

Volume 28, Issue 7**Research Announcement****An Economic Case against Vouchers: Why Local Public Schools Are a Local Public Good**

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Abstract

Statewide voucher plans are consistently rejected in plebiscites. This article explains voters' attachment to public education despite the schools' deficiencies: The public benefit of local schools accrues to parents, not children. Having children in a local school enables adults to get to know other adults better, which in turn reduces the transaction costs of citizen provision of true local public goods. This network of adult acquaintances within the municipality is "community-specific social capital." Vouchers would disperse students from their communities and thereby reduce the communal capital of residents. Voters' implicit understanding of this causes them to reject large-scale voucher plans.

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