



# ADVANCEMENT PROJECT

## Save Neighborhood Schools – Say No to Private School Vouchers!

Public schools welcome and serve all children in local communities for free. They provide vital access to education and services for the whole community. They teach children and young people the fundamentals of civic engagement and provide special education services, adult role models, and extracurricular activities. Local public schools also contribute to vibrant communities by providing gathering spaces, polling places, hometown sports teams, and locations to hold adult education classes, health clinics, and other needed services.

Communities strongly support their neighborhood public schools. That's why closing them is wildly unpopular.<sup>1</sup> Time and again, school district leaders who attempt to close schools face heated opposition campaigns,<sup>2</sup> walkouts,<sup>3</sup> protests,<sup>4</sup> and even hunger strikes.<sup>5</sup> For decades, communities have urged policymakers to invest more in their public schools, not leave them behind.

But in recent years, opponents of free and accessible education for all have promoted private school voucher schemes and the accompanying defunding of public schools.<sup>6</sup> Voters across the political spectrum understand that voucher programs threaten their local public schools, which is a major reason why, during the 2024 election, they rejected vouchers at the ballot box in Kentucky,<sup>7</sup> Nebraska,<sup>8</sup> and Colorado.<sup>9</sup>

Despite these losses, lawmakers continue to fund unaccountable and rapidly expanding private school voucher programs at the expense of public schools. As a result, neighborhoods in urban, suburban, and rural areas are experiencing public school closures.

When neighborhood schools close, students are forced to start over again at a new school farther away from home and build new relationships with unfamiliar teachers and staff.<sup>10</sup> Families often face hurdles to finding a new school<sup>11</sup> or are forced to send elementary-aged students<sup>12</sup> on long bus rides to a school that is inaccessible for their parents.<sup>13</sup> School closures also have negative academic,<sup>14</sup> attendance,<sup>15</sup> behavioral,<sup>16</sup> and economic consequences<sup>17</sup> for students. Furthermore, when the only school in the neighborhood closes, whole communities lose an important gathering place, access to social and civic services, and representation on and through their local school board.<sup>18</sup> In some cases, a neighborhood or community is existentially threatened.<sup>19</sup>



## Private School Vouchers Lead to Public School Closures

1. **Voucher programs divert limited public dollars to private education.** These resources would otherwise be used to support public schools and other public goods. In many states, public schools are already inadequately and inequitably funded, and voucher programs exacerbate this underfunding.<sup>20</sup>

2. **Voucher programs contribute to declines in public school enrollment.**<sup>21</sup>

Declines in enrollment impact state and federal funding for public schools, which is partly dependent on pupil counts. This often leaves school districts with less money and a higher-need student population, without reducing fixed costs such as building maintenance.<sup>22</sup>

### *What is a private school voucher?*

Vouchers redirect public money to private educational expenses, such as private school tuition or homeschooling. Vouchers can take the form of a tuition coupon, a tax credit, or an education savings account. No matter the name or funding mechanism, all vouchers have the same purpose and effect: to subsidize private education and undermine public schools.

## Private School Vouchers are Bad Public Policy

1. **Vouchers are expensive and drain public education budgets.** During the 2024-25 school year, Florida's voucher programs cost almost \$4 billion and diverted an estimated 18% of state public education funding from school districts.<sup>23</sup> In its first full year, Arizona's universal voucher program cost the state \$708.5 million,<sup>24</sup> equal to 11.3% of the state's education budget while only serving 6.3% of its students.<sup>25</sup> The cost of vouchers in Arizona is projected to reach \$1 billion in 2025-26.<sup>26</sup>

2. **Vouchers are a handout to the rich.** Proponents claim vouchers support low-income families. But in reality, vouchers are overwhelmingly used by families whose children already attend private school.<sup>27</sup>

3. **Vouchers worsen student outcomes.** Large-scale studies of voucher programs in Louisiana, Indiana, and Ohio show that students experienced significant declines in their academic performance when moving from public to private schools.<sup>28</sup> The impact of accepting a voucher on academic achievement in these programs is on par with – or in some cases worse than – the learning loss caused by Hurricane Katrina and the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>29</sup>

