VOUCHER WATCH

This chart contains information about voucher proposals in Congress and in state legislatures.
Click on the bill number for a link to the full bill text.

Updated as of February 2018

STATE	BILL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
Federal	HR 610	• Repeals the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and redirects federal K-12 funds from public schools to private and religious school vouchers. Lowers nutrition standards in schools • No provisions protecting the rights of voucher students with disabilities or requiring voucher schools serve low-income or homeless students or English language learners	In January 2017, introduced and referred to House Committee on Education and the Workforce.
Federal	S 148/HR 895	• Revises the Internal Revenue Code to allow tax credits (up to $4,500 for individuals and $100,000 for corporations) for amounts paid to non-profit organizations for K-12 private school tuition for low- and moderate-income families (up to 250% of poverty). Prohibits use of funds to provide FAPE* • Requires schools receiving funds to comply with state laws against discrimination	In January 2017, introduced and referred to Senate Committee on Finance.
Federal	S 1294	• Establishes a voucher program for Native American students based on 90% of the per-pupil amount spent on Bureau of Indian Affairs schools; funds to be used for private school tuition and fees, online programs, technology, testing, transportation, etc. Disbursements	Introduced in June 2017, and referred to committee on Indian Affairs.

		initially to tribes, which can use up to 15% of funds for administration • No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners or "at-risk" students. Does not require schools receiving funds to obey laws against discrimination	
Federal	HR 691/S 235	• Amends the IDEA* to allow states to use federal special education funds, distributed to parents, to supplement public or private funds for private school placements; states that a "school accepting such funds shall not be required to carry out any of the requirements of this title [IDEA] with respect to such child" • Expands current voucher program in Washington, D.C . • Establishes a pilot program for vouchers for children of military personnel living on military installations	Introduced in January 2017, and referred to relevant committees in both houses of Congress.
Federal	HR 1462	• Amends the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to allow states to send federal funds for the education of disadvantaged children (Title I) to charter schools, private schools, or other unspecified educational programs • No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners or "at-risk" students. Does not require schools or programs receiving funds to obey laws against discrimination	Introduced in March 2017, and referred to House Committee on Education and the Workforce.
Arizona	SB 1431/HB 2349	• Expands current voucher program to universal (all K-12 students eligible), phased in from 2017 to 2020, and reallocates to vouchers "the monies that would otherwise be allocated to a recipient's prior school district" • No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners or "at-risk"	Modified to cap new vouchers at 5,500 per year; passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in April 2017. Voucher opponents submitted sufficient signatures to halt implementation

		• students • Does not require schools receiving funds to obey laws against discrimination	and place a vote to repeal law on Nov. 2018 ballot. Court challenge to manner in which signatures were collected in process. Judge ruled in January that proponents of vouchers lacked standing to challenge the voter referendum.
Colorado	SB 18-083	• Allows a taxpayer to claim a credit when the taxpayer enrolls a qualified child in a private school or the taxpayer provides a scholarship to a qualified child for enrollment in a private school • The amount of the credit is equal to either the tuition paid or the scholarship provided to a qualified child or 50% of the previous year's state average per pupil revenues, whichever is less	Introduced in January 2018, referred to the Appropriations Committee in February 2018
Florida	HB 15	• Modifies two of Florida's three existing voucher programs by expanding eligibility of home-school and private-school students, increasing the dollar value of vouchers, and increasing eligibility for moderate income families. Does not require schools receiving voucher funds to obey laws against discrimination in their admissions, etc.	Passed by both houses of the legislature, signed by governor.
Florida	No Bill Number	• Various proposals being considered by the Florida Constitutional Revision Commission would enshrine private school vouchers in the Florida Constitution if subsequently approved by voters.	Pending
Florida	SB 1172/HB 1	• Allows parent of a public school student who was the victim of violence or abuse the opportunity to transfer the student to another public school or request and receive from the state a scholarship for the student to enroll in an eligible private school	Passed by House and Senate Education Committees in February 2018.

Florida	HB 7055	• Omnibus bill including the bullying voucher contained in SB1172/HB1 • Includes reading scholarships for students who do not pass third-grade state language arts test	Passed by the House on February 8, 2018. Referred to the Senate Education Committee on February 14, 2018.
Georgia	HB 217	• Expands existing voucher program, which primarily benefits well-to-do families using religious schools, by increasing dollar amount of cap that redirects former state tax revenues to vouchers via tax credits • No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners or "at-risk" students. Voucher schools may discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, etc.	Introduced in February 2017, different versions in House and Senate not reconciled by end of legislative session on March 30. Appointed to conference committees in February 2018.
Illinois	SB 668	• Establishes Opportunity Scholarship Program where custodian of a qualifying pupil is entitled to voucher to pay for qualified education expenses at nonpublic elementary schools in Cook County • Provides tax credits for contributions to Opportunity Scholarship Fund	Introduced in January 2017. Reassigned to Senate Education Committee in January 2018.
Iowa	House File 2160	• Increases amount of tuition tax credit applied to first $2000 (originally $1000) paid by taxpayer for tuition to a non-public school and textbooks	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to Ways and Means Committee.
Iowa	Senate File 2091	• Provides vouchers for pre-K-12 students for "qualified educational expenses," including private school, tutoring, fees, etc. • Money remaining in a student's account upon high school completion can be used for higher education costs	Introduced on January 23, 2018, and referred to Ways and Means Committee.

