



ARE PRIVATE SCHOOLS DIVERSE?

Utah's private schools are as broadly diverse as its public schools, and more diverse in many cases.

FACT: UTAH'S PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS HAVE EQUAL PROPORTIONS OF MINORITY STUDENTS

A close look at diversity data in public and private school enrollment is a bit like looking in the mirror. The percentage of minority enrollment is virtually the same in both public and private schools thus mirroring the Utah ethnic landscape.

According to federal government data from 2003 (the most recent year for which both public and private school racial data is available), Utah's private schools have a higher proportion of minority students compared to the public school system (see Chart 1). By demographic group, Utah's private schools

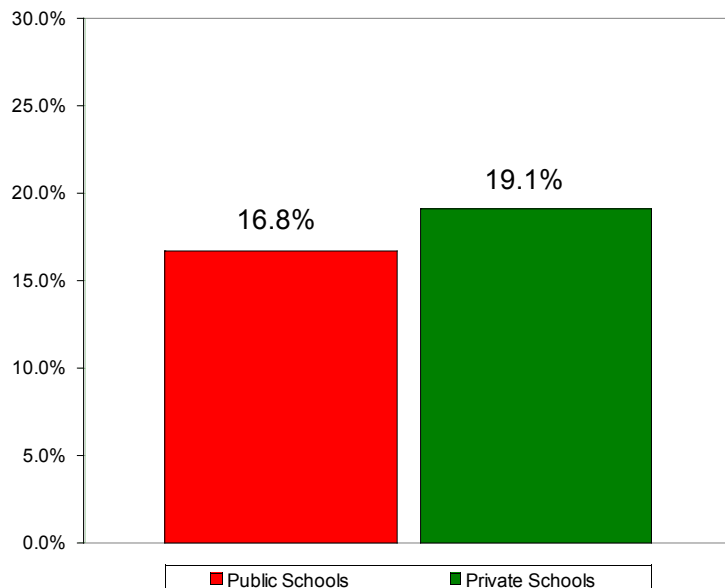
have higher proportions of African-American, Asian, and American Indian students while public schools have a higher proportion of Hispanics.

As Chart 2 shows, using current data from the Utah State Office of Education and using an August 2007 follow-up telephone survey to private schools, these results were verified when comparing voucher-eligible schools with their public school neighbors.

The Sutherland Institute called 64 private schools and collected student body

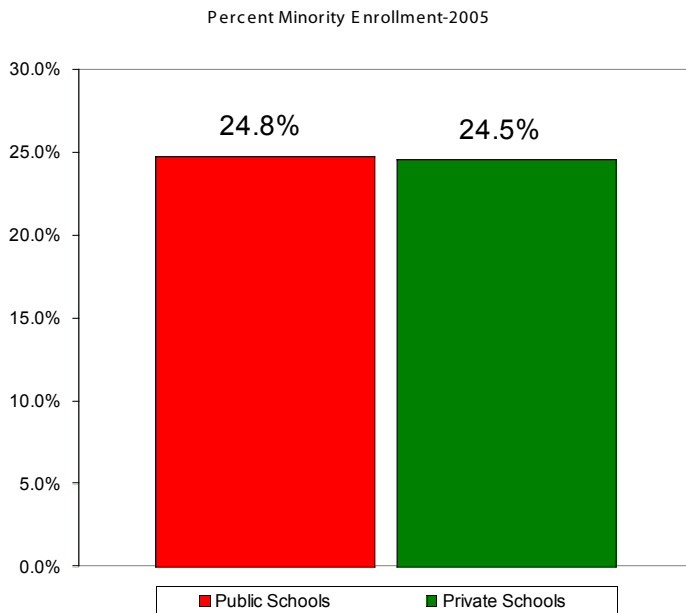
Chart 1

Percent Minority Enrollment-2003



racial information from 41 schools, with a total 2005 enrollment of 9,812 students (between 59.9% and 72.5% of 2005 total private school enrollment). The Institute compared this racial information to racial information on neighboring public schools – in other words, those located in the same zip code as the private schools.

Chart 2



As the chart shows, voucher-eligible private schools and neighboring public schools are equally diverse. As in 2003, the private schools had slightly lower proportions of white students than their public school counterparts, and had higher proportions of African-Americans and Asians/Pacific Islanders. Public schools had a higher proportion of Hispanics, and also had a higher proportion of American Indian students, a change from the 2003 data.

Broken down and compared at the zip code level, the findings on racial parity in public/private schools were again verified. The private schools resided in 13 different school districts and 27 different zip codes. In thirteen of these zip codes, private schools had fewer white students and in thirteen other zip codes, it was the public schools that had fewer white students.

Furthermore, upon statistical testing of the mean proportions of white students in public versus private schools, there was no evidence to indicate that the two values differed one from another.

Overall, these results suggest 1) that private schools are just as diverse as public schools in general, and 2) that private schools waiting to accept voucher students are just as diverse as their public school neighbors. The “lack of diversity” argument against the voucher program does not hold up to actual fact.