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Florida's Hidden Voucher Expansion:

OVER \$1 BILLION FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TO FUND PRIVATE EDUCATION

Research Team

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Making the Grade 2022: Florida

Level

Grade: F

Rank: 44th

Distribution

Grade: D

Rank: 35th

Effort

Grade: F

Rank: 48th

Florida Education Finance Program

- In 1973, the Florida adopted the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) to equalize funding among school districts and helps implement 'the constitutional requirement for a uniform system of free public education'.
- FEFP considers:
 - Local taxes available
 - Cost of educating students, including enhanced funding for programs such as special education
 - District cost differential that accounts geographic differences and local economic situations
 - Considers small districts (sparsity supplement)
- Funds traditional public schools, charter schools and private school vouchers

Florida's Voucher Programs

Conventional private school vouchers – The Florida Empowerment Scholarships for Educational Options (FES—EO) – funds are paid directly to private schools for eligible students.

Eligibility – Florida resident, 5 years or older, SNAP/WIC eligible (direct certification) or up to 375% of the federal poverty level. Children in foster care, homeless or children of military or law enforcement are eligible regardless of income. Siblings also eligible.

Educational Savings Accounts – (formerly the Gardiner and McKay Scholarships) Florida Empowerment Scholarships for Students with Unique Abilities (FES-UA) are paid to parents of students with disabilities to use for approved educational expenditures, including tuition, etc. These include for children with disabilities.

Eligibility – no income limit, must have a documented disability. Siblings also eligible.

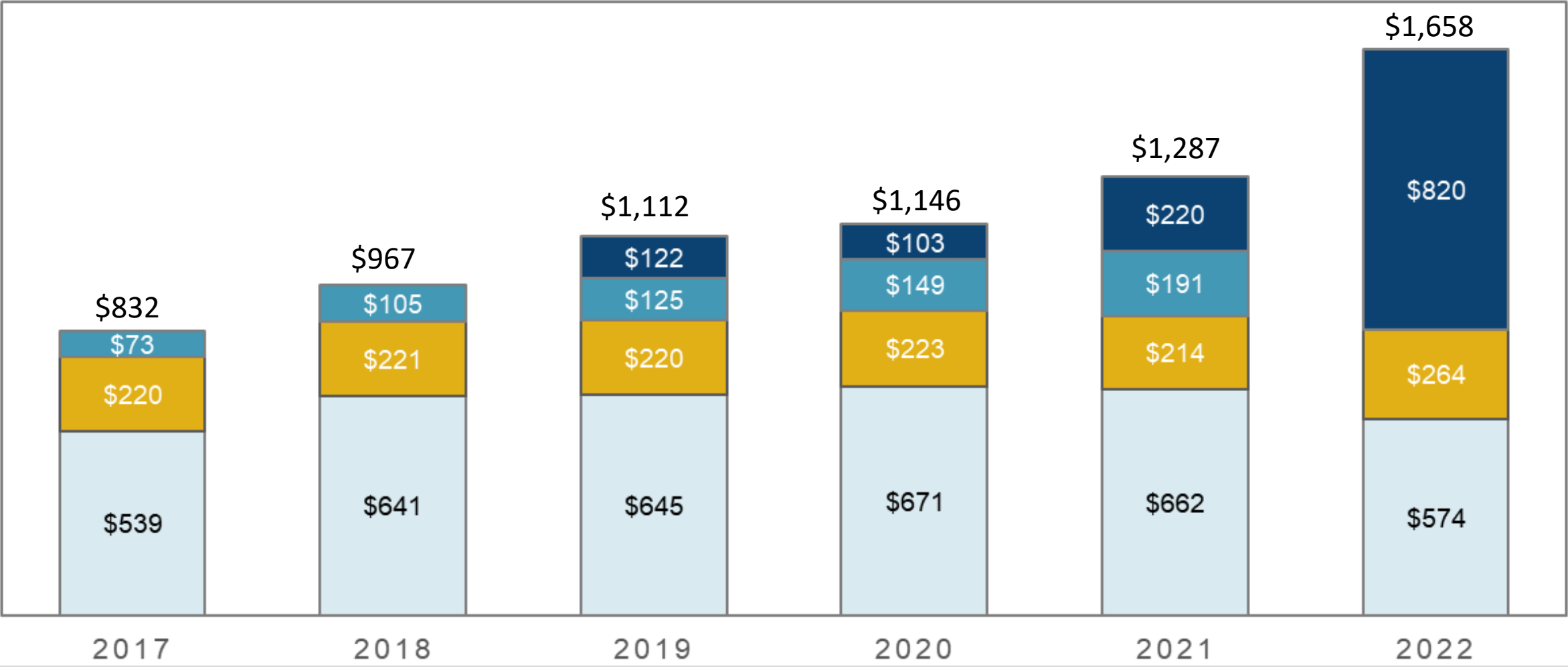
Tax Credit Vouchers - Florida Tax Credit Scholarships – allows businesses to make donations funding these vouchers and receive dollar-for-dollar tax credits.

