

Resolution Opposing the Establishment of Education Scholarship (aka Savings) Accounts and the Expansion of the Indiana School Choice Scholarship (aka Voucher) Program

WHEREAS, the Indiana General Assembly during the 2021 legislative session is considering the establishment of Education Scholarship (aka Savings) Accounts (ESAs) that funnel state funding to parents who withdraw their children from public schools, as well as a significant expansion of the Indiana School Choice Scholarship (aka Voucher) Program; and

WHEREAS, Education Savings Accounts give parents a portion of per-pupil state funding to spend like a taxpayer-funded debit card on education products and services, including private school tuition, unregulated home schools, and tutoring, in a generally-unmonitored and unaudited manner with little to no oversight or regulatory requirements related to the authenticity and quality of the products and services utilized; and

WHEREAS, the expansion of the Indiana school choice scholarship program would redirect additional resources to non-public schools that are not held accountable to taxpayers for the use of public funds, and inappropriately reduce the amount of new dollars appropriated during the 2021 biennial budget that would be received by traditional K-12 public schools; and

WHEREAS, public funds should be invested in public schools, which are required to serve ALL children, and who may not discriminate or deny student services based upon a religion, students within the LGBTQ community, students with disabilities or exceptions, and other discriminatory practices that further segregate students throughout Indiana; and

WHEREAS, non-public schools lack fiscal transparency, public oversight, and taxpayer accountability; and

WHEREAS, education scholarship accounts would be funded through the K-12 tuition support appropriation at the expense of funding to support public schools; funds that already have been researched to be at least \$600 million short based upon the final report of the Governor's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission; and

WHEREAS, the expansion and creation of these private school funding programs are covered by our state's school tuition support fund, further eroding the already-limited public dollars that are used to fund traditional K-12 public schools and increase teacher pay; and


WHEREAS, House Bill 1005 and/or Senate Bill 412 (or other bills in which these concepts are inserted) create an Education Scholarship Account program called the "Indiana education scholarship account program", as well as an education savings account program called the "Indiana personalized education grant program", and significantly expand the Indiana School Choice Scholarship (aka Voucher) Program; and

WHEREAS, this legislation intentionally would further erode in irresponsible and reprehensible ways the financial support provided to Indiana's public schools, which serve more than 90% of Indiana's students, and would divert resources away from improving Indiana public school teachers' salaries as recommended by the Governor's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission report, released on December 14, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of the Kokomo School Corporation strongly opposes and condemns the establishment of Education Scholarship (aka savings) Accounts and the expansion of the Indiana Choice Scholarship Program as proposed by members of Indiana's General Assembly and currently found in House Bill 1005 and Senate Bill 412.

Approved this 1st day of March, 2021.


KSC Board President


KSC Board Secretary