

New York University's Sean Concoran Speaks about School Choice



Professor Sean Concoran presented his research on voter demand for school choice at the Department of Public Policy's speaker series. Professor Concoran's research uses school choice ballot initiatives or referenda in Washington State to understand voter support for charter schools.

Professor Concoran discussed the impacts of school choice on traditional schools, including school size and efficiency. He examined voter preference by voter, school, and community characteristics. Professor Concoran measured graduation rates, class size, revenues per student, and local teacher union membership to evaluate the success of school choice for charter schools in particular.

Professor Concoran finds that, there is a high level of positive support for charter schools amongst those in higher income brackets, and among some elderly. There also seems to be lower support for charter schools in increasingly Hispanic districts. There was less support for school choice in districts that have lower achievement levels in math and reading. Finally, districts with teachers that have higher rates of experience also tended to be less supportive of charter schools.