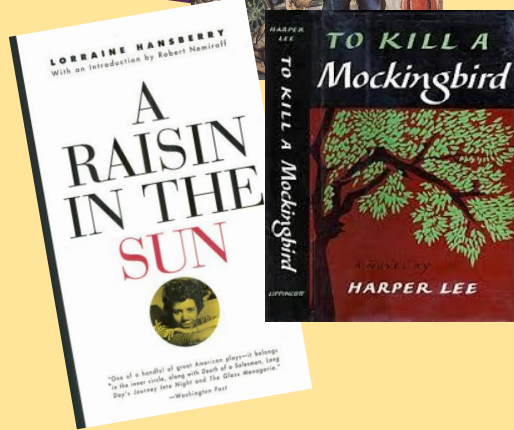
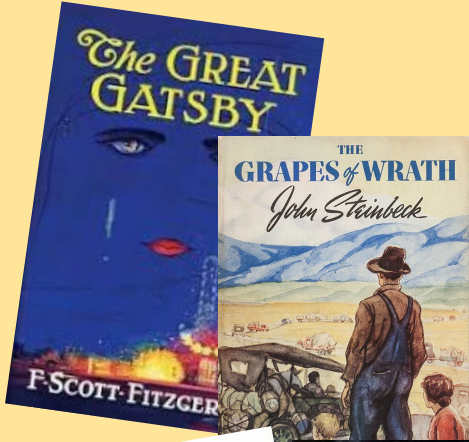
As a society we once respected the experts in their field.

But the internet and its influencers have seemingly made us all “experts” on medicine, vaccines, media, education, etc.

And we are kept in a constant state of OUTRAGE about it all.



# Attack Topic: CRT



**Critical Race Theory** is a **LEGAL hypothesis** that

- ❑ Racism is not just individual prejudice
- ❑ Racism is embedded in society and law

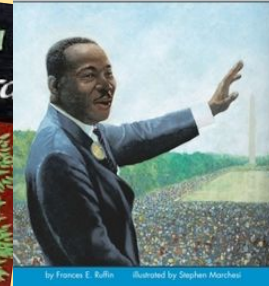
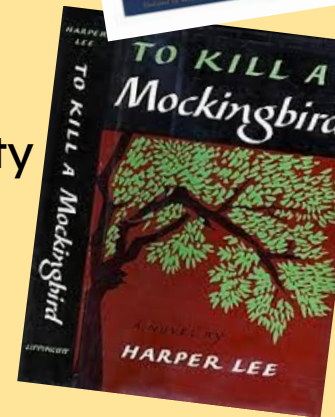
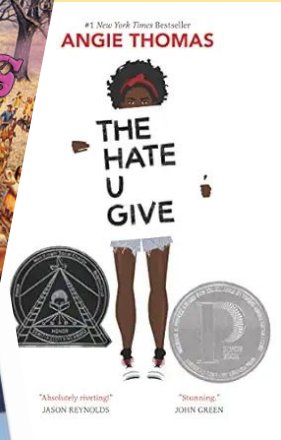
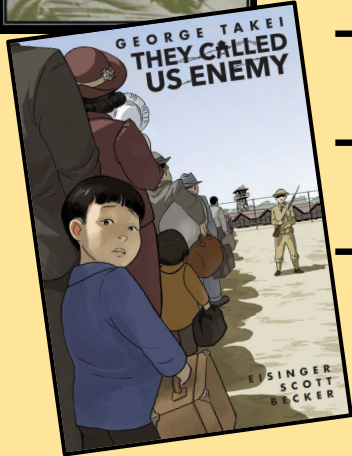
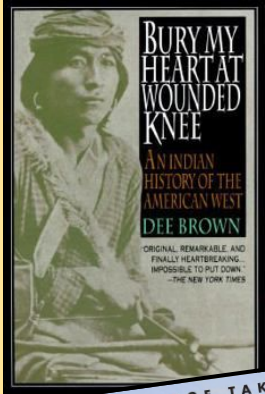
There are many targeted lenses (theories) COLLEGE students use to read/discuss/write about a text:

- Reader- Response (focus on reader experience)
- New Criticism (plot, style, irony, literary devices)
- Marxist (Class, economics, power dynamic)
- Feminist (Women, patriarchal roles)
- Eco-criticism (Nature, Ecology)
- Ethnic/minority studies (includes any race) not CRT!!
- New Historicism (sticks to historical/cultural time)
- Psychological (motivation, unconscious)

# Attack: CRT

Critical Race THEORY was never something taught in public schools. Being against CRT was a convenient way to protest any piece of history that make some people uncomfortable:

- Founding fathers were slave owner
- We are a country of immigrants
- Native Americans were here first and treated badly
- Women and Minorities contribute to society and are still fighting for equality
- Japanese Americans were wrongly imprisoned during WWII



# Attack Topic: DEI

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion



Locally:

- Lawsuit against SPS District after 2021 Inclusion Training that included discussion of George Floyd's death & last words Included terms like *bias, microaggression, privilege, prejudice, ally, ableism, Bigotry*
- Plaintiff's claim a violation of free speech because the *required* training contained material they disagreed with.
- Big legal costs for SPS (=further strain)

["Appeals Court Revives 2021 SPS DEI Training Lawsuit."](#)  
[NewsLeader. 1/6/26](#)

