

ANYONE FOR SCHOOL CHOICE?

If there was ever any doubt about the popularity of school choice, it was stricken when New York City launched a modest experiment of its own. At the behest of Mayor Giuliani, a foundation created by Wall Street executives helped raise funds to transfer 1,000 public-school students to parochial and other private schools.

The students would be selected by lottery from the among the city's worst public schools. Here are the results: there were more than 17,250 public-school children who applied for the 1,000 openings.

So what does this tell us? Among other things, it says that if the poor are given the same choices afforded the affluent, they will vote with their feet and walk their child to the nearest Catholic school.