Eligibility - Florida resident, 5 years or older, SNAP/WIC eligible (direct certification) or up to 375% of the federal poverty level.

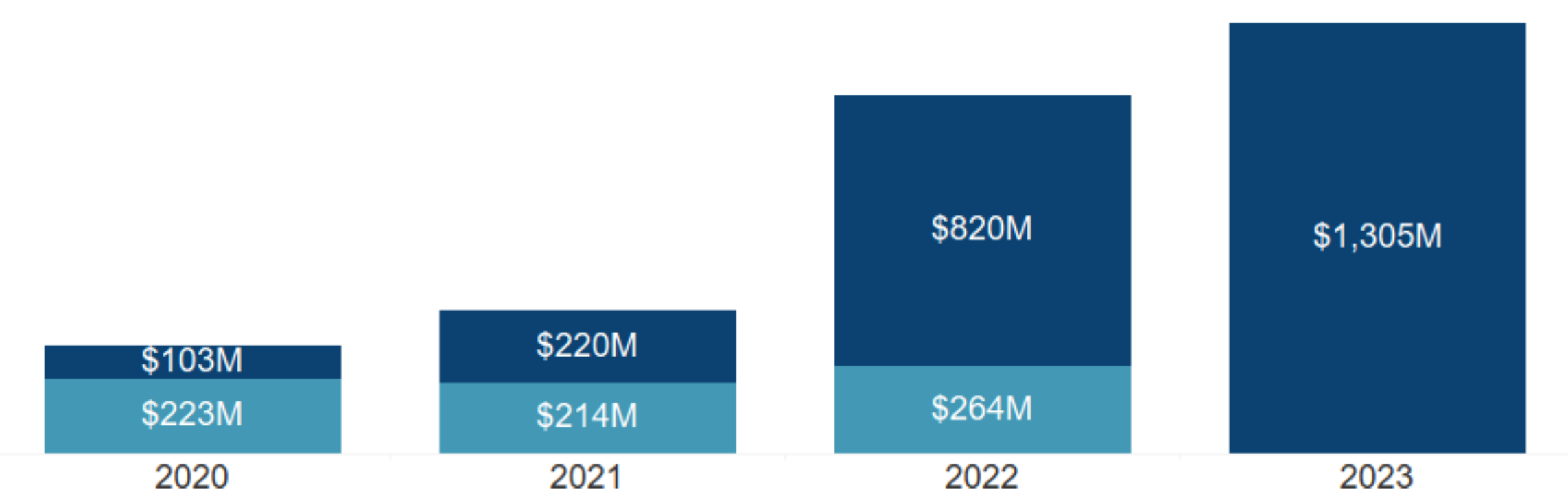
These vouchers are funded at 100% of full-time, unweighted FTE

Florida Voucher Spending, 2016-17 to 2021-22 (In Millions)

□ Tax Credit Scholarship ■ John M. McKay Scholarship ■ Gardiner Scholarship ■ Family Empowerment Scholarship



Increase in Florida FEFP State Aid Re-Routed from Public School Districts to Private Education through McKay and FES Vouchers