4. **Vouchers fund discrimination against students and families.** Private schools that participate in voucher programs are not subject to the same anti-discrimination requirements as public schools and often discriminate against students and families based on disability, LGBTQ+ status, religion, English fluency, and other characteristics. Also unlike public schools, private schools can admit or expel students based on ability to pay, discipline record, academic performance, or for no reason at all. This is intentional. Voucher programs, which were created as a way to avoid school integration in the mid-twentieth century, were explicit about their goal: to continue a discriminatory and unequal system of education.<sup>30</sup>
5. **Vouchers are a scam.** Voucher dollars often go to fly-by-night schools opened to grab voucher money. This volatile business model means these schools are at a higher risk of closing during the school year, disrupting the lives of students and their families and meaning the public schools will accept students midyear without the resources to educate them.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, voucher programs waste public funds through well-documented fraud and abuse.<sup>32</sup>

## School Closures Harm Communities, Especially Low-Income Communities, Communities of Color, and Rural Communities

Research shows that school closures harm children, families, and entire neighborhoods in multiple ways.<sup>33</sup> In addition to creating academic and social disruption for students, school closures reverberate throughout the community. Not only do neighborhoods lose a community hub, but empty school buildings can become environmental hazards that fail to generate tax revenue, drive community investors away, and depress property values.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, closures often exacerbate segregation and inequity in cities, and students whose schools close lose equal access to educational opportunities.<sup>35</sup>

While school closures devastate all communities, low-income communities and communities of color are hit especially hard.<sup>36</sup> Even when controlling for “race-neutral” factors like enrollment and test scores, nationwide, majority-Black schools are disproportionately targeted for closure.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, those factors most often used to justify closures – enrollment or so-called “utilization” rates, test scores, graduation rates, facility conditions, and available resources – are stacked against schools that have been neglected by federal, state, and local policies that result in more money and resources going to wealthier communities. Low-income communities have disproportionately high populations of students of color, who are more likely to already attend under-resourced schools.

Rural communities also experience some of the most devastating consequences of voucher programs and public school closures. In rural areas, where public schools serve as the heart of the community, school closures mean longer commutes for students to schools far from home, disruptions to student learning, and reduced involvement in afterschool activities.<sup>38</sup> For other residents, school closures trigger unemployment (public schools are often the largest employer in the community), a loss of civic and social opportunities,<sup>39</sup> and population decline.<sup>40</sup> When money is diverted to voucher programs, public schools also have fewer resources to provide community members with crucial, non-educational services such as healthcare and nutrition.<sup>41</sup>

## Fund Public Schools Instead!

For decades, communities have been demanding investments in their local public schools, which welcome and serve everyone. But instead of adequately funding the existing public school system, many policymakers – against the wishes of their constituents – have prioritized funding dangerous and unaccountable private school voucher programs.

It doesn't have to be this way. Policymakers can choose to provide increased resources to PreK-12 public education to fund evidence-backed programs and services that improve the lives of students and their families in a system that is open to all.<sup>42</sup>

### ***Why are public schools worth fighting for?***

Local public schools provide free, open access to education. They do not turn away any children or families. They are often community hubs. And they are crucial to community self-governance: through local school board elections, parents, guardians and community members have a say in what happens in their local public schools.

