Impact of the Draper Voucher Initiative on the State Budget

Background
In 1988, voters approved a constitutional amendment that requires approximately forty percent of the state budget be spent on public schools (Proposition 98). This guarantee includes all K-12 public schools and community colleges, childcare programs provided by public schools, state schools for the deaf and blind, and schools for the neurologically handicapped. According to the Legislative Analyst, the Draper Voucher Initiative would "result in a major rearrangement of the state system of school finance."

The Draper Voucher Initiative will have a devastating impact on the portion of the state budget that does not go to public education.

- Under the initiative, the private school vouchers must be funded out of the portion of the budget that is not already set aside for public education.
- Paying for the vouchers that must be provided to nearly 700,000 students currently attending private schools - at a minimum of $4000 per student - will cost almost $3 billion over and above the current state budget.
- Paying for the $3 billion in vouchers just for those students currently in private schools will mean either a tax increase or cuts to services like police, fire, prisons, health care, transportation, and state colleges and universities.

The Draper Voucher Initiative will remove guarantees voters put in place to protect public school funding.

- If the state's per pupil funding reaches or exceeds the national average, the Draper Voucher Initiative eliminates the constitutional guarantee that 40 percent of the state budget go to public schools. The new system of funding in the initiative covers K-12 public schools only.
- This will remove the voter approved constitutional funding guarantees for community colleges, childcare programs provided by public schools, state schools for the deaf and blind, and schools for the neurologically handicapped.

The Draper Voucher Initiative takes money away from local public schools.

- Every child that leaves a public school for a voucher school will result in a loss of revenue to that local public school.
- The state bureaucracy and not the local public school would control any savings. Politicians and bureaucrats, not local communities, would determine how it is spent.
- Implementing this initiative requires creating a massive new bureaucracy to track the voucher payments, costing taxpayers millions of dollars and further reducing the amount of money available to public schools.
- Every dollar spent on vouchers for those students already in private schools is a dollar that could be spent on improving public schools. Under this initiative, however, it must be spent on those who can already afford to send their children to private schools.