FLORIDA EDUCATION FINANCE PROGRAM

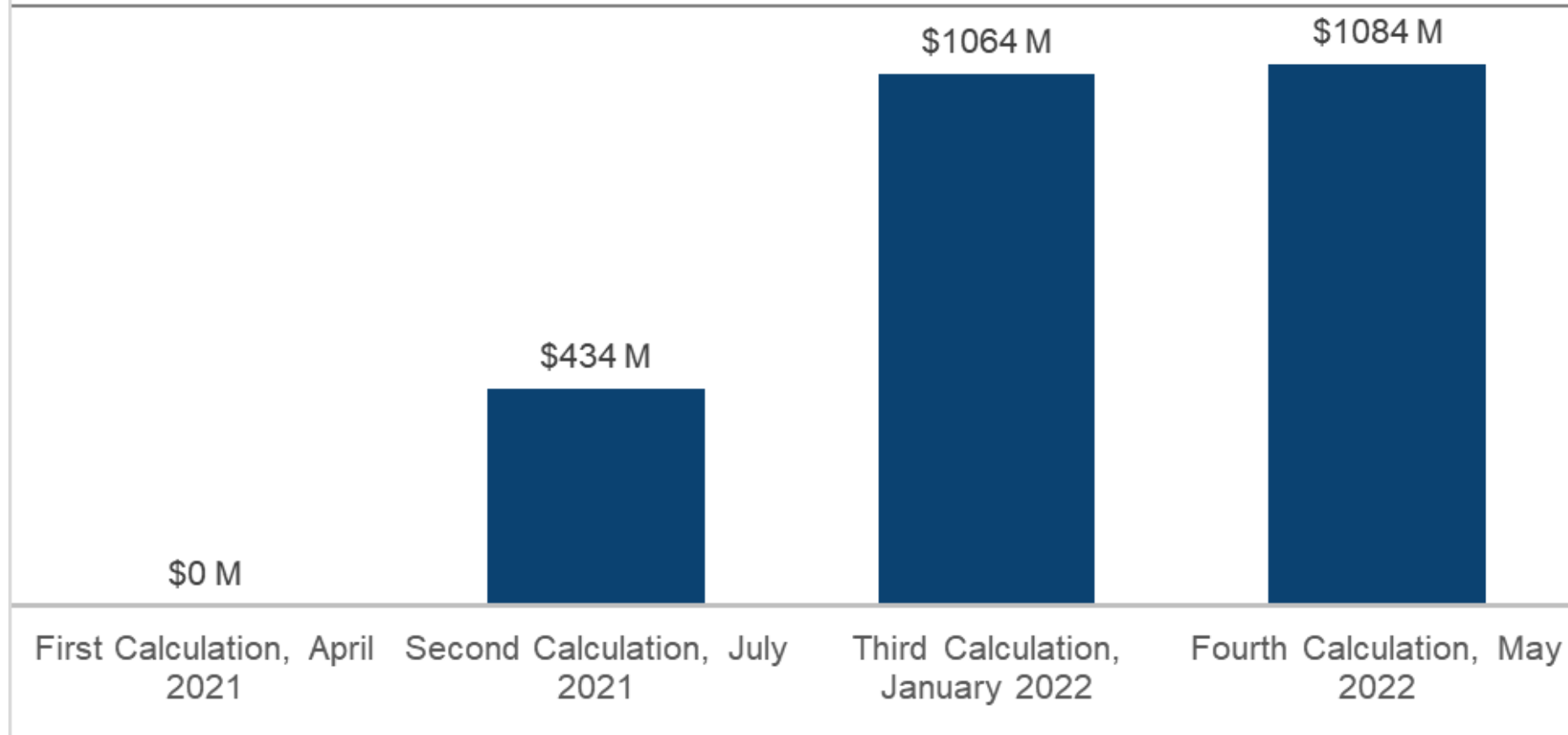
2022-23

SECOND CALCULATION

2022-23 FEFP Second Calculation
Prekindergarten through Grade 12 Funding Summary - Page 4

