

What We Know About Vouchers: The Facts Behind the Rhetoric

As the debate over vouchers, their effects, and the legal status of voucher programs continues, WestEd will provide periodic updates to our September 1999 brief on this topic. Please view this attachment regularly to remain informed about the latest judicial decisions, new legislation, and noteworthy research findings.

Judicial Rulings:

On October 4, 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court declined review of the Arizona tax-credit case (*Kotterman v. Killian*), leaving in place the January 1999 ruling of the Arizona Supreme Court. The state court upheld the Arizona program allowing a tax credit of up to \$500 for individuals making charitable contributions to “school tuition organizations” that provide scholarships to private schools, including religious schools.

On October 12, 1999, without comment or a recorded vote, the U.S. Supreme Court also declined to review cases concerning the Maine “tuitioning” law. That law allows reimbursements to families from districts lacking public schools that send their children to secular private schools but not religious schools. The law was previously upheld by both the Maine Supreme Court (*Bagley v. Raymond School Department*) and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 1st Circuit (*Strout v. Albanese*). By declining review, the Supreme Court allowed the decision of the 1st Circuit to remain binding for Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico.

Update: October 14, 1999