

**Orlando Sentinel**  
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**Don't doubt Dwight**

Final Edition

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Vouchers can help at-risk kids blossom

Most people wouldn't be surprised that, as a Catholic school, we reach out to educate the children of low-income families. But few may realize the depth of poverty some of our families know. That's why it troubles me to see some people attack a worthy scholarship program for the support it provides to students who attend faith-based schools ("Vouchers may get big boost," *Orlando Sentinel*, Thursday).

Earlier this year, the faculty at St. Andrew Catholic School in Orlando celebrated its distinction as a Blue

Ribbon School, an honor the U.S. Department of Education bestows on schools that show superior academic progress. St. Andrew was one of only 12 public and private schools in Florida to receive the award, a notable achievement considering St. Andrew enrolls some of the poorest students in a diocese that covers nine counties.

Those students would not be here if it were not for the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship. The scholarship gives children another educational option their families could not afford on their own. We do not see ourselves

as competitors with our public-school friends. Rather, we believe our school plays a vital role in helping public education reach out to a distressed community.

We have seen our most at-risk students blossom, and their families have played a significant role in their education. I know we're not the only parochial school with such a mission, and legislation that would expand and strengthen the Tax Credit Scholarship would aid these efforts.

**Kathleen Kiley**  
Principal, St. Andrew Catholic School