*[Public Funds Public Schools](#) (PFPS) is a national campaign to ensure public funds for education are used to support and strengthen our nation's public schools. [Education Law Center](#), which directs the work of PFPS, is a legal advocacy organization that pursues justice and equity for public school students.*

*[Advancement Project](#) (AP) is a national racial justice organization committed to supporting communities fighting to keep their neighborhood public schools and working to ensure that our nation's children are cared for and provided the robust, liberatory education that they deserve. For 25 years, AP has documented and pioneered efforts to end the school-to-prison pipeline and fought for true education justice in our public schools.*

## Case Studies: Don't Be Like Florida, Arizona, and Other States That Have Implemented Universal Voucher Programs

*Florida and Arizona recently enacted universal voucher programs.<sup>43</sup> This means any family—regardless of income or whether their child is already in private school—is eligible for a voucher. After only two years, these programs have set off a wave of public school closures that are hitting schools that serve Black, Latine, and working class families first and hardest.*

**Florida's** universal voucher program cost almost \$4 billion in 2024-25<sup>44</sup> and created budget crises that set off school closures and mass layoffs in school districts across the state—including Hillsborough County,<sup>45</sup> Broward County,<sup>46</sup> Duval County,<sup>47</sup> and Miami-Dade County.<sup>48</sup>

In many counties, parents used vouchers for homeschooling or private school tuition only to re-enroll their children in public school mid-year. These children returned to their local public schools without dollars to educate them.

Parents have filed hundreds of complaints about the unregulated private voucher schools that have popped up to grab voucher money—complaints have included: “Cleaning lady substituting for teacher” and “They don’t provide lunch and they don’t even have a place to eat.”<sup>49</sup>

**Arizona's** universal voucher law, which took effect in 2022, “blew a massive hole in Arizona’s budget,”<sup>50</sup> and contributed to declines in public school enrollment costing districts “hundreds of millions of dollars” in per-pupil funding.<sup>51</sup> The program also set off a wave of school closures across the state—Paradise Valley Unified School District,<sup>52</sup> Roosevelt School District,<sup>53</sup> Phoenix Elementary School District,<sup>54</sup> and Cave Creek Unified School District<sup>55</sup> all announced school closures, citing enrollment drops and budget shortfalls.

As in Florida, these vouchers were often spent at schools that popped up to take advantage of Arizona’s voucher law, but did not last the entire school year—scamming parents and students while wasting limited state education dollars.<sup>56</sup>

## Smaller-Scale Voucher Programs Also Devastate Public Schools

**Iowa:** Iowa’s voucher program is a significant contributor to the strain on public school district budgets—as a result, districts across the state are considering school closures.<sup>57</sup> After losing an estimated \$1.3 million in revenue to the state’s voucher program, Iowa City Community School District closed an elementary school, delayed curriculum purchases, reduced staff, and increased class sizes.<sup>58</sup>

**West Virginia:** After the Hope Scholarship private school voucher program went into partial effect in 2023 (it will become universal in 2026),<sup>59</sup> 25 school closures were announced across the state in 2024.<sup>60</sup> Officials in Kanawha County reported losing 1,200 students due to the Hope Scholarship and decided to close six schools in 2024.<sup>61</sup>



