

# Opinion: Getting a stimulus check? Spend it on private school tuition.

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An unprecedented opportunity has arrived, and too many are focused on applauding or hating the \$1.9 trillion covid-19 relief bill to notice.

If you are getting a check, here's the smart thing to do: Enroll your child in a private school. The government is going to pay for it.

Every taxpayer gets \$1,400, provided the individual makes \$75,000 or less. Eligible families will receive \$3,600 for every child 5 and younger, and \$3,000 for every child 6 to 17. Though regulations are being hammered out, the hope is to convert these child payments into a monthly check — \$300 or \$250 a month.

Not everyone can spend this money on schools. Some families are pressed to the edge, desperate for food and shelter. But when the one-time checks and monthly child payments go to a family with a balanced budget, the overwhelming push should be for education.

The pandemic has laid bare the dysfunction of public school systems, which have closed their doors thanks to the unbridled selfishness of the teachers unions, despite scientific data on the safety of in-person instruction. The brand damage to the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers will not be forgotten; countless "I love my teacher" campaigns won't erase the scars. Parents with kids in every closed school will remember: When the going got tough, the teachers unions fled.

Which ought to tell parents that now is the time to flee the public schools. A new river of cash is headed to you and your kids. Find a school, do a deal, and enroll your children. Catholic schools especially are used to making arrangements with families to bring in new sets of siblings. Catholic elementary school tuition averages around \$5,000 a year in the United States, but all with which I am acquainted provide scholarships and other means to help an eager family find desks for their kids. Start this very day by Googling the name of your city and "Catholic schools." Make a list, start calling, asking



for the admissions office. Tell them you want in and you have the new benefit coming. They'll be ready.

At least they *should* be ready. Every private school principal must prepare for the windfall. Jam in the desks, hire the necessary teachers. Appeal to alumni for donations to take up the slack. Suggest to parents that the \$1,400 can help cover the costs of uniforms and books. Advertise. Proselytize. Evangelize about the benefits of your school.

The stimulus package can work a revolution in American education. Some families simply won't be able to spare the payments, but many will be empowered to try as the unemployment rate falls. The chance to change the trajectory of a child's life comes around only a few times, and the government is making this moment hard to ignore.

The anger felt by some parents whose children languished in apartments or sat at crowded dining room tables next to parents working remotely is white-hot. That intensity is likely to increase with every day, with every excuse, with every district that finds another reason to stay shuttered. Meanwhile, the missed classes, sports seasons, graduations and experiences keep mounting.

Get your kids out and into a school that puts them first. You now have the money. Use it.