	Net State FEFP	Adjustment for Family Empowerment Scholarships	Adjusted Net State FEFP
District	-1-	-2-	-3-
1 Alachua	125,724,762	(17,056,035)	108,668,727
2 Baker	29,726,345	(991,640)	28,734,705
3 Bay	94,055,337	(5,549,213)	88,506,124
4 Bradford	17,188,656	(2,092,305)	15,096,351
5 Brevard	297,279,060	(38,731,413)	258,547,647
6 Broward	878,747,842	(119,543,634)	759,204,208
7 Calhoun	14,265,990	(230,345)	14,035,645
8 Charlotte	17,087,629	(5,569,452)	11,518,177
9 Citrus	58,880,612	(6,018,844)	52,861,768
10 Clay	215,042,001	(10,623,033)	204,418,968
11 Collier	32,834,487	(11,523,747)	21,310,740
12 Columbia	57,750,180	(6,016,927)	51,733,253
13 Dade	870,665,895	(225,184,792)	645,481,103
14 DeSoto	23,673,391	(1,437,589)	22,235,802
15 Dixie	13,455,943	(1,062,030)	12,393,913
16 Duval	573,056,647	(79,564,030)	493,492,617

Recalculation of FEFP State Aid Diverted to Private Education, 2021-22

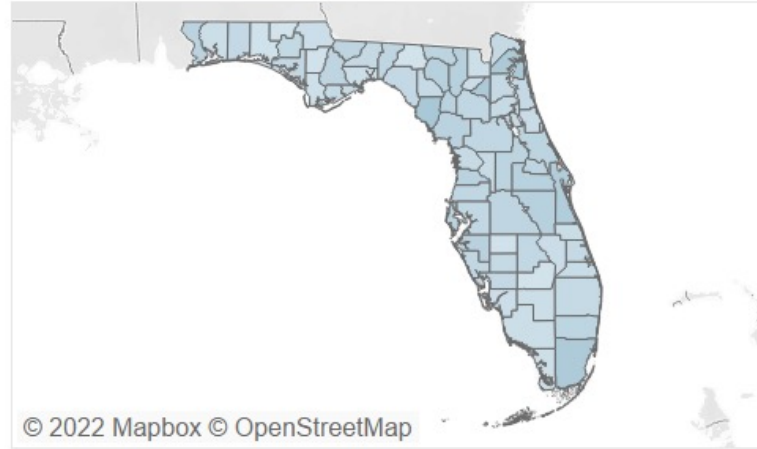


Florida Voucher Costs as % of FEFP Funding

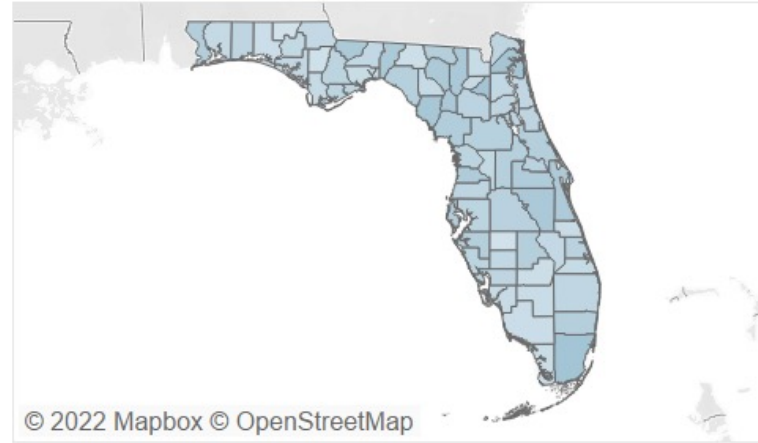
Vouchers as % of Total FEFP Budget



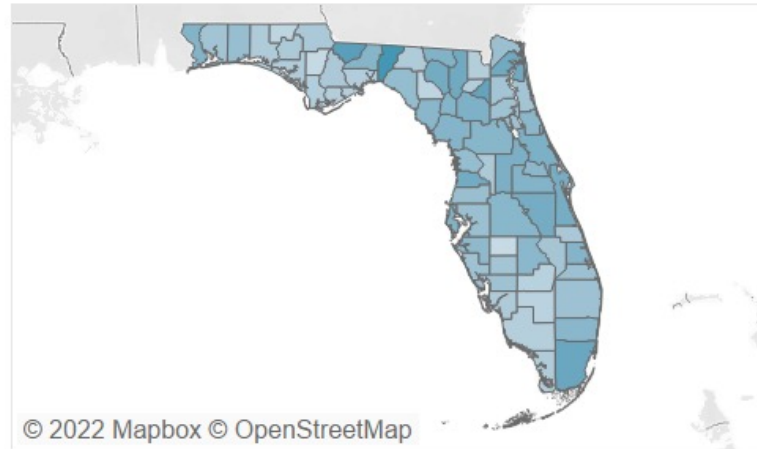
2020



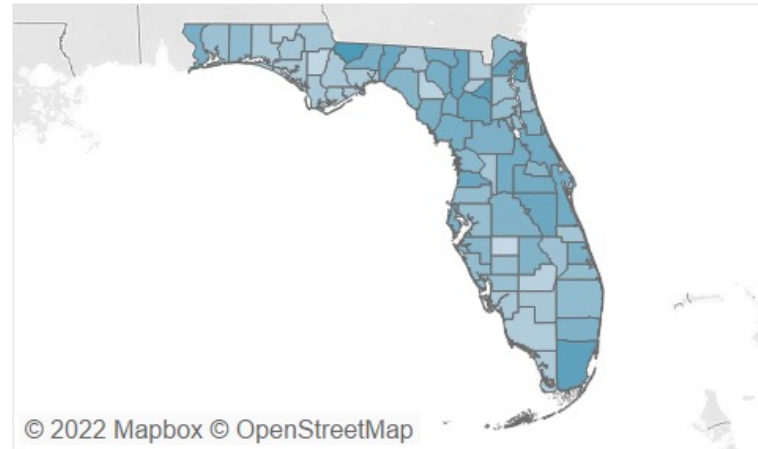
2021



2022



2023



Florida School Funding Redirected to Private Education, 2022-23 Estimates (millions)

	Voucher Expenditures (FES)	State & Local FEFP Funding	Vouchers as a % of State & Local FEFP Funding	State FEFP Funding	Vouchers as a % of State FEFP Funding
Sarasota	\$17.6	\$419.2	4.2%	\$76.6	22.9%
Palm Beach	\$76.1	\$1,702.4	4.5%	\$595.7	12.8%
Miami-Dade	\$225.2	\$2,913.7	7.7%	\$1,224.5	18.4%

Summary of Findings

- The amount of public Florida funds being spent on private education has grown tremendously over the past 4 years
