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School Choice Week: a reminder we need more options



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Students Isabel Onisile, 11, left, and Octavia McKindra, 11, attend a rally at the Sierra Nevada Academy Charter School at the National School Choice Week Capitol celebration in Carson City, Nev., on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2015. An estimated 500 students, ... more > (/multimedia/image/ap_f343e1fbaaea90046c0f6a7067002e45jpg/)

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By Nick Novak (/staff/nick-novak/) - - Thursday, January 29, 2015

One of the biggest choices I had to make as a young child was figuring out what bike I wanted for my eighth birthday. Up to that point, I largely had hand-me-downs from my older brother. As he grew too big for his bike, he would get a new one and I would get his old one – the “perks” of being a younger sibling.

But when it came to my birthday that year, I knew I was finally going to get my own bike. You see, I didn’t mind getting my brother’s old bikes before then, but they were never the perfect fit for me. This time, it was going to be different.

I had the coolest dark blue Huffy picked out. I looked at so many bikes that summer with my parents, and that was the one for me. Then on that warm July morning, I woke up to a shiny, new Huffy in the living room.

For me, it was perfect.

But no matter how perfect it was for me, none of my friends had that bike. They all had different ones that were the perfect fit for them.

We all had a choice, something that is largely missing in education in our country.

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If purchasing a bike was the same as our education bureaucracy, all the kids in my neighborhood would have had the exact same bike – no matter what their needs and wants were. For a kid who was about a foot taller than everyone else, that would not have worked out well for me.

This is why we need to expand school choice in America. Parents deserve options that give their kids the best education possible that is perfect for them. A one-size-fits-all approach simply is not working. Yes, it is great for some. I went to public school my whole life and got an excellent education, but a public education might not be what is best for everyone.

This week, January 25 to 31, is National School Choice Week. It is a time that we can highlight the successes of school choice and ensure parents are aware of their options.

Whether it is a voucher program in Arizona, Louisiana or North Carolina or the independent public charter schools in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, parents have many educational options. But parents deserve more.

Paul Davis, a single father in St. Louis, Missouri, is one of those parents. His 16-year-old son, Robert, attended Normandy High School until its accreditation was revoked. This allowed Robert, who has mild to moderate autism, to transfer to a different school.

While Paul's son had been repeatedly bullied at his old school and struggled in class, he was quickly succeeding at his new school.

"The one year at Francis Howell opened our eyes to what a good school can be," Paul said of his son's new school in a nearby district.

After learning that his son may have to go back to Normandy High School, Paul used what little savings he had to rent an apartment in the Francis Howell school district to ensure Robert would not have to return to a school that was failing him.

No parent should be left without any options but to move to a different district. That is why policymakers should listen to the students, teachers and families that are calling for greater educational options during School Choice Week.

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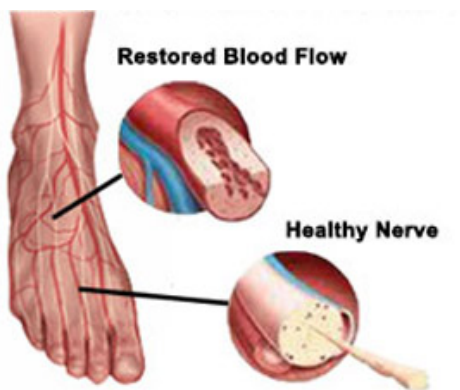


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Nick Novak (/staff/nick-novak/)

Nick Novak has years of experience in politics and public policy. Recently, he served on Gov. Scott Walker's 2010 gubernatorial campaign and in Mr. Walker's official office prior to joining Eric Hovde's U.S. Senate campaign as director of Operations. Mr. Novak also worked for the Republican National Committee in the months leading up to the 2012 presidential election. He currently ...

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Choice doesn't have to cost more. The amount that we spend per pupil at public schools will more than cover better-than-public private education.

And, as Mr. Novak alludes to, choice is both the ultimate luxury and the basis of freedom.

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It doesn't have to cost more, but in this country it does. The more wealth you have, the more you have available to you. The people that can afford high quality education are already enrolled in these places and they aren't too keen on letting the rest of the masses in. If choice is a luxury, than isn't freedom also?

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translation= raid public schools , gut them and embrace the me myself and I aesthetic of conservatives

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