Kentucky	HB 134	• Establishes a separate income tax credit for tuition assistance based on contributions made to a qualified scholarship-granting organization • Families are eligible if their income is not more than 200% of the eligibility for reduced-price meals, if a student is in foster care, or if a student has certain disabilities or impairments • The individual tax credit value is 95% of scholarship contributions not to exceed $1 million	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to the Appropriations & Revenue Committee.
Maryland		• In 2016, Maryland established a $5 million voucher program for the 2016-17 school year, which requires reauthorization each year • Governor wanted increase to $10 million	Legislature limited increase to $5.5 million. Legislative session ended in April.
Mississippi	SB 2623	• Expands voucher program to all students • Capped at one-half of one percent of public school enrollment for the first year	Died in the Senate in February 2018.
Missouri	SB 612	• Establishes tax credit-funded education savings account voucher program • Eligible students include students with disabilities, foster children, and children of active-duty military personnel	Introduced in January 2018, and reported out of Senate Government Reform Committee.
Nebraska	LB 118	• Provides vouchers, administered by Department of Revenue, and reduces revenues through taxpayer tax credits to fund vouchers	Introduced in January 2017, and referred to Revenue Committee. Legislative session ended May 23. Bill carried over to 2018.
Nebraska	LC 188	• Provides vouchers, administered by the Department of Revenue, to low- and moderate-income families for	Introduced in January 2017, and referred to Revenue Committee.

		• students to attend private schools; reduces revenues through taxpayer tax credits equal to full amount contributed for vouchers up to statewide total of $10 million in 2018 • States that voucher schools must not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin • No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners or "at-risk" students	Legislative session ended May 23. Bill carried over to 2018.
New Hampshire	SB 193	• Provides vouchers, administered by the Department of Education, to all public or charter or home school K-12 students; shifts funding from public schools to vouchers to pay for a wide variety of education-related expenses • Parents responsible for any balance over amount of voucher • Provides additional 5% to new voucher organizations for administrative expenses	Introduced in January 2017 in Senate and passed in March, then introduced in House and referred to Education Committee. Passed by House in January 2018. Currently under consideration by House Finance Committee.
New Hampshire	SB 8	• Allows towns using the town tuitioning program (allows small towns, without resources to operate their own public schools, to send children to neighboring public school districts) to send students to non-sectarian private schools	Passed and signed by the governor.
Pennsylvania	HB 1717/SB 2	• Shifts funds from public schools to vouchers administered by State Treasurer and Department of Education for students with disabilities or attending high poverty schools, to be used for private or parochial schools or "nonpublic" online programs • These bills are similar, but SB 2 creates eligibility for more students • Establishes auditing of parent spending and potential prosecution	Both bills introduced in 2017, and referred to House and Senate Education Committees.

		• Voucher schools not required to alter creed, practices, admissions policy or curriculum. No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners, "at-risk" students, or LGBT students	
Tennessee	HB 126/SB 0161	• Provides vouchers, administered by Department of Education, to low-income students in 5% of schools with lowest test scores • Shifts state and local funding that would otherwise go to student's local school district • Awards 5,000 vouchers first year; growing to 20,000 in fourth year • No provision requiring voucher schools serve students with disabilities, English language learners or "at-risk" students	Introduced in January 2017; recommended for passage by both education committees, and referred to government operations committees. Legislature voted against bill in April. HB 126 put on calendar and subsequently taken off in January 2018.
Virginia	HB 1286	• Establishes voucher program for students who attended public K-12 Virginia school two semesters prior to voucher application, with family income less than or equal to 300% of federal poverty guidelines, or who receive special education pursuant to IEP*	Introduced in January 2018. House subcommittee failed to recommend reporting on February 5, 2018.
West Virginia	SB 6	• Establishes Education Savings Account voucher program for all children who have attended a public school in the 100 days preceding • Voucher money may be used for private school tuition, fees, textbooks, tutoring, etc., but not for home schooling	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to Senate Education Committee.
West Virginia	HB 4008	• Established Education Savings Account voucher program for students with disabilities	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to Committee on Education then Finance.
West Virginia	SB 128	• Establishes Education Savings Account voucher program	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to Senate Education

		• Establishes $2500 per child income tax credit for public and private education-related expenses for parents or guardians not receiving vouchers	Committee.
West Virginia	HB 2429	• Provides income tax credit up to $1,000 per child for homeschooling expenses and $2,000 per child for private school to parent or legal guardian	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to House Education Committee.
Wisconsin	SB725/AB 830	• Establishes Educational Savings Account voucher program in the amount of $1000 for students identified as "gifted and talented" • Students may be enrolled in public or private school and be eligible for free or reduced price lunch • No more than 2,000 scholarships in any school year	Introduced in January 2018, and referred to Committee on Education. Public hearing held on Assembly bill on January 25, 2018.

Notes:

*IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) is the federal law requiring public schools to find, evaluate, and serve students with disabilities through appropriate programs and services. IDEA protects student rights regarding IEPs, FAPE, and LRE.

*FAPE is a "Free Appropriate Public Education" as guaranteed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

*LRE is a "least restrictive environment" as guaranteed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

*IEP is an "Individualized Education Program" as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).