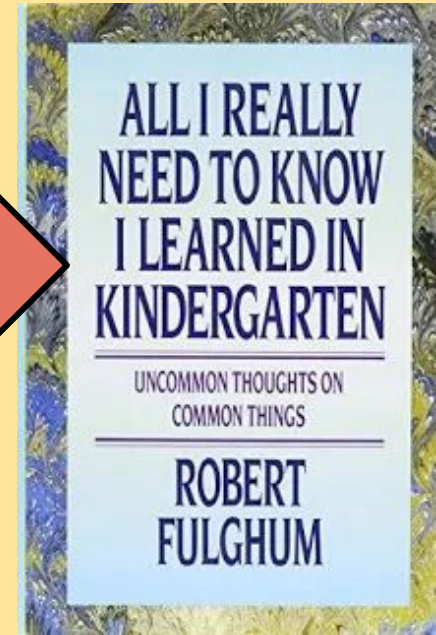
### OFFICIAL DOE WEBSITE STATEMENT

The U.S. Department of Education has taken action to **eliminate harmful Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** initiatives, including references to them in public-facing communication channels and its associated workforce. These actions are in line with President **Trump's ongoing commitment to end illegal discrimination and wasteful spending** across the federal government.

# Attack: DEI

**Wis. school district bans first graders from singing Cyrus-Parton duet 'Rainbowland' at concert**

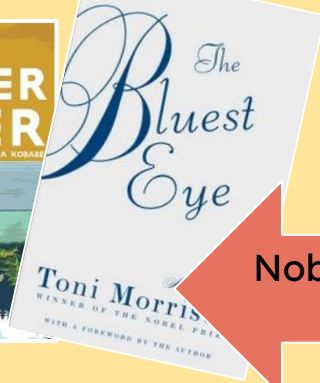
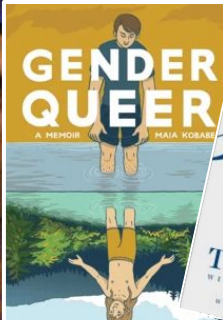
Remember when we were grateful for what public school taught us?



**Missouri education leaders say social-emotional learning guidelines an 'ongoing discussion'**

# Attack Topic: LGBTQ

Top 3 most challenged 2024:



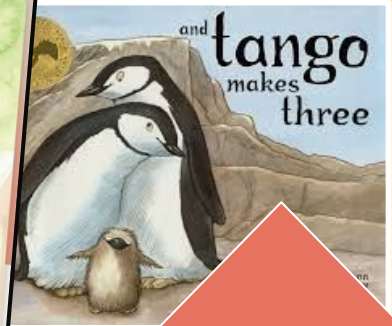
Favorite Culture War Issue, but not a real problem:

[GLAAD Fact sheet 2025: Transgender participation in Sports](#)

Nobel Prize in Lit

Reading Harry Potter didn't turn kids into wizards, and reading a book with a gay character doesn't turn kids gay.

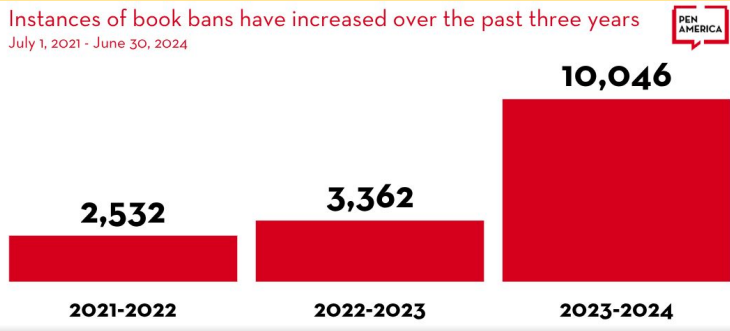
["How Reading Fiction Increases Empathy and Encourages Understanding." Discover. 8/28/20](#)



TRUE STORY:  
2 male penguins hatch an abandoned egg

# Censorship Summary

Instances of book bans have increased over the past three years  
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2024



**Florida and Iowa** recorded the highest number of book bans during the 2023-2024 school year with over 4,500 book bans in Florida and over 3,600 in Iowa.

Nearly 60% of these banned titles are written for young adult audiences, and depict topics young people confront in the real world, including grief and death, experiences with substance abuse, suicide, depression and mental health concerns, and sexual violence.

Not authentic, grassroots challenges. 72% come from pressure groups and government entities

WHO DEMANDS BOOK BANS IN SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

**72%**

Pressure Groups and Government Entities  
(including elected officials, board members, and administrators)

**16%**

Parents

**12%**

Other  
(individual library users, teachers, librarians, staff)



ALA American Library Association

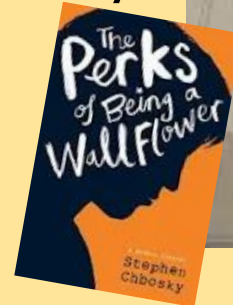
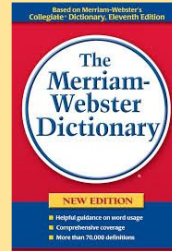
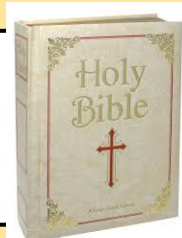
- [“Banned in the USA: Beyond the Shelves.” PEN America. Nov 2024](#)
- [ALA Banned Book Data](#)

# Public Comment Spectacle

- Reading choice EXCERPTS instead of considering the work in its entirety.
- Excerpts of cussing, sex, violence, alcohol & drug use (**without mention of the book's overall message**)
- Primary target LGBTQ+ texts, but any teen book with sex was fair game
- Landslide of banned books including dictionaries, Bible, classics, and critically acclaimed works



*Biblical story of Lot:  
And they made their father drink wine  
that night: and the firstborn went in,  
and **lay with her father** ...*



# Local Complaints

■ CHRISTIAN COUNTY

## What's in those books patrons of Christian County Library complained about?

*Of 21 book titles subject to requests in the past two years, 17 were retained after review by library staff, two were relocated and two were removed*



"I don't believe it is appropriate for district employees or district facilities to **display Pride flags, or Safe Space stickers or any similar virtue-signaling items.** Students should not be urged or signaled to that certain adults or rooms are safe to have private conversations about matters of a sexual nature."

