



Everything New Orleans

Gov. Bobby Jindal's voucher plan gets an 'F' from Louisiana Budget Project

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By **Times-Picayune Staff**

By

A liberal think-tank blasted Gov. **Bobby Jindal's** voucher plan last week, noting that private schools that accept students on scholarship will not be required to undergo the same testing and grading regime now in place for public schools, an issue expected to be a key point for teachers unions and other opponents during the debate. The **Louisiana Budget Project** gave the plan an "F" for accountability and transparency.



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John Raoux, The Associated Press

Gov. Bobby Jindal was photographed at the Republican Governors Association annual conference in Orlando, Fla., on Nov. 30.

An overhaul of the education system is one of the governor's key issues this year and a part of that plan is a system that would allow students in schools ranked C, D or F to get vouchers allowing them to attend private schools. Those grades are based on performance standards and testing that are not required of private schools.

Louisiana Budget Project director Jan Moller said private schools should be held to the same standards as public schools and that assessment tests would allow parents and taxpayers to see where their money is going. "Handing over public resources to private schools with no strings attached is bad public policy," Moller said. "All schools

that receive state funding should be subject to the same testing and grading requirements."

Jindal administration officials have noted that individual students that are part of the existing voucher program in New Orleans are still required to take state tests, which allow parents to monitor their progress.

Communications Director Kyle Plotkin said it should be up to the schools to prove that they are the right place to send their children. "Every solution they want involves more government spending and more government control," said Plotkin, who referred to the think tank as "the Big Government project." "We have a philosophical difference with them. We trust parents to make choices because they know what's

best for their children. The big government project trusts government because they think government knows best."

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