

January 19, 2016

More Than 10,000 Rally for School Choice

By Matt Galka



Supporters of Florida's private school voucher program came out in droves to Florida's Capitol Tuesday. As Matt Galka tells us, they say they don't want to fight with public educators, they just want options.

More than ten thousand people, mostly students, marched near Florida's Capitol Tuesday. They chanted "drop the suit," urging the Florida Education Association to back off their legal challenge to the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship program. The program provides private school scholarships to more than 70 thousand mostly low income and minority students.

Parent Lisa Smiley from Jacksonville said she had to be their with her kids.

"Choices, we need choices, for our babies. We should have a right to choose," she said.

One day after the country celebrated the holiday in honor of his father, Martin Luther King III led the rally.

"What education does, for any family, is create the prospect for change, and financial sustainability," said King.

Students from all around the state said that without the tax credit scholarships, they'd have nothing.

"It's bettered me, it's given me more opportunities, it's going to give me more opportunities in the future," said Yaneimi Escobar. She attends Faith Outreach in Tampa.

But FEA President Joanne McCall says when it comes to the "drop the suit" movement...

"It's not going to happen. I'm not so sure what they're afraid of, we're going to go to the courts and they'll tell us if its constitutional or not," she said.

The program lets businesses provide scholarships worth more than \$5600 bucks, and they get a dollar for dollar tax break in return for their participation. FEA says the money could be used to bolster public schools.

There is no timetable on a ruling.