–former SPS Board Member

[Nixa School District Restricts Access to 10 Books, Including Toni Morrison's \*The Bluest Eye\*." NewsLeader 9/29/22](#)

["What's in Those Books Patrons of Christian County Library Complained About?" Daily Citizen. 12/4/24](#)

["Christian County Library Won't Label LGBTQ Books, Will Explore Alternatives." NewsLeader. 4/24/25](#)

["SPS changes rules for displaying Safe Space stickers, requires training." News Leader. 7/22/24](#)

# Attack: LGBTQ



“Can you imagine you’re a parent and your son leaves the house and you say, ‘Jimmy, I love you so much, go have a good day in school,’ and **your son comes back with a brutal operation**? Can you even imagine this? What the hell is wrong with our country?  
[NBC News 9/9/24](#)

TEXAS Bill proposed in 2025 (not enacted)

**"Forbidden Unlawful Representation of Roleplaying in Education (F.U.R.R.I.E.S.) Act"**

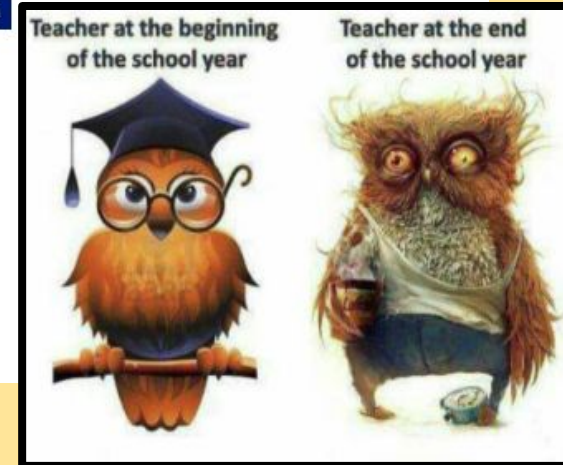
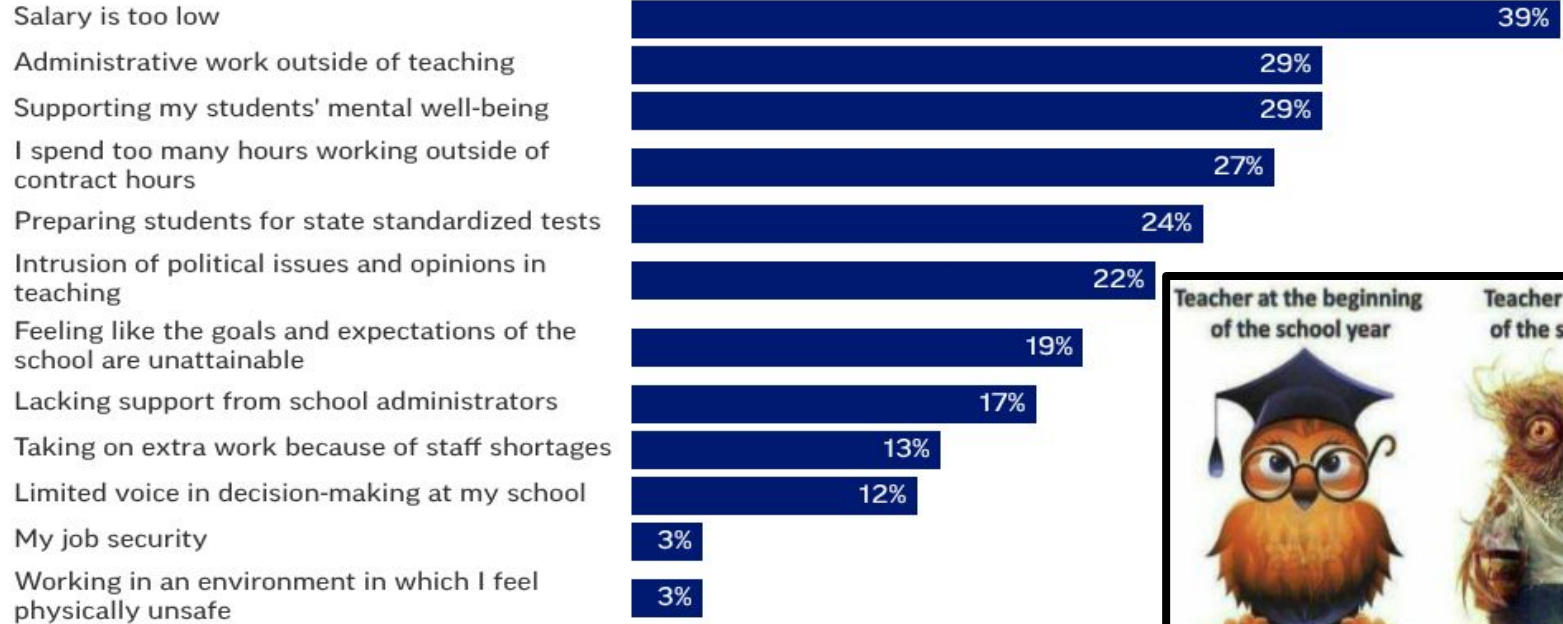
**Video Clip** shows the sponsor is unable to defend the rumors behind the bill when questioned.