## Endnotes

- [1] See, e.g., Sally A. Nuamah, *Closed for Democracy: How Mass School Closure Undermines the Citizenship of Black Americans* at 85 (2023) (“Public schools are critical pillars in enabling disenfranchised communities to feel fully human.”); Eve L. Ewing, *Ghosts In The Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago’s South Side* at 127 (2018) (School closures are “much more than the loss of an interchangeable building. It can be a harbinger of things to come, the culmination of multiple generations of racism and injustice and a blatant disregard of the fundamental reality within which a community understands itself.”); Mara Casey Tieken & Trevor Ray Aldridge-Reveles, *Rethinking the School Closure Research: School Closure as Spatial Injustice*, 89(6) Am. Educ. Res. Assoc. 831 (Dec. 2019), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.3102/0034654319877151> (“Research indicates that most communities are opposed to school closures, often vehemently.”).
- [2] See, e.g., Jesse Hagopian, *Seattle Planned to Close Up to 21 Public Schools — Here’s How We Stopped Them*, Truthout (Dec. 17, 2024), <https://truthout.org/articles/seattle-planned-to-close-up-to-21-public-schools-heres-how-we-stopped-them/>.
- [3] See, e.g., Erin Jones, *Parents protest Fort Worth ISD school closures amid budget deficit*, CBS News (Feb 27, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/texas/news/parents-protest-fort-worth-isd-school-closures-budget-deficit/>; Movimiento Poder, *DCIS BAKER STUDENT WALKOUT AGAINST SCHOOL CLOSURES* (Nov. 15, 2024), [https://www.instagram.com/movimiento\\_poder/reel/DCZlNfvveiM/](https://www.instagram.com/movimiento_poder/reel/DCZlNfvveiM/); Sean Coffey, *Students walkout in protest of plans to close Granville Central High: ‘We want to be heard’*, ABC11 (Nov. 12, 2024), <https://abc11.com/post/school-closings-nc-granville-central-high-students-walkout-protest-districts-close-3-schools/15541246/>.
- [4] See, e.g., Adriana Doria, *Rockford residents protest closure of Parkside Elementary*, WoodTV (Mar. 6, 2025), <https://www.woodtv.com/news/kent-county/rockford-residents-protest-closure-of-parkside-elementary/>; 412 Justice, *Rally to STOP SCHOOL CLOSURES!! Pittsburgh Public school board is pushing through a reckless plan to close 16 schools. They are doing this backwards!* (Sept. 23, 2024), <https://www.instagram.com/412justice/reel/DARySIYNwgb/>; Anna Hoffman, *Columbus parents rally to save their schools*, NBC4 (June 23, 2024), <https://www.nbc4i.com/news/local-news/columbus/columbus-parents-rally-to-save-their-schools/>.
- [5] Ashley McBride, *Oakland educators poised to end hunger strike over school closures*, Oaklandside (Feb. 18, 2022), <https://oaklandside.org/2022/02/18/oakland-educators-poised-to-end-hunger-strike-over-school-closures/>; Eve L. Ewing, *The Fight for Dyett: How a Community in Chicago Saved Its Public School*, Am. Educator (Spring 2019), <https://www.aft.org/ae/spring2019/ewing>.
- [6] See Jessica Alcantara & Laura Petty, *Project 2025’s Plan to Eliminate Public Schools Has Already Started*, TIME (July 22, 2024), <https://time.com/7001264/project-2025-public-school-closure/>.
- [7] See Bruce Schreiner, *Kentucky voters defeat a measure intended to allow tax dollar support for private school education*, Assoc. Press (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://apnews.com/article/kentucky-election-school-choice-constitutional-amendment-b3acd8fdb770b82e0263d27cedc2cc4>.
- [8] See Aaron Sanderford, *Nebraska voters reject state funding for students attending private K-12 schools*, Nebraska Examiner (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2024/11/05/nebraska-voters-reject-state-funding-for-students-attending-private-k-12-schools/>.
- [9] See Erica Breunlin, *Amendment 80 fails: Right to school choice won’t be added to Colorado’s constitution*, Colorado Sun (Nov. 7, 2024), <https://coloradosun.com/2024/11/07/amendment-80-results-colorado/>.
- [10] See, e.g., Mary Eddins, Maja Pehrson, & Kevin Burgess, *Revisiting Research on School Closings: Key Learnings for District and Community Leaders*, Penn. Clearinghouse for Educ. Research at 4–5 (June 2024), <https://www.researchforaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/revisiting-research-on-school-closings-key-learnings-for-district-and-community-leaders.pdf> (summarizing research on non-academic outcomes of school closures).
- [11] See, e.g., Molly F. Gordon et al., *School Closings in Chicago: Staff and Student Experiences and Academic Outcomes*, U. Chicago Consortium on School Research at 6 (2018), <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2018-10/School%20Closings%20in%20Chicago-May2018-Consortium.pdf> (“Interviews with affected students and staff revealed major challenges with logistics, relationships, and school culture.”); Arianna Prothero, *When Choice Doesn’t Feel Like a Choice*, Educ. Week (Aug. 19, 2015), <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/when-choice-doesnt-feel-like-a-choice/2015/08> (documenting one family’s struggles finding a new school in New Orleans after school closed).
- [12] See National Center for Education Statistics, *Closed schools*, (2023) <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=619> (Elementary schools were the most likely to close between 2010-2022.).
- [13] See, e.g., Anna Van Dine, *A Lot Of Road To Cover’: As Schools Close, Some Kids Face Longer Bus Rides*, Vermont Public Radio (May 7, 2021), <https://www.vermontpublic.org/vpr-news/2021-05-07/a-lot-of-road-to-cover-as-schools-close-some-kids-face-longer-bus-rides>; Denisa R. Superville, *When a Community Loses Its Schools*, Educ. Week (June 6, 2017), <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/when-a-community-loses-its-schools/2017/06>; See also Williamena Kwapo, *Study Links Longer School Bus Rides to Chronic Absenteeism*, Educ. Week (June 16, 2022), <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/study-links-longer-school-bus-rides-to-chronic-absenteeism/2022/06> (2022 study found “significant difference in absentee records” between students who rode the bus for more than 30 minutes to get to school and students whose bus rides were shorter).

