



## NAACP chapter opposes school choice program ... for not being universal?

By Jason Russell

A battle is brewing among liberals in Florida over the state's quasi-school voucher program. The Florida Education Association, the largest teachers' union in the state, is challenging the program in court, with the support of the state chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

But the NAACP's reasoning for opposing the program is curious. "Adora Obi Nweze, president of the state's NAACP chapter, said the group opposes the scholarship program because Florida's children do not have equal access to the opportunity," reports Politico Florida. "All children cannot go to a charter school, or they can't have a voucher, so you're picking and choosing," Nweze said. "And that is a policy we can't support."

That would seem to imply the NAACP chapter would support the program if it were universal. So does this: "If only some children have access to an educational program, 'that's not good enough for us,' Nweze said. 'That's a low bar. That's a real low bar. That is not good enough. It has to be for everybody.'" The teachers' union argues the program takes money away from public schools. In contrast, Nweze's logic seems to imply that the program should be expanded to all students, or limited to none.

Nweze did not respond to a request for clarification.

Contrary to the Florida NAACP and the FEA, other education reform groups are calling on the FEA to end its challenge. These groups include the Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Options, the Black Alliance for Educational Options and the Florida African American Ministers Alliance.

The voucher program gives full tax credits for donations to organizations that give private school tuition scholarships to students in low-income families. Statewide, only \$450 million can be claimed in the credit. "Of the state's nearly 3 million school children, about 70,000 are now attending private schools with the tax credit-funded scholarships," Politico Florida reports. "About 38 percent of scholarship recipients are Hispanic, and 30 percent are black. The average household income for participating families is \$25,000."