

Dear Governors,

We write to you today with the fervent hope that you will stand strong as a champion for all children and public education by rejecting the federal private school voucher tax credit. Equitable public education is a promise of hope, yet to be fully realized. The federal voucher is another attempt to move our society from the greater “we” to a focus on “me.” Rather than directly investing federal dollars into critical programs, such as IDEA and Title I, which have never been fully funded and that benefit all children, the federal government has chosen to provide personal tax credits and individual vouchers. We know that you believe in opportunity for all children and not just opportunity for some. Special interests intent on profiting off the backs of our children have seized this moment to privatize education at the expense of their futures. Instead of settling for quick fixes that only provide opportunities for a select group of students, we need you to demand opportunities for all. This is a pivotal moment; your leadership is needed now more than ever.

The federal voucher scheme promises hope but only leads to destruction. Well-meaning leaders may be tempted to settle for the crumbs this administration is offering because our public schools have been starved for far too long, but this is not the solution. We demand better from our leadership. **Rejecting the voucher scheme is not rejecting funding; it is rejecting the dismantling of public schools.** Implementing a voucher program is a decision to funnel money away from families that depend on public schools toward private interests. This serves only to erode the opportunities available to all students.

Our stance represents a national movement that is uncompromising in its demand for fully-funded public schools that provide educational opportunity for all students. The Partnership for Equity & Education Rights (PEER) and 31 education advocacy groups across 19 states have published a new report, [Public Dollars for Private Schools: The State of Vouchers in 2025](#). Despite the unfounded belief that vouchers support our most vulnerable students, this report reveals that the vast majority of vouchers benefit children from wealthy families who already attend private school: in Arkansas, in the 2023-24 school year, only 5% of children using a new voucher program transferred from public schools. While this report focuses on the use of vouchers for private and home school students, it is important to recognize that offering vouchers for public school students to acquire tutoring services or fund extracurricular activities will still leave students behind. Private schools and businesses receiving vouchers are unaccountable and often exempt from key civil rights protections that apply to public schools, such as transparency laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and laws that protect students from discrimination.

Parents and taxpayers do not want vouchers; they want well-resourced, fully-funded public schools. In 2024, [voters in three states](#) rejected efforts to expand school choice programs. Every single time the opportunity to create a voucher system has been brought to the voters, it has been rejected. A recent poll showed that voters, regardless of party, [want to increase funding for public schools](#) rather than increase funding for voucher programs.

Horace Mann, the father of American public education, once reminded us, “Let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us the determination to make the right things happen.” His call is clear: we cannot stand by while policies weaken our public schools. We have a moral responsibility to act now, ensuring every child has access to opportunity, equity, and a future built on justice. We expect you to take a bold stand for all children by rejecting the federal tax credit voucher scheme.

Alabama

Faith in Action Alabama

Alaska

Coalition for Education Equity

Arizona

Save Our Schools Arizona

Arkansas

Grass Roots Arkansas (All Counties)

California

Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE)

American Association of University Women California

California Partnership for the Future of Learning

Labor Community Strategy Center

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)

Public Advocates

San Francisco Education Alliance

SEIU California State Council

SEIU 99

SEIU 1021

Colorado

Advocates for Public Education Policy

Arvadans for Progressive Action

Colorado PTA

Colorado Rural Schools Alliance

Engage JeffCo

Great Education Colorado

JeffCo PTA

League of Women Voters CO

Our Denver Our Schools

Connecticut

AFT Connecticut

Ansonia Federation of Teachers

Canton Federation of Education Personnel

Connecticut for All

EastConn AFT Local #6605

Hartford Federation of Teachers

Meriden Federation of Teachers

Middletown Federation of Teachers

New Britain Federation of Teachers

New Haven Federation of Retired Teachers

New Haven Federation of Teachers

Newtown Federation of Teachers

Norwalk Federation of Teachers

State Vocational Federation of Teachers

West Haven Federation of Teachers and

School Nurses Local 1547

SEIU 1973 4Cs

Windham Federation of Teachers #1577

DC

Coalition for DC Schools and Communities

Florida

Families for Strong Public Schools

Florida Coalition for Thriving Public Schools

Florida Education Association

Florida Policy Institute

Hillsborough County Special Education PTA

Pastors for Florida Children

P.S. 305

Public Education Network Sarasota

Public School Defenders, Duval County, FL

Support Our Schools Sarasota, FL

Kansas

SEIU Local 513

Kentucky

Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools Louisville

Kentuckians For The Commonwealth

Illinois

American Association of University Women

Illinois

Chicago Teachers Union

Citizen Action Illinois
Illinois Families for Public Schools
Illinois Federation of Teachers
Illinois National Organization for Women
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois
PEER Illinois
Network 49

