

## **Anti-School Privatization Model Legislation**

WHEREAS, the [State] constitution outlines its responsibility to provide a free local system of public education, with no mention of using taxpayer funds to maintain or support private schools; and

WHEREAS, research shows that school vouchers have not been effective at improving student achievement or closing the achievement gap, with the most credible research finding little or no difference in voucher and public school students' performance; and

WHEREAS, vouchers often do not cover the full cost of tuition or transportation costs and therefore do not actually support all families and students equally, especially students from low-income families, in having the option to attend private schools, thereby exacerbating inequality; and

WHEREAS, federal and state law supports families in exercising school choice within the existing public school system, such as charter schools, magnet schools, or other traditional public schools including in the event a student is zoned to attend a chronically underperforming school; and

WHEREAS, vouchers eliminate public accountability and transparency in a number of ways. These include, but are not limited to, channeling tax dollars into private schools that are not required to meet the state-approved academic standards, are not required to make budgets public, do not adhere to open meetings and records laws, do not elect local school board members, do not publicly report on student achievement, and do not face the public accountability requirements or anti-discrimination laws contained in federal and state laws, including special education; and

WHEREAS, vouchers are an inefficient use of tax payer money because they spread limited taxpayer funds and resources to support two school systems: one public and one private, the latter of which is not accountable to all the taxpayers supporting it; and

WHEREAS, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, students with disabilities are already entitled to attend private schools or receive private services with the full cost of tuition covered when the public school is unable to provide services that meet a students' need; and

WHEREAS, students with disabilities are done a disservice by being given a voucher or education savings account to cover just a portion of the cost in exchange for waiving their civil right to a free appropriate public education; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the [Southern Education Foundation or other state civil rights organizations] opposes legislation or other similar efforts to create a voucher program in [State] that would divert public taxpayers' dollars for private schools and calls on the [State] General Assembly to phase out any existing private school voucher programs and to ban the use of public funds for any future school voucher, or similar programs, in the state.