



OFFICE OF RESEARCH

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LIES AND DISTORTIONS:

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SCHOOL VOUCHERS

Organized opponents of tax-supported school vouchers purposely issue inaccurate statements about parental school choice, according to a report issued by the Office of Research, Institute for the Transformation of Learning (ITL), Marquette University.

“Lies and Distortions: The Campaign Against School Vouchers,” is being issued in connection with a national convention of education reporters to be held April 26-28 in Phoenix, Arizona. The theme of the event — the 54th National Seminar of the Education Writers Association — is “Changes, Choices, or Chaos.”

The new study is co-authored by Howard Fuller, Ph.D., and Kaleem Caire. Fuller is a Distinguished Professor of Education at Marquette University, where he founded and directs the ITL. He is a former superintendent of the Milwaukee Public Schools. Caire is executive director of the Black Alliance for Educational Options. He previously held the position of chief education consultant on minority student achievement at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

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Fuller and Caire argue that widespread use of inaccurate information about school choice “seriously contaminates discussion of this important policy issue.” The report documents errors and distortion by prominent journalists and media outlets, including NBC anchor Tom Brokaw and *The New York Times*.

“We encourage the print and broadcast media to cast a public spotlight on perpetrators of misinformation about school choice. The news media should hold participants on all sides of the debate accountable for their statements,” according to the Fuller and Caire report.

Fuller and Caire say that a “growing range of credible research suggests that expanded school choice may hold real promise for addressing the unacceptable” achievement gap between low-income students, mostly of color, and other students. This was underscored by recently released data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

They conclude their report as follows: “This campaign of misinformation contributes to denying low-income parents and their children the options that most American families take for granted. [The] ‘consequences of deception’ are measured by millions of children whose ability to prosper in a free society may be jeopardized.”