

Louisiana

This excerpt is taken from the [Public Funds Public Schools](#) report [The Fiscal Consequences of Private School Vouchers](#) by Samuel E. Abrams and Steven J. Koutzavlis. The report documents the growth of voucher programs and spending in seven states between 2008 and 2019.

Louisiana lawmakers have enacted two sizable conventional voucher programs: the Scholarships for Educational Excellence voucher launched in 2008, and the School Choice for Students with Exceptionalities voucher program launched in 2011. The following year, lawmakers enacted a tax credit voucher program, the Tuition Donation Credit Program.

The state's voucher programs served approximately 9,000 students in 2019. This total represented only 1.3 percent of the state's 710,000 PK-12 students.

In fiscal year 2013 (the first year for which data are available), Louisiana was spending \$26,933,352 on voucher programs.* By fiscal year 2019, that figure had risen to \$68,455,426, an increase of 154 percent and an annual growth rate of 16.8 percent.

Between fiscal years 2008 and 2019, the state increased its per-pupil funding for public education by 6.3 percent, from \$9,714 in fiscal year 2008 to \$10,323 in fiscal year 2019 (all in 2020 dollars). The 49 other states, on average, increased per-pupil spending over this time period by 9.3 percent.

This substandard growth in per-pupil funding might be attributed to economic duress, as it coincided with a 1.8 percent annual growth rate in GDP for the state from 2008 to 2019, far short of the 3.1 percent mean annual growth rate over this time period for the 49 other states.

In terms of educational effort, measured as the percentage of state GDP allocated to PK-12 funding, Louisiana's per-pupil spending shows Louisiana to be idling in its commitment to public education at the same time it substantially increased its funding of private schooling. In fiscal year 2008, Louisiana allocated 2.9 percent of its GDP to PK-12 funding, giving it a rank of 46 among the 50 states. In fiscal year 2019, Louisiana allocated 2.8 percent of its GDP to PK-12 funding, conferring a rank of 41 among the 50 states. Over this time period, however, enrollment in Louisiana public elementary and secondary schools climbed 4.3 percent.

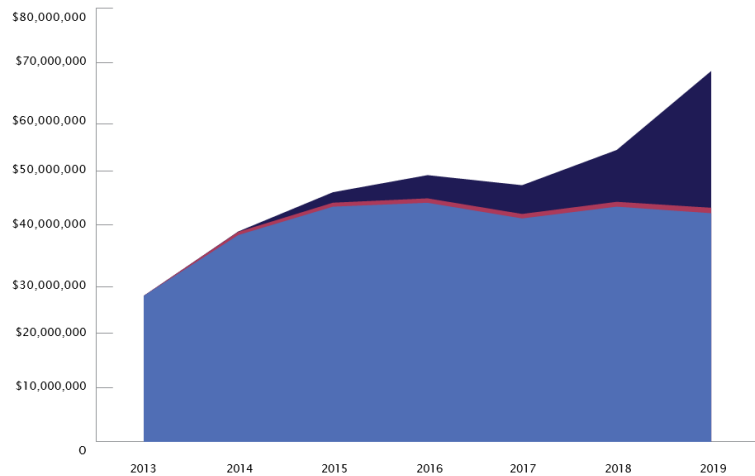


Fig 5 Louisiana Voucher Spending 2013-2019
Voucher spending total in 2019 equals \$68 million.
See Table 5 in Appendix for details.

- 1 Scholarships for Educational Excellence, 2008
- 1 School Choice for Students w Exceptionalities, 2010
- 1 Tuition Donation Rebate Program, 2012

* All spending amounts presented here are in 2020 dollars.