

April 9, 2002

Letters to the Editor
The Frontiersman
5751 E. Mayflower Court
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Dear Editor:

T. L. Whitstine Sr. of the Butte wrote a letter to the editor with seven questions about my support of vouchers, and then proceeded to answer them.

Due to space limitation, I'll respond without restating his questions. A voucher plan allows parents, not government administrators, decide where their child will be educated, giving rise to healthy competition instead of the current monopoly. No new money would be involved. Alternatively, a fixed portion of money to pay for a child in a government school would go to a different school, either private or public in the form of a voucher issued to parents.

Schools would compete for students instead of compulsory attendance as we now have. Private schools would pick and choose as they already do. The number of school buses and teachers added or removed would depend on how many parents decided to send their children to private schools. The money saved would also depend on how many kids enrolled in private schools.

Parents who don't have children should not have to pay. But I doubt that this application of common sense would fly in Juneau, yet. Rent is a private agreement between landlords and their customers and thus not subject to government.

The market will determine if there are schools for slower learners. There are schools that teach language, cooking, carpentry and mechanics. If there is a demand, the market usually finds a solution.

Mr. Whitstine's questions avoid the major reason for a voucher plan in the first place. Vouchers would take power from educational bosses and place it back in parents' hands where it properly belongs. It would end the

government school monopoly. Winners? Parents, competent teachers and kids. Losers? Incompetent teachers and government monopolists.

Sincerely,

Rep. Vic Kohring
Juneau