Indiana

Indiana Coalition for Public Education

Maryland

SEIU Local 500

Massachusetts

AFT Massachusetts
Citizens for Public Schools
Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance

Michigan

Michigan Education Justice Coalition
Support Forest Hills Public Schools

Minnesota

Saint Paul Federation of Educators
SEIU Local 284

Missouri

Communities One Project St Louis, Missouri

Nebraska

Stand For Schools

New Jersey

Camden Parent Student Union
Family Voices NJ
Our Children/Our Schools
PULSE (Newark)
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

North Carolina

Great Schools in Wake
North Carolina Caucus of Black School
Board Members
North Carolina Justice Center
Pastors for NC Children
Public Schools First NC
Triangle Freethought Society

New York

Alliance for Quality Education
Dignity in Schools Campaign, NY

Ohio

Honesty for Ohio Education

Ohio Equal Rights
Columbus Education Justice Coalition

Pennsylvania

412 Justice
Education Rights Network
Education Voters of PA
Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers
SEIU PA State Council

Tennessee

Metro Nashville Education Association
Statewide Organizing for Community
eMpowerment (SOCM)

Texas

Our Schools San Antonio
Pastors for Texas Children
Students Engaged in Advancing Texas
(SEAT)

Virginia

Legal Aid Justice Center

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools
Wisconsin Public Education Action
Wisconsin Public Education Network

National

Advancement Project
Advocating 4 Kids, INC
Advocates for Public Education
The Advocacy Institute
Alliance for Educational Justice
Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS)
American Association of University Women
American Humanist Association
Brown's Promise
Center for Common Ground
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
Defense of Democracy
Dignity in Schools Campaign (National)
Education Law Center
Feminist Majority
Freedom From Religion Foundation
GSA Network
HEAL to Win

Intercultural Development Research
Association (IDRA)
In the Public Interest
Integrated Schools
Japanese American Citizens League
Journey for Justice Alliance (J4J)
Labor Network for Sustainability
League of Women Voters
Local Progress
National Education Association
National PLACE
Network for Public Education Action
NYU Metropolitan Center for Research and
Equity and the Transformation of Schools
(EJ-ROC)
Parents for Public Schools

Partners for Dignity & Rights
Partnership for Equity and Education Rights
(PEER)
Pastors for Children
Popular Democracy in Action
Public School Strong
Red Wine & Blue
Restorative Justice Initiative
The Secular Coalition for America
Secular Education Association
SSL
Student Advocacy Center
Teaching for Change
Together for Hope
United Women in Faith

ADDENDUM: REASONS TO WAIT

States do not need to rush into a decision to opt into the Federal Tax Credit Voucher program. Below are some of the reasons states should adopt a position of wait and see. [The PEER Report, The State of Vouchers in 2025](#) highlights many of the issues stated below.

1. Federal regulations aren't final.

The program is still evolving. Regulations, guidance, and accountability requirements can shift after states commit. Opting in early may lock status into rules they did not expect or cannot influence.

2. Unknown long-term fiscal impact.

The federal government often launches programs with temporary funding that shrinks over time. States may be left to cover:

- Administrative costs
- Expanded enrollment in private schools
- Ongoing voucher expenses

3. Early-adopter states will bear the risk.

Waiting allows:

- Evaluation of real-world impacts
- Visibility into legal challenges
- Analysis of implementation problems
- Understanding effects on public school budgets
- Understanding effects on private school budgets and tuition

4. Legal and Constitutional issues are not settled.

Federal vouchers could raise:

- Establishment Clause questions
- State constitutional conflicts
- Challenges from families and/or school districts

5. Public schools will face disruption.

Diverting funds to private institutions could:

- Destabilize local district budgets
- Increase class sizes
- Reduce services for vulnerable students
- Accelerate teacher shortages

6. Private schools will face disruption.

Delays or nonpayment of funds to private schools can:

- Destabilize private school budgets
- Result in an abrupt closure of smaller private schools
- Result in financial hardship for parents required to cover funds that have not been received in a timely manner.

7. No evidence that the federal tax credit voucher program will improve student outcomes.

Existing voucher research shows:

- Significant academic declines
- Inconsistent accountability
- No protections for students with disabilities
- Increased segregation