And in our own JC Capital:

MISSOURI state Rep Toalson Reisch (TERMED OUT 2024): "For the last decade or more, we have a school that is more interested in DEI, CRT, 1619, white-privileged and use standardized grading, that **allows kids to come to school to change their genders** without their parents knowing. **They allow students to act like cats and dogs, even going as far as walking on all fours, being led around by a leash, and including litter boxes.** This is not fake news, it is not a lie. I have real documentation." ["MO Lawmakers want to expand charter Schools." News Leader. Jan 22 2024](#)

# Who wants to teach?

## Teachers' Top-Ranked Sources of Job-Related Stress



["How to Increase the Retention of Early Career Teachers." CAP. 12/18/25](#)

["What a New Survey Says About Teachers' Plans to Leave their Jobs. NEAToday. 7/24/25](#)

# Teacher shortages

## Overview of Teacher Shortages: 2025” Learning Policy Institute 7/16/25

48 states + DC:

Employed **365,967** teachers not fully certified for their teaching assignments.



31 states + DC

Published data on vacancies, showing 45,582 unfilled teacher positions.



411,549 positions were either unfilled or filled by teachers not fully certified for their assignments, representing **about 1 in 8** of all teaching positions nationally.

To become a substitute teacher in Missouri:

- Be at least 18
- Pass a background check/fingerprinting
- Hold either a high school diploma/GED with a 20-hour online training program OR have 36+ hours of college credit.

[“Tennessee Private School Teachers Without a Degree could get Emergency Teaching Permits Under New Bill.” Chalkbeat Tenn 2/29/26.](#)

# Profession in decline

The number of college students studying to become teachers is **HALF** of what it was 50 years ago.



GOOD:

“Grow Your Own” programs, like SPS’s “Future Educator” Program that had [23 HS students signed on this past Sept.](#)

BAD:

Not treating teachers as PROFESSIONALS!  
Allowing parents or politicians to micromanage.  
Mistrust of any EXPERT in their field (science, medicine, law, librarians) is mistrust in education.

[Missing: Future Teachers in Colleges of Education. NEAToday. 3/29/22.](#)

[“Teacher Retention in SPS Improves, but Still Lags Behind State Average. Springfield Citizen.](#)

[Feb 10 2026](#)

# Harmful Legislation

The Culture Wars Are Alive and Well in Jefferson City

[Partisan clash erupts in Missouri Senate Education Hearing” MO Independent. 2/12/26](#)

## Initial **House Education Committee** Discussion

Topics in Jan (Substantive)

- Teacher Certification
- [Gifted Education](#)
- Reduce repetitive teacher training

## Initial **Senate Education Committee** Discussion Topics in Jan (Culture-war)

- Empower parents to sue districts
- Anti-abortion curriculum starting in 3rd grade
- “Furries” in public schools
- [Stop helping students transition](#) (no pronouns; report students)
- Anti-DEI for [sports board MSHSAA](#)

Noticeable lack of legislation on PRIVATE or HOMESCHOOLS. If they are getting public money, shouldn't they have regulations too?

# Legislation to Watch

- ❑ **“OPEN ENROLLMENT”** Allows students to attend a public school outside of their home district (5th year attempt)
- ❑ **“A-F GRADING of PUBLIC SCHOOLS”** ([GEO-26-01](#)) may include funding rewards for higher performing schools
- ❑ **Mandatory 3rd grade retention** for low reading test score



SPS hired a Lobby Group for \$240,000 this year.

[“Missouri Public Schools Want Protection in Open Enrollment Legislation” Mo Independent. 3/3/26](#)

[“Lobbying Firm Led by Blunt Family to Serve SPS at state, federal Level. News Leader. 2/2/26](#)

[“Missouri School A-F Report Cards for Schools and Districts Has Gone Sideways.” Show-Me Institute. 3/19/26](#)

[“Mo Educators Push Back on Forcing Struggling Readers to Repeat 3rd Grade.” Mo Ind 4/14/26](#)

# Funding Woes



- Possible elimination of state income tax (65% state budget)
- Changes coming to funding formula (task force)
- Current funding flat, but transportation cuts
- Inconsistent property taxes throughout state

## What's At Risk?



Nearly 60% of school funding in Missouri is local, a higher share than all but 2 states.

| HOW MISSOURI STACKS UP                                |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| MISSOURI'S NATIONAL RANKINGS FOR KEY STATE INDICATORS |                                      |
| 44 <sup>th</sup>                                      | FUNDING SPENT PER CAPITA             |
| 46 <sup>th</sup>                                      | REVENUE COLLECTED PER CAPITA         |
| 49 <sup>th</sup>                                      | STATE REVENUE SPENT PER K-12 STUDENT |
| 50 <sup>th</sup>                                      | SPENDING ON PUBLIC HEALTH            |

Missouri schools face

# 18% cut

under tax scheme

Click here for a [SEARCHABLE](#) table of data by school district.

## SPRINGFIELD R-XII

The estimated loss in this school district is **\$27,547,986** each year or **5.8%** of all spending.

