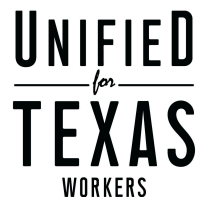


March 10, 2025

TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Nancy Zdunkewicz, Z to A Research  
MEMO: Results of Texas State Survey

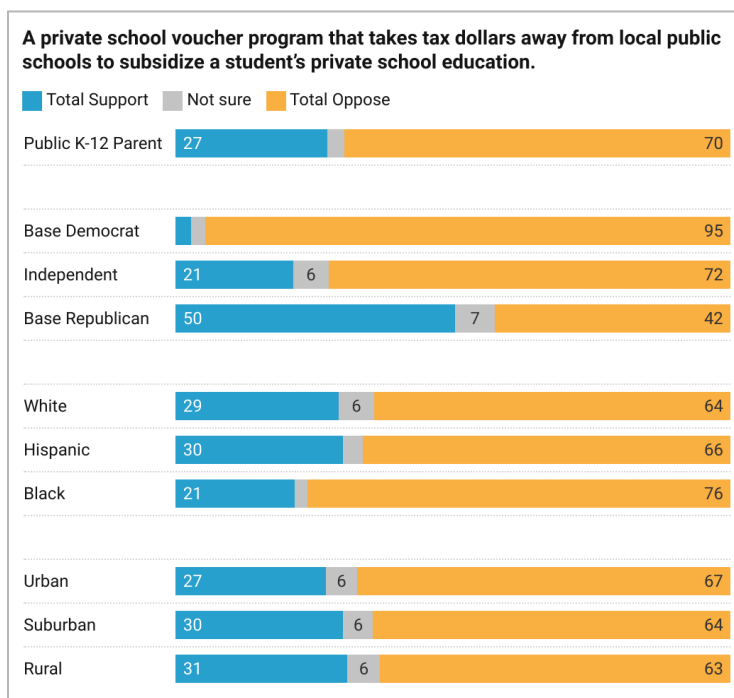


## Large Bipartisan Majority Opposes Vouchers, Voters Ready To Punish Lawmakers Who Vote For Them

A new survey of 1,275 likely midterm voters in Texas finds large majorities oppose private school vouchers. Voters don't believe tax dollars should fund private schools and are deeply concerned vouchers will impact their property taxes and local public schools. They demand legislators focus on fully funding public schools, and legislators who support vouchers will lose their support.<sup>1</sup>

Roughly two-thirds of voters oppose “A private school voucher program that takes tax dollars away from local public schools to subsidize a student’s private school education” (29% support, 65% oppose).

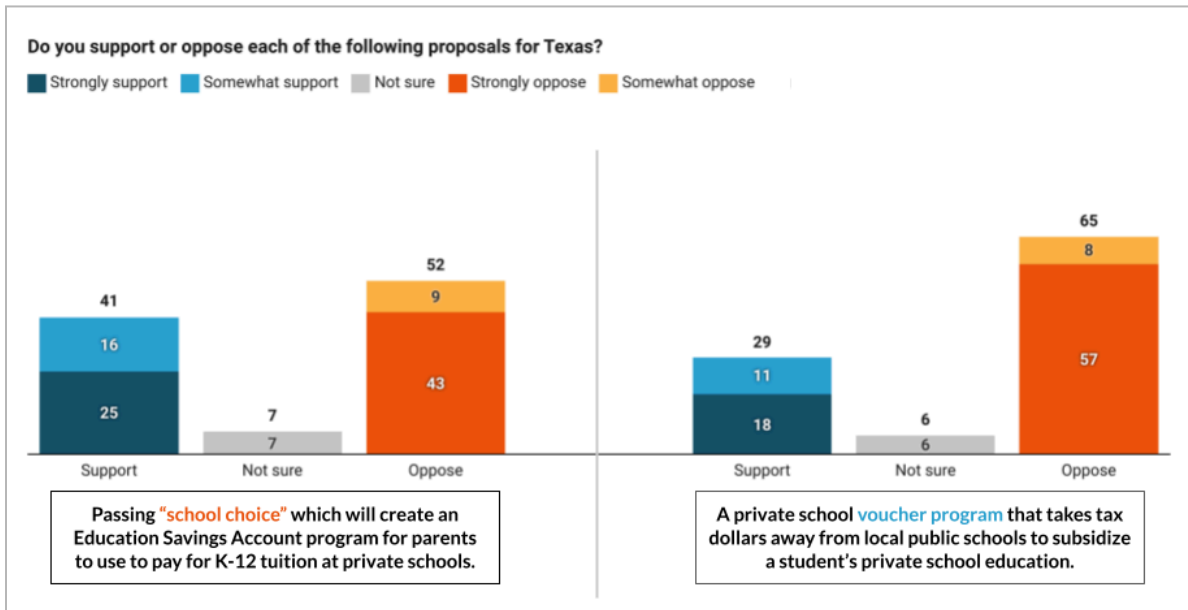
Vouchers are opposed by 95% of base Democrats, 72% of independents, and 42% of base Republicans. Despite Governor Abbott’s campaign in support of vouchers, only 50% of base Republicans support them. Vouchers are opposed by majorities of every major demographic group, including Hispanic and Black voters, and voters from every region of the state. Notably, 70% of public school parents oppose vouchers, and 85% report that \$10,000 would not be enough for them to afford private school tuition for their child.



