

Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty: Parents in Milwaukee are choosing schools based on quality

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Background: With traditional Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), three types of public charter schools, and private schools in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP), few cities, if any, offer more educational options than Milwaukee. However, not enough research has been done about why parents choose the schools they do, why schools grow and shrink, and why schools close.

A new [study](#) by WILL's Dr. Will Flanders and Cato Institute's Corey DeAngelis seeks to fill that research void.

Study: WILL Research Director Will Flanders and Corey DeAngelis of the Cato Institute conducted a [market analysis](#) to determine how academic achievement, school safety, and enrollment trends predict school growth and school closure in Milwaukee. Conclusions:

- Academic performance predicts enrollment growth and decline among private schools in the MPCP and public charter schools. It also predicts school closure in the MPCP.
- Total enrollment predicts school closure among private schools in the MPCP and public MPS district schools.

Why it matters: The study provides evidence that parents are voting with their

feet, choosing schools that are higher performing and safer. But the school choice programs are threatened by the governor-elect Tony Evers who has a history of being an opponent of vouchers and charters and ran on a platform of rolling back school choice. Proponents of school choice need to be on guard for new regulations that will hinder parental choice.

- **Learn More:**

- Read about it in the Washington Examiner (2 minute read): [“Believe it or not, markets work in education”](#)
- Watch it (6 minutes): [“The Predictors of School Growth and Closure in Milwaukee”](#)
- Listen to Will Flanders and Corey DeAngelis on [Right Wisconsin](#) (26 minutes)
- Full study (27 pages): [The Education Marketplace: The Predictors of School Growth and Closures in Milwaukee](#)