That is a cut of **\$1,261** per student and is the equivalent of **500** teachers or **869** support staff.

CHARTS are from the Missouri Budget Project: <https://mobudget.org/>

["Cost of Future Missouri School Funding Formula Unclear as Task Force Continues Work."](#) Mo Independent. 1/2/26.

["Missouri Public Schools. Medicaid Need \\$1 Billion More to Continue Current Programs."](#) MO Independent. 10/9/25.

[Plan to Overhaul Missouri Property Tax Would Lower Minimum School Levy."](#) NewsLeader 3/10/26

# Funding Notes

## **Missouri sports betting tops \$543M in first month but deductions leave state with only \$521K**

After providing more than \$100 million in free plays to lure customers, FanDuel and Draftkings, the sports books dominating the state market, paid no taxes

Colleges and Universities are also experiencing funding woes.

## **Missouri Senate looks at funding cuts for 'low-earning' college degrees**

["Missouri Sports Betting Tops 543M in First Month But Deductions Leave State with Only 521K" MO Independent. 1/30/26](#)

["Missouri Senate Looks at Budget Cuts for 'Low Earning' College Degrees." MO Independent. 2/25/26](#)

["'A Complete Joke.' Higher Ed Funding Overhauls Find Few Takers in MO Senate." Mo Ind 3/26/26.](#)

# Main Culprit: Vouchers

[Mo Independent, 10/13/25:](#)

98% of Missouri vouchers going to religious schools.

Call them **VOUCHERS**, not choice programs or scholarships!

**VIDEO:** Texas Rep James Talarico (former middle school teacher) explains why vouchers are “welfare for the wealthy.”



[“A growing billion dollar boondoggle—what’s happening with Vouchers in Texas.”](#)

[Texas AFT. 1/6/26.](#)

TEXAS will soon launch the LARGEST voucher program (beating AZ)

- \$10,474 pers student for private school (doesn’t meet full cost!)
- Up to \$30,000 for special needs students (but no state requirement for actual special services)
- \$2000 for homeschoolers
- 90% of 291 approved private schools are religious (**NOT Muslim** =lawsuit) / 60 have anti-LGBT+ policies / 180 rural counties = no private option

# Vouchers



## VIDEO CLIP:

IOWA State Auditor Ron Sands

**Take Public Money =  
Follow the Same Rules**

- Take the *Public*
- This means ANY child ANY time!
- Allow Audits
- Allow Open Records
- Allow Open Meetings
- Same spending and professional obligations as public schools

I don't really like the city parks.

I want to join a country club so my kid doesn't have to play with "those" kids and I want the city parks system to pay for my membership.

School Vouchers in a nutshell.

["A Subsidy for the Few: Vouches leaving public schools, students behind"](#)  
[neaToday 2/9/26](#)

*"Years of research—along with new data emerging from individual states—have documented how **vouchers weaken public schools, blow up state budgets, and foster discrimination.**"*

# Forced Vouchers

- No state has put vouchers on the ballot and received approval
- Kentucky, Nebraska, Colorado said NO to vouchers in 2024
- Arizona voters said NO in 2018 (Vouchers exploded in 2022)
- 30 states have a voucher program
- 18 states have “universal vouchers,” meaning open to all
- Disproportionately benefit affluent families with children already enrolled in private schools
- Vouchers are “unaccountable, fraud-ridden programs”
- Public schools (80-90 % of students) are left with fewer resources
- MO Groups plan to put issue on the 2028 ballot. [Mo Ind 3/31/26](#)



*“If other states want to follow Arizona—well, **be prepared to cut everything that's in the state budget,**” Arizona Education Association President Marisol Garcia [told NEA Today in 2024.](#)*

*“Not just public education but **health care, housing, safe water, transportation.** All of it.”*

# Spotlight: OHIO

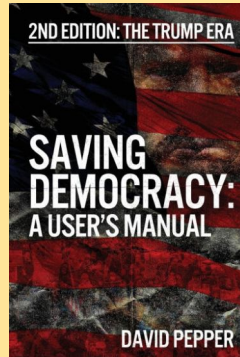
**What happens when a state underfunds its education system year after year?**

Not just:

Bigger Class Sizes

“Pay to Play” Sports

Higher Local Property Taxes



David Pepper: [“Pepperspectives” CRISIS: WHEN THE WHEELS COME OFF A STATE’S PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. A Case Study of a Systemic Underfunding Crisis. Substack, Dec. 22, 2025](#)

## Next

- Four day school weeks
- No transportation for High School students
- Head Start programs close
- Property taxes so high seniors forced from homes
- Uncooled or under heated classrooms
- Special Needs Kids stay home
- Schools shuttered
- Districts consolidate

# OHIO



## What Caused the crisis?

- “Trickle down” mindset favoring rich
- Tax breaks for the wealthy
- Giveaways like Browns Stadium deal
- Businesses get property tax breaks (not homeowners)
- Vouchers divert BILLIONS to unaccountable Private schools
- Charter Schools—for profit, fraud Many have shuttered unannounced mid-year

# OHIO

[“In an Unprecedented Move, Ohio is Funding the Construction of Private Religious Schools.” Propublica. 9/17/24](#)

Transportation example: Dayton, Cincinnati

- Public schools pay for transportation of charter/private students
- Shortage of drivers/busses
- Public school students served last
- Districts tried bus passes
- New law disallows buying public bus passes (family pay \$540)



[“Ohio Provides Buses for Private School Kids. Public School Students Have to Find Their Own Ride. Guardian. 8/11/25](#)

# Rural Schools

According to the [National Rural Education Association](#), rural schools serve almost 10 million students, and nearly half are from low-income families.



