

Open Letter to Our Democratic Governors:

As presidents of statewide educators unions representing millions of public school employees, we write to urge you to reject participation in the proposed federal private school voucher tax credit program advanced by President Trump and congressional Republicans.

Public education is one of the Democratic Party's defining commitments — a promise that every child, in every ZIP code, deserves access to a great public school regardless of their parents' income. At this moment, educators, parents and communities across the country are asking a simple question: Will Democratic governors stand up for public schools?

Voucher schemes undermine the very foundation of public education by diverting public resources away from neighborhood schools and into private institutions that are not subject to the same standards of accountability, transparency, civil rights protections or democratic oversight. These concerns are compounded by the well-documented history of voucher programs tracing back to efforts to resist school integration following desegregation, as well as repeated warnings from civil rights organizations that modern voucher schemes continue to deepen racial and economic segregation in education.

We are especially concerned because the overwhelming evidence shows these programs do not improve student outcomes. In state after state, voucher programs have expanded far beyond their original claims, primarily subsidizing families already enrolled in private schools while weakening the public schools that educate the vast majority of children.

This proposal is also a central priority outlined in Project 2025 — the far-right blueprint for reshaping the federal government and dismantling public institutions. Its inclusion there made clear that these voucher tax credit schemes are not isolated policy ideas, but part of a broader effort to privatize public education and erode public accountability.

Supporters of this proposal point to limited or incidental benefits for some public school students or districts. But no temporary benefit is worth legitimizing a policy designed to weaken public education itself. Public schools should not be asked to participate in their own dismantling.

The 2024 Democratic National Committee platform clearly and unequivocally rejected these policies, stating that Democrats "oppose the use of private-school vouchers, tuition tax credits, opportunity scholarships, and other schemes that divert taxpayer-funded resources away from public education."

We urge Democratic governors to uphold not only that platform commitment but the core values of the party itself. At a moment when public education is under coordinated attack, neutrality or accommodation is unacceptable. Democratic leaders should be unequivocal in defending public schools as a public good and rejecting efforts to privatize them through federal tax policy.

This proposal is not "school choice." It is a federally subsidized tax shelter designed to accelerate privatization while reducing investment in the schools that serve every student, in every community, every day.

Democratic governors have long served as a firewall against efforts to dismantle public institutions and privatize public goods. We urge you to continue that leadership now by opting your state out of this program and publicly affirming your commitment to strong public schools.

Public education remains one of the last truly universal institutions in American life. It deserves investment — not abandonment.

We stand ready to work with you to strengthen public schools and expand opportunities for every student.



In solidarity,

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