[14] See, e.g., *id.* at 3 (summarizing selected research on impact of school closures on student achievement); Jeonghyeok Kim, *The Long Shadow of School Closures: Impacts on Students' Educational and Labor Market Outcomes*, Annenberg Brown University, Working Paper No. 24-963 at 25, (May 2024), <https://edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai24-963.pdf> (studying data on Texas students) (“[M]y findings suggest that experiencing school closure reduces college attendance by 1.2 percentage points.”); *id.* at 28 (“I find that school closure leads to a drop in test scores.”); Matthew F. Larsen, *Does closing schools close doors? The effect of high school closings on achievement and attainment*, 76 *Econ. of Educ. Rev.* (June 2020), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0272775718305922?via%3Dihub> (studying data on Milwaukee students and finding that “closures also have long-run consequence both lowering the probability of high school graduation and college attendance.”).

[15] See, e.g., Larsen, *supra* (“I find that school closings cause a negative shock to student attendance.”); Matthew P. Steinberg & John M. MacDonald, *The effects of closing urban schools on students' academic and behavioral outcomes: Evidence from Philadelphia*, 69 *Econ. of Educ. Rev.* 25 (Apr. 2019), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0272775718302693?via%3Dihub> (“School absences increased significantly for displaced students following closure.”).

[16] Kim, *supra* at 28 (“I find that school closure leads to . . . an increase in behavioral issues in the following years.”).

[17] Kim, *supra* at 26 (“[M]y estimated effect of school closure is a 3.4% decrease in earnings at ages 25-27, which is equivalent to a 0.35 standard deviation decrease in class quality or a one standard deviation decrease in teacher quality for 2.5 year.”).

[18] See, e.g., Mara Casey Tieken & Trevor Ray Auldrige-Reveles, *Rethinking the School Closure Research: School Closure as Spatial Injustice*, 89(6) *Am. Educ. Res. Assoc.* 831 (Dec. 2019), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.3102/0034654319877151>; see also, e.g., *Across Texas, communities fight to defend public education*, *Liberation* (Oct. 14, 2023), <https://www.liberationnews.org/across-texas-communities-fight-to-defend-public-education/> (School closures in San Antonio Independent School District in 2023 left some neighborhoods without any public schools).

[19] For instance, Francis A. Pearman and Danielle Marie Greene documented the relationship between school closures in predominantly Black communities and gentrification, see *School Closures and the Gentrification of the Black Metropolis*, Stanford University, CEPA Working Paper No. 21-02 (Feb. 2022), <https://cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/wp21-02-v022022.pdf>, and many others have documented the role that school closures play in the deterioration of high poverty and rural communities. See, e.g., Hallie Miller, *Baltimore closed at least 30 schools in 10 years. More people are asking if that makes sense*, *Baltimore Banner* (Aug. 8, 2023), <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/baltimore/baltimore-school-closing-opposition-T7U3OW4LTJGVDCU452STCCE/>; Urban Inst., *Subtracting Schools from Communities* (Mar. 23, 2017), <https://www.urban.org/features/subtracting-schools-communities> (“The impact is felt more quickly in rural areas . . . There aren’t other wraparound services, right? There aren’t other venues. Even extracurricular activities – it’s harder to get kids to those if the school isn’t right there.”).

