

BUSH VOUCHER PLAN DESERVES WIDE SUPPORT

The Bush administration today announced a plan for education that includes a limited voucher program. The plan would give schools that receive Title 1 federal money – money designated for poor children – three years to improve job performance to meet federal standards. If the schools fail to improve in that time, parents would receive \$1,500 from Title 1 money to be used for tutoring or private schooling.

Catholic League president William Donohue took the occasion to explain why the league supports the plan:

“Vouchers are a matter of civil rights. The right to access quality education, particularly for poor children, is a basic right that has long been recognized and supported by Americans. To deny children that right because the neighborhood in which they live forces them to attend a substandard public school is a violation of their basic rights.

“Voucher programs have a solid record of leveling the playing field and giving parents freedom of choice in the education of their children. It improves public education, while improving opportunities for all children regardless of their economic status.

“The Bush plan is a starting point toward assuring educational opportunities for all Americans. While education vouchers should be available for every child, we support this initial step in recognizing an essential civil right.

“The track record of Catholic schools in the inner cities has proven to be the greatest single engine of social mobility. Anyone who is not anti-poor should support this measure.”