School Voucher Program
A Win-Win Situation
For Students, Taxpayers

Joanne King recently wrote regarding her concern that her taxes are going to private schools and as a result more public schools will fail [“Florida Taxpayer Money Should Not Be Going Toward Private Schools,” March 23].

She stated that private schools were not accountable because students at private schools do not have to take the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test. The facts are:

- Taxpayer money is being used by low-income parents to help find schools that work best for their children, who are often struggling in public schools.
- The school is accountable to taxpayers. Scholarship students are required to take a state-approved standardized test. The schools are accountable to parents. If parents don’t think their child is doing well, the scholarships give them the power to place their child in an environment better suited to his or her needs.
- There are clear links between vouchers and improved academic achievement. The state requires the test results to be analyzed by a highly regarded educational researcher at Northwestern University. He has consistently found that scholarship students, who are low-income, are making the same gains as students of all income levels nationally. The same researcher also found the students who used scholarships were the students who struggled the most in public schools.
- Tax-credit scholarships do not take money away from public schools and do not increase cost to taxpayers. Taxpayers pay roughly half as much per scholarship ($4,880) as they do per student in the public schools. In fact, it saves the state money that can be invested in the public school.
- Research has found that through competition, the program spurred academic gains in public schools.

The voucher program is a win-win situation for the taxpayer as well as the students. Ultimately, it benefits our society.

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Voucher Concerns Unfounded

Contrary to the status quo, Florida’s school-voucher program has helped thousands of students and families with special needs acquire better educational environments not available in public schools. The concern over Florida’s school-voucher program is unfounded. Last year, the average cost in Florida was $8,747 per student in the public school system. The maximum scholarship for disabled and low-income students was $4,335, saving the state’s taxpayers a little more than half its educational cost per student. Not a bad deal. And studies show that there is no academic disadvantage for students in private schools.

Out of the 1,338 private schools participating in the Florida’s voucher program, a mere 164 of these schools are said to teach creationism. The majority of Christian schools teach Darwin’s theory along with intelligent design. This practice gives students a clear picture of both world views, not just the forced indoctrination of one. The freedom to think and explore the evidence is not acceptable to so-called citizens for science groups who cry foul.

With similarities to most religions, evolution’s bold proclamations and artist renderings stand as truth, not science.

There is no evidence that school vouchers or creationism are a threat to science or the ability of their students to excel in their academic or scientific endeavors. Nor is the freedom to question evolution’s shaky theory a threat to science.

The uproar is not about vouchers but rather the possibility students might question the unverifiable claims of molecule-to-man evolution.

The very idea that the latest rendition of evolution’s grand scheme might be questioned is a threat to those who feed off it along with the secular humanists and atheists who are faithfully committed to hold and cherish it. Herein lies the problem.

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WRITE TO US

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