

OBAMA TO CATHOLICS: NO VOUCHERS

When he was a state senator in Illinois in June 2002, Barack Obama was explicitly asked by Chicago media personality Jeff Berkowitz whether he supports school vouchers. "I would support anything that is going to be better for the children of Illinois," he said. He emphatically added that "I am not closed minded on the issue."

In February 2008, Obama spoke to reporters from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* about the issue. Still keeping an open mind, he said, "If there was any argument for vouchers, it was 'Let's see if the experiment works.' And if it does, whatever my preconception, you do what's best for kids."

However, last Saturday Obama told the American Federation of Teachers that he was opposed to vouchers. When his campaign was asked about his new position, it released a statement saying, "Senator Obama has always been a critic of vouchers."

Commenting today is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

"Guess Obama couldn't resist pandering to the teachers union. It's so easy to tell the media that keeping an open mind on school vouchers is the best way to go. But when cash counts—and the American Federation of Teachers has plenty of it—who cares about principle? Fact is, no amount of empirical evidence was ever going to change his mind.

"Obama now joins a long list of African American elites who wouldn't dare send their kids to an urban public school, but who works hard at every turn to deny poor black parents the same options he and his wife are so lucky to have. We hope that Catholics, as well as African Americans, get the message."