[20] Danielle Farrie & Robert Kim, *Making the Grade: How Fair is School Funding in Your State?*, Education Law Center (2024), <https://edlawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Making-the-Grade-2024.pdf>.

[21] See Hilary Wething, *How vouchers harm public schools; Calculating the cost of voucher programs to public school districts*, *Econ. Pol. Inst.* (Dec. 19, 2024), <https://www.epi.org/publication/vouchers-harm-public-schools/>.

[22] See Griffith & Burns, *supra* at 13 (Table 6 displays impact of Arizona voucher program on costs for educating students in public schools).

[23] Norin Dollard & Mary McKillip, *Florida Continues to Drain Much-Needed Funds Away from Public Schools to Private and Home-School Students*, *Florida Pol. Inst. & Education Law Center* (Jan. 14, 2025), <https://www.floridapolicy.org/posts/florida-continues-to-drain-much-needed-funds-away-from-public-schools-to-private-and-home-school-students>.

[24] Michael Griffith & Dion Burns, *Understanding the Cost of Universal School Vouchers: An Analysis of Arizona's Empowerment Scholarship Account Program*, *Learning Pol. Inst.* (Feb. 2024), [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/4193/download?inline&file=Universal\\_School\\_Vouchers\\_REPORT.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/4193/download?inline&file=Universal_School_Vouchers_REPORT.pdf); see also Grand Canyon Inst., *Cost of the Universal ESA Voucher Program* at 1 (June 2024), <https://grandcanyoninstitute.org/research/education/private-school-subsidies/cost-of-the-universal-esa-vouchers/> (similar estimate).

[25] Save Our Schools Arizona, *Voucher Accounts Balloon as State Budget Starves* (Sept. 24, 2024), <https://www.sosaznetwork.org/2024/voucher-accounts-balloon-as-state-budget-starves/#:~:text=A%20shocking%20new%20study%20by,public%20school%20parents%20cannot%20access>.

[26] Mary Jo Pitzl, *Katie Hobbs seeks more funding for AZ's voucher program, making a point in budget fight*, *Arizona Republic* (Mar. 9, 2025), <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/legislature/2025/03/09/hobbs-seeks-more-school-voucher-funding/81664627007/>.

[27] See, e.g., Jamie Klinenberg, Jon Valant, & Nicolas Zerbino, *Arizona's 'universal' education savings account program has become a handout to the wealthy*, *Brookings* (May 7, 2024), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/arizonas-universal-education-savings-account-program-has-become-a-handout-to-the-wealthy/>; see also Eli Hager & Lucas Waldron, *In a State With School Vouchers for All, Low-Income Families Aren't Choosing to Use Them*, *ProPublica* (Oct. 12, 2024), <https://www.propublica.org/article/arizona-school-vouchers-esa-private-schools>; see also Ethan Dewitt, *Most education*

freedom account recipients not leaving public schools, department says, New Hampshire Bulletin (Mar. 28, 2022), <https://newhampshirebulletin.com/briefs/most-education-freedom-account-recipients-not-leaving-public-schools-department-says/#:~:text=By%3A%20Ethan%20DeWitt%20%2D%20March%2028%2C%202022%205%3A44%20pm&text=New%20Hampshire's%20Education%20Freedom%20Account,continues%20to%20be%20relatively%20low>