- Public Schools are biggest employer / **“economic anchor”**
- Less LOCAL tax = more reliant on state
- More local levies, bonds, taxes = stress residents
- Programs cut = students leave
- Districts consolidate
- No private school options (distance & cost)
- Unregulated “pop up” schools in strip malls and church basements

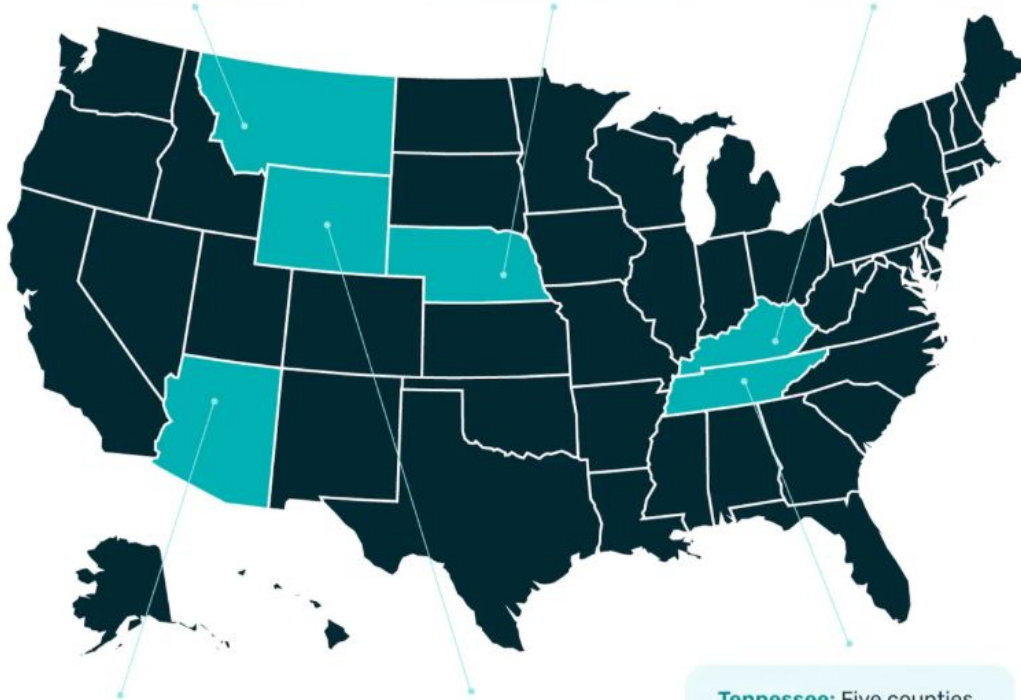
[Vouchers Deliver Blow to Rural Schools, “They’re Taking Money From Our Students.” NEAToday 6/13/25.](#)  
[“In Texas, Rural Republicans Hold the Line Against School Vouchers.” KUT News. 10/10/23](#)

# Rural Schools

**Montana:** 30 counties without private schools.

**Nebraska:** No private schools in more than half of the state's 93 counties.

**Kentucky:** More than half of certified private schools are in just three counties.



**Arizona:** More than half of the private schools are concentrated in one county.

**Wyoming:** Nearly half of the state's 23 counties lack private schools.

**Tennessee:** Five counties hold over half of the private schools; more than 30 counties have only one or two, some with fewer than 10 students.

“To curate failure – to say that public schools are broken and public school teachers are inept all in a **push to privatize public schools**. To dumb down the populace. To demonize a system that educates of 90% of kids in this state. To send taxpayer money to grifter who will line their pockets while opening the **fly-by-night private schools operating out of the old Pizza Hut building dotting the heartland**.” Jess Piper

[“Public Schools are the Heart of Rural Missouri.” Jess Piper. Public Voices for Public Schools.](#)

# 4 Day School Week



- No a lot of “peer-review” studies yet
- 2024–25 school year: 2,100+ public schools 26 states
- Days extended / Teachers still work 5 days
- **Best when it is a community CHOICE** (some LOVE it)
- Saves money on transportation, food, utilities

- Reduces dropout, but increases absences (Oregon study)
- Some reports of less bullying, less buss incidents
- **Rural students did better with 4 days** than urban (6 state study)
- Overall growth *may* be slower with 4 day week / no large evidence yet
- Some schools say it helps recruit teachers, but stats are still light

A THIRD of  
Missouri  
districts are  
4 Day

[“What the Research Tells us About Four-day School Weeks. Emily Morton, NWEA. 2/24/26](#)

[“Four-day School Week: Research Shows the Impact of a Condensed Schedule Varies by Location and Student Grade Level.” Journalist Resource. 8/1/25.](#)

# FEDERAL Vouchers

## Educational Choice Act for Children (ECAC)

### [5 Reasons why the ECAC is Bad for Students](#)

EdTrust 5/12/25

- Opens the door to discrimination (disabilities, race, multilingual learners, religion, LGBTQ)
- Reduces transparency and accountability
- Disadvantage rural students
- Hurt low-income students
- Damage student outcomes

The ECCA could potentially divert over \$10 billion in taxpayer dollars each year — funds that should support public services — toward private schools.”



