



# Available Seats 2.0: Opportunities Abound with School Choice

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The Springfield, Missouri School District enrolled nearly 25,000 students in 2017, making it the largest school district in the state. If that school district were closed tomorrow, there would be more than enough space to accommodate the students in existing private schools throughout the state. Of course that's not likely to happen, nor am I advocating that; but it gives a nice illustration of the capacity of Missouri's private schools.

Using data from the National Center of Education Statistics' Private School Universe Survey, I estimate that there are more than 28,000 available seats in currently operating private schools. This estimate does not count the tens of thousands of students already being educated in private schools; rather, it is an estimate of the gap between how much the schools could serve and how many students they currently enroll.

This is discussed in more detail in my new paper, *Available Seats 2.0: Opportunities Abound with Private School Choice*. Additionally, I show that a private school choice program, depending on the design, could potentially save the state millions of dollars.

While the discussion about program design and potential savings is a substantial part of the paper, it should not be construed as the most important component. The main takeaway from the paper is really captured in the subtitle itself—*opportunities abound with private school choice*.

If Missouri were to enact a voucher or a scholarship program, they could open the doors of

hundreds of private schools to students who otherwise may not have had any educational options outside of their traditional public school. Having the ability to choose the type of school—maybe a Montessori school or a classical academy—means having educational freedom.

Opportunities abound for families to find a school that meets their needs and aligns to their values. That is the promise of school choice. To read the essay, click on the link below.

### Read More:

 [Download 20181030 - Available Seats in Private Schools - Shuls.pdf](#) (1.16 MB)

## About the Author



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