[28] See, e.g., Public Funds Public Schools, *Research Shows Private School Vouchers Don't Work for Students and Harm Public Schools*, [https://pfps.org/assets/uploads/CR\\_PFPS\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_MAR\\_2020-final.pdf](https://pfps.org/assets/uploads/CR_PFPS_Fact_Sheet_MAR_2020-final.pdf); see also Joshua Cowen, *Research on school vouchers suggests concerns ahead for education savings accounts*, Brookings (Aug. 15, 2023), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/research-on-school-vouchers-suggests-concerns-ahead-for-education-savings-accounts/#:~:text=Tax%2Dfunded%20private%20tuition%20programs,hover%20around%20%2D0.25%20standard%20deviations>; Martin Carnoy, *School vouchers are not a proven strategy for improving student achievement*, Econ. Pol. Inst. (Feb. 28, 2017), <https://www.epi.org/publication/school-vouchers-are-not-a-proven-strategy-for-improving-student-achievement/>.

[29] National Coalition for Public Education, *Vouchers Harm Student Achievement As Much As Natural Disasters*, <https://www.ncpecoalition.org/vouchers-harm-student-achievement>.

[30] See, e.g., Jennifer Berry Hawes, *Segregation Academies Still Operate Across the South. One Town Grapples With Its Divided Schools*, ProPublica (May 18, 2024), <https://www.propublica.org/article/camden-alabama-segregated-schools-brown-v-board>; Chris Ford, Stephenie Johnson, & Lisette Partelow, *The Racist Origins of Private School Vouchers*, Center for American Progress (July 12, 2017), <https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/07/VoucherSegregation-brief2.pdf>; Southern Education Foundation, *A History of Private Schools and Race in the American South* (2016), <https://southerneducation.org/publications/history-of-private-schools-and-race-in-the-american-south/>.

[31] See Eli Hager, *Arizona Regulators Closed a Failing Charter School. It Reopened as a Private Religious School Funded by Taxpayers.*, ProPublica (Dec. 31, 2024), <https://www.propublica.org/article/arizona-private-school-vouchers-no-transparency>.

[32] Public Funds Public Schools. *The True Cost of Private School Voucher Programs*. [https://pfps.org/assets/uploads/Voucher\\_Cost\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Final\\_1.pdf](https://pfps.org/assets/uploads/Voucher_Cost_Fact_Sheet_Final_1.pdf).

[33] See Mary Eddins, Maja Pehrson, & Kevin Burgess, *Revisiting Research on School Closings: Key Learnings for District and Community Leaders*, Penn. Clearinghouse for Educ. Research at 3–4 (June 2024), <https://www.researchforaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/revisiting-research-on-school-closings-key-learnings-for-district-and-community-leaders.pdf> (summarizing academic research on impacts of school closures).

[34] Courtney Lauren Anderson, *The Disparate Impact of Shuttered Schools*, 23(2) American University Journal of Gender Policy and Law, 319-351 (2015).

[35] Jin Lee & Christopher Lubienski, *The Impact of Closures on Equity of Access in Chicago*, Education & Urban Society, 49(1), 1–28 (2016).

[36] See, e.g., Alec MacGillis, *The Unequal Effects of School Closings*, ProPublica (Aug. 26, 2024), <https://www.propublica.org/article/school-closures-students-charter-schools-home-schooling-rochester>.

[37] See Danielle Marie Greene-Bell & Francis A. Pearman, *Racialized Closures and the Shuttering of Black Schools: Evidence from National Data*, 94 Harvard Educ. Rev. 187, 201 (study of school closures nationwide from 2010–18 “found that the average majority Black school was more than three times as likely to close as the average Majority non-Black school” and that “even after adjusting for observable differences across schools, the average school in the full sample that had a majority Black student population was still greater than 20 percent ( $\beta = 1.21$ ) more likely to close than its counterpart”).

[38] Mara Casey Tieken, *School closures can hit rural communities hard*, The Conversation (Jan. 9, 2020), <https://theconversation.com/school-closures-can-hit-rural-communities-hard-128837>.

[39] *Id.*; Public Schools First NC, *The Facts on Rural Schools in NC* (Jan. 12, 2021), <https://www.publicschoolsfirstnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Facts-on-Rural-Schools-1.12.21.pdf>.

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