- In 2022-23, \$1.3 billion will be redirected from public school districts to private education, 10% of state K-12 education funds through the state's school funding formula
- \$1.1 billion more from general revenue that would otherwise be used to support state services may be redirected to private education as a result of business tax credits too
- The poor timing of budget deductions for vouchers happening mid-school year makes the funding drain even more challenging
- The impact of vouchers on districts' budgets ranges up to 9% of the total FEFP budget (state and local dollars) as of the start of the 2022-23 school year.

Implications

- Expanded private school sector without accountability
- Increased segregation and establishment of two systems of education
- Redirection of Title 1 funds to private schools

Recommendations:

Keep Public Funds in Public Schools

- Increase transparency and accountability of the voucher process
- Halt further expansion of eligibility
- Cap the amount of funds that can be awarded so school districts can plan and manage their budgets
- Support the school districts impacted by vouchers to cover fixed costs and assist students with high resource needs

What To Watch

- The newly adopted House rules establish a new sub-committee to the standing Education and Employment Committee
 - The Choice and Innovation Subcommittee – Leadership & Membership TBA

What can be done?

- Help raise awareness of the diversion of public school funds
 - Share our report with your networks
- Help raise awareness among legislators
 - Stay tuned for one pagers for upcoming session
- Stay tuned for an Action Network Page on FPI website

Questions?

Contact info

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