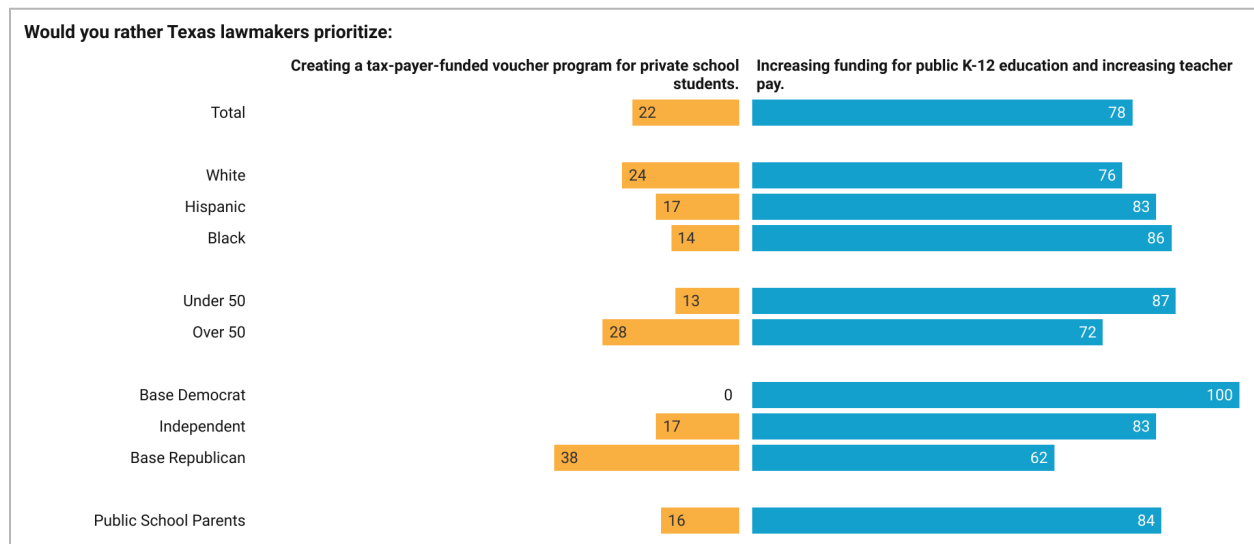
Of course, voucher advocates know they are unpopular, which is why they use terms such as “Educational Savings Accounts” and “school choice”. When “school choice” and “Educational Savings Account” language was tested in this poll, a majority remained opposed. Just 41% of voters support “Passing ‘school choice’ which will create an Education Savings Account program for parents to use to pay for K-12 tuition at private schools” and a 52% majority oppose it. Vouchers are

<sup>1</sup> On behalf of Unified for Texas Workers, Z to A Research surveyed 1,275 likely 2026 voters in Texas from February 24 - March 3, 2025. Respondents were recruited into an online survey instrument via SMS from a voter-file sample of likely presidential year voters and targeted online advertisements. The margin of error is ±2.75%.