## BBB FEDERAL CHOICE PROGRAM

- Begins 2027
- \$1700 per person federal tax CREDIT (not deduction)
- Corporations can gift stocks and avoid capitol gains
- More generous tax shelter than ANY other donation

# Saying No gets harder

Nebraska voters said NO to *STATE* vouchers, but their Gov is quoted in [Federal Credit Fact Sheet](#) praising *FEDERAL* vouchers.

“It’s a tough dilemma. Will Democratic leaders opt their states into the new federal school choice program, allowing families to accept scholarships that are funded by charitable donations from taxpayers nationwide —scholarships that don’t cost their state a penny, and therefore can’t be said to be taking any money from their public schools?”

[“Trump’s School Choice Initiative Puts Democratic Governors in a Bind.” FI 7/24/25](#)

“Big Beautiful Bill creates a \$5 Billion tax shelter for private school donors”

This unique dollar-for-dollar rebate is something no other charity has ever gotten from the federal government.

[The Hill 6/9/25](#)

[“The Federal Choice Program in Here: Will it Help Public School Students, Too? Education Week. 2/5/26](#)

[“School Voucher Program Explained: What the New Federal Program Means.” Harvard Grad School of Education. Oct 2 2025.](#)

[“Shelter Skelter: How the ECCA would use tax avoidance to fuel school privatization.” ITEP March 2025.](#)

# Federal Changes

NEA Today, Jan 2026: “[How Recent Funding Cuts will Hurt Students.](#)”

- Medicaid Cuts—loss of services to student with disabilities who receive speech, occupational, physical therapy. Medicaid did provide 7.5 billion in school-based **health services**
- SNAP cuts: up 18 million children lose access to free **school meals**
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) went from 100 employees to 3 = “virtually impossible” to determine which schools need **Title 1 funding** (90% of schools receive some funding)

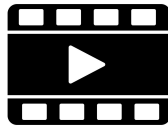


# Federal Changes

- Goal to eliminate the Dept of Education and “**return education to the states**”
- Congress said No! and continued funding, But... Mass Layoffs (nearly 50% of staff), Outsourced responsibilities, Moving Dept out of LBJ Building

If anyone wants to know what the **Christian Nationalist/Project 2025 plan is for public education**, you should view this 14 minute Youtube **video** from ProPublica: [Inside the Trump Administration's Plan to Change Public Education](#)

Must  
Watch



[“Mass Layoff Slash Dept. of Ed Erode its Civil Rights Division.” ProPublica. 3/12/25.](#)

“Only five of the agency’s civil rights offices remain nationwide. Those who are still with the department say it will now be “virtually impossible” to resolve discrimination complaints.”

[“Trump Education Department Outsources More Responsibilities, Continuing Proposed Wind-Down.” Mo Independent. 3/23/26](#)

[“In Setback for Trump, Congress in Spending Law Rejects Call to Axe Department of Education.” Mo Independent. 2/5/26](#)

[“Education Dept. Hands of More of Its Responsibilities.” AP 2/23/26.](#)

[“Education Dept Will Move Out of Its Headquarters.” NPR. 3/17/26.](#)

# Something Positive

[Mississippi Free Press Feb 3, 2026](#)

“Our concern with HB 2 is that it **moves Mississippi away from a shared public commitment** to education and toward a **model that fragments funding and responsibility,**” Union Public School District Superintendent Tyler Hansford said in a Jan. 29 [Newton County Appeal opinion article](#). “Public dollars should be used to sustain public systems that serve all students and communities, not to **convert a public good into a marketplace transaction.**”

## **Private-School Voucher Bill Dies in Mississippi Senate; House Passes \$5,000 Teacher Pay Raise**

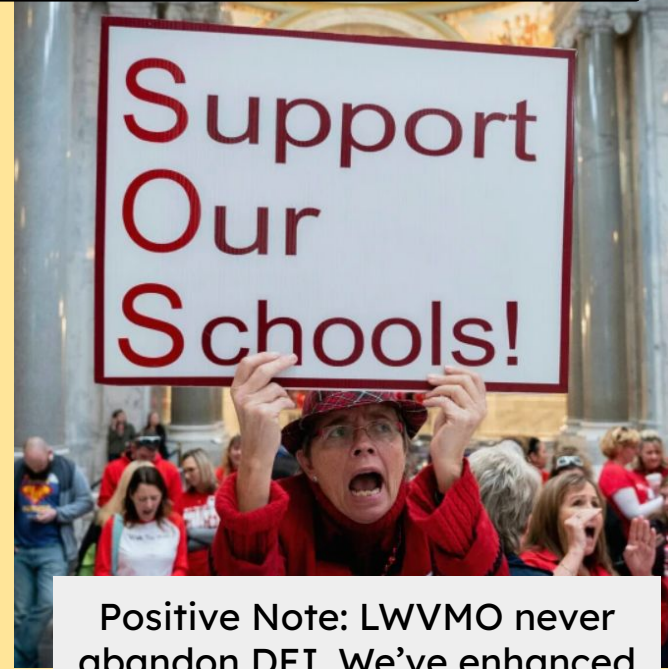
“Public education is **not a consumer commodity; it is a public service. Like roads, bridges, parks, libraries, and fire departments,** public schools exist to serve the entire community, not just the individuals who use them on a given day. Taxpayers support these services because **they strengthen communities,** promote safety and opportunity, and **serve the common good,** even if every resident does not directly or immediately benefit from every service.”

