

Vouchers Increase Segregation

A Lima News analysis of data provided by the Ohio Department of Education shows that in Lima, Ohio the EdChoice Voucher scheme segregates!

Do vouchers increase segregation? Testing data shows more white students in Lima using vouchers

EDUCATION, NEWS

By Mackenzi Klemann - mklemann@limanews.com

LIMA — White students make up the majority of students residing in the Lima schools district who use vouchers to attend private schools, a Lima News analysis of Ohio Department of Education data found.

Demographic data from voucher students who took state assessments last school year show more than half of those students residing in the Lima schools district were white, even though an estimated 65% of Lima schools students are students of color.

The data exclude students who paid private tuition in full or who did not take a state exam that year, like students in kindergarten through second grade.

Still, those records show that 56% of Lima voucher students in grades 3-8 who took the state English language arts assessment last school year were white, while 55% of Lima voucher students in grades 9-12 who took the English exam that year were white.

Similar ratios were observed for other state assessments, the only demographic data private schools are required to disclose.

More than 600 students living inside the Lima schools district took advantage of private school vouchers last school year, costing the district \$3.4 million, according to Ohio Department of Education records.

The vast majority of those vouchers were EdChoice scholarships, available to lower-income families and children residing in low-performing school districts, while several dozen others were approved for special education students.

Lima schools have seen a 10 percentage-point decline in white students enrolled since Ohio started offering the EdChoice scholarships in 2006, according to a lawsuit filed in Franklin County court last month, which argues that the vouchers discriminate against minority students by increasing segregation in Ohio schools.

The district is one of six plaintiffs challenging the constitutionality of Ohio's voucher system, which will be considered by the courts as lawmakers consider making all students eligible for vouchers, regardless of household income or performance of the public schools in their district.

Plaintiffs argue the voucher program “promotes and exacerbates segregation of students by race and class, depletes public resources otherwise available for the public education of Ohio's children and hampers public school districts' ability to provide high-quality instruction regardless of each pupil's circumstance or background,” according to the lawsuit.

Demographic data for voucher student test scores show that private schools are struggling to close the achievement gap for non-white students too: Only 27% of Black students residing in Lima who used vouchers to

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attend a private high school last school year passed the state English exam, compared to 70% of their white peers who took the test.

At the elementary level, 38% of Black voucher students in Lima who took the English language arts assessment that year passed their exams, compared to 55% of white peers who were tested.

Lima Grades 3-8:

ELA: 163 white students, 128 non-white students

Math: 163 white students, 128 non-white students

Science: 47 white students, 35 non-white students

Lima Grades 9-12:

ELA: 57 white students, 46 non-white students

Math: 46 white students, 29 non-white students

Science: 17 white students, 0 non-white students

Social Studies: 29 white students, 10 non-white students

Ohio Grades 3-8:

ELA: 12,458 white students, 14,620 non-white students

Math: 13,458 white students, 14,620 non-white students

Science: 3,917 white students, 4,437 non-white students

Ohio Grades 9-12:

ELA: 8,828 white students, 9,314 non-white students

Math: 7,738 white students, 8,036 non-white students

Science: 2,998 white students, 3,195 non-white students

Social Studies: 5,806 white students, 6,158 non-white students

Source: Ohio Department of Education, voucher student assessment report 2020-21 school year

[Do vouchers increase segregation? Testing data shows more white students in Lima using vouchers - The Lima News \(limaohio.com\)](#)