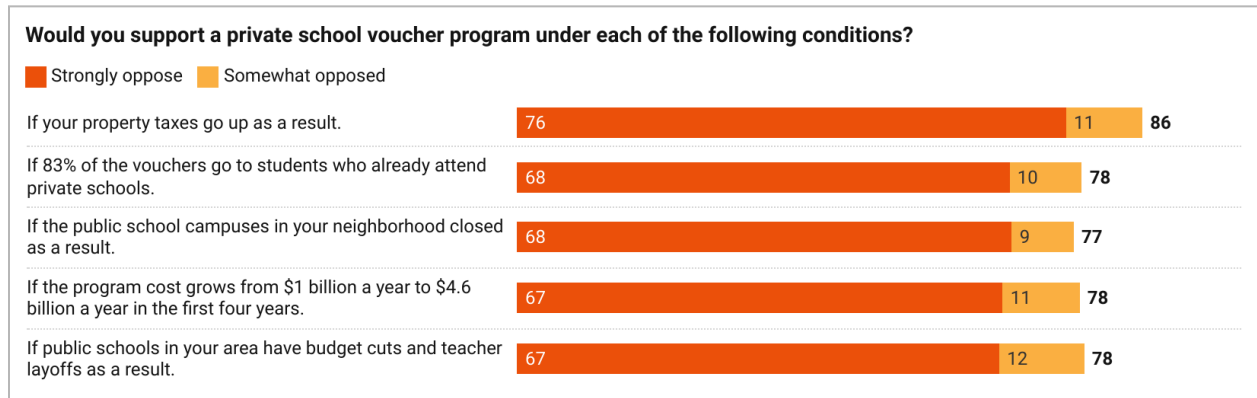
clearly not the same as “school choice” in voters’ minds. To underscore the point, 82% agree “Vouchers don’t ensure ‘school choice’ because private schools can pick and choose their students.”



The voucher debate is taking place in the context of widespread understanding that our public education system is underfunded — 63% say we spend too little on public K-12 education and 73% say we spend too little on public school teachers’ salaries. Contrary to the claims of pro-voucher advocates, 78% of voters, including 61% of Republicans, disagree that “Texas public schools are adequately funded, and we can afford to fund a private school voucher program.” **A large 85% majority of voters, including 78% of Republicans, support “Increasing funding to local public K-12 schools in order to reduce class sizes and increase teacher and staff pay.”** Additionally, 62% support “Ending STAAR testing — the standardized test at Texas public schools.” **Asked which lawmakers should prioritize, 78% choose “Increasing funding for public K-12 education and increasing teacher pay” over “Creating a taxpayer-funded voucher program for private school students” (22%).** This is the preference of every subgroup, including 62% of Republicans and 84% of public school parents.



Opposition to vouchers is grounded in the basic principle that “Your tax dollars should not be used to fund private schools” (79% agree, 67% of base Republicans agree). Opposition will grow, and opponents will become more motivated, as the ramifications of vouchers become clear. Most notably, 86% of voters would oppose a voucher plan if their property taxes went up as a result, and 76% would strongly oppose it. **A 66% majority of voucher supporters say they will change their position and oppose vouchers if their property taxes go up.**



Rural voters are also deeply concerned about the impact of vouchers on their communities. Three-in-four rural voters are seriously concerned by the argument that “Vouchers don’t help rural communities, which don’t have private schools nearby. Rural Texas is proud of its public schools, and doesn’t want to see one of their top employers and economic drivers defunded to pay for rich private schools in Dallas and Houston.”

Voters are ready to punish lawmakers who support a voucher program. **Fully 71% of voters, including 82% of swing voters, say they are less likely to support a candidate for the Texas State Legislature who votes for a private school voucher program. A 58% majority say they are much less likely to support a pro-voucher candidate.** Even Republicans are more likely to punish than to reward a candidate who votes for vouchers (35% more likely, 46% less likely to support).

Of course, voucher proponents are aggressively pushing what they consider their best case in favor of “school choice,” which says:

*“Too many children are trapped in schools that fail to meet their needs because of their zip code. Texas needs to pass school choice this session so we can ensure every child, no matter their zip code, has the freedom to choose the best educational option for their child, including private options. There’s a lot of people spreading lies about school choice, but an overwhelming majority of Texans across all walks of life support school choice.”*

Fortunately, only 38% of voters find this argument for vouchers convincing. The more voters hear of the voucher debate, the more they oppose them and believe vouchers will generally hurt local public schools (75%), their property taxes (74%), public school teachers (74%), students enrolled in public schools (68%), and their community as a whole (63%).

After an aggressive campaign by Abbott, 85% of voters report hearing about the Governor's proposal for private school vouchers. Abbott is increasingly unpopular and voters are more concerned about public education funding than ever. A majority of voters disapprove of the Governor's job performance for the first time in our polling, and public K-12 education tests higher than we have ever measured on the list of top state priorities — 30% select it as a top three priority, second only to the cost of living (35%) and the border and immigration (34%).

Voters are paying attention to the voucher debate and legislators should be concerned about their voters' response if they support voucher legislation. Voters do not support the Governor's private school voucher policy, which few voters say will benefit them, and will actively make the problems of public school funding and property taxes worse.

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*Unified Texas is a coalition of Texans coming together to fight for workers and their families. We are your neighbors – school teachers, local government and state employees, truck drivers, janitors, skilled tradespeople, and more. We are united to stand up against low wages, increased healthcare costs, and underfunded public schools.*