# Something Positive

[Kentucky Supreme Court Rules CHARTER School Law is Unconstitutional. AP 2/19/26.](#)

[“Department of Education Backs Down on Unlawful Directive Targeting Educational Equity. ACLU 2/18/26.](#)

“This ruling ensures that educators can engage in scholarship and teach history, literature, and other subjects where race, gender, and the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion appear, without fear of arbitrary or discriminatory enforcement, said Sarah Hinger, deputy director of the ACLU Racial Justice Program. “It affirms that educators must be free to teach and that students have a right to a full and honest education that reflects the diversity of their communities and prepares them to participate in our democracy.”



Positive Note: LWVMO never abandon DEI. We've enhanced it by adding JUSTICE to our "JEDI" Committee.

# Some Library Wins

- Federal Funding: A 2025 executive order threatened to dismantle the **Institute of Museum and Library Services** (IMLS), but Congress increased funding for FY26!

ALA: [Fight for FY27](#)

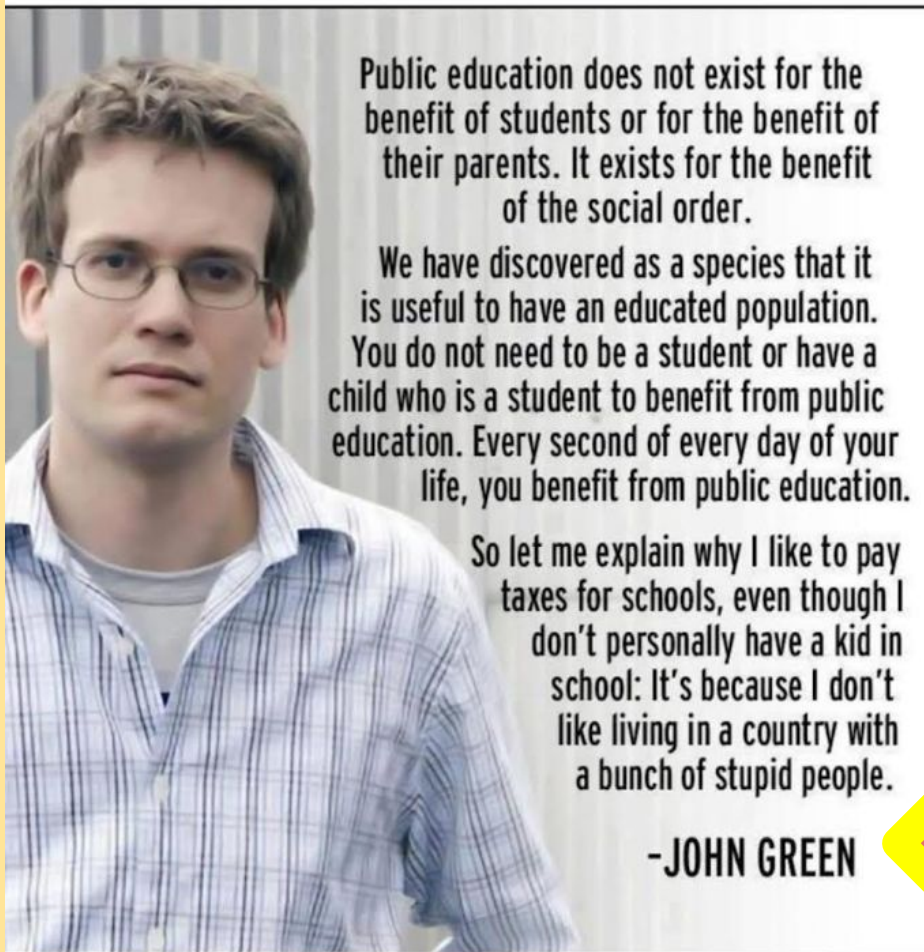
- In Dec. 2024, a Federal Court struck down Arkansas Censorship Law, Act 372. This probably influenced CC Library from labeling LGBTQ books. [AR ACLU 11/23/24](#)
- MO Courts: SB775 (statute 573.550) struck down. Threatened teachers & librarians with fines and jail for distributing sexual content. [MO ACLU 11/18/25](#) [News Leader 11/20/25](#)



# Keep up the fight

- **Verbally Defend Public Schools**: Say something positive about them when you hear them being derided. Defend public institutions!
- Call them Vouchers!
- Declare “Public Money is for Public Schools”
- Contact representatives frequently (via 5Calls, League Call to Action, etc.)
- Support legislation that HELPS public schools instead of adding more hurdles and regulations
- Join the **RIGHT TO READ COALITION**. to stay informed on library issues & censorship.
- Watch the **Propublica Video!** (14 min) to see who is running (RUINING) education.





Public education does not exist for the benefit of students or for the benefit of their parents. It exists for the benefit of the social order.

We have discovered as a species that it is useful to have an educated population. You do not need to be a student or have a child who is a student to benefit from public education. Every second of every day of your life, you benefit from public education.

So let me explain why I like to pay taxes for schools, even though I don't personally have a kid in school: It's because I don't like living in a country with a bunch of stupid people.

-JOHN GREEN

# Thank You!

LWVSWMO

## Education Committee:

Cindy M, Debra P, Donna T, Molly P, Kathy F, Cynthia E, Jill S, Sue W, Mary S, Carolyn M, Rebecca C, Robbie P, Carol C, Shelby B, Cindy E, Marcia D, Heather A, Marilyn B, Jen C, Mindy S, Deborah M, Arleen P

# Any Questions?

← YA author whose books are frequently banned