RESOLUTION 2019-02-01

RESOLUTION OPPOSING EDUCATION VOUCHER LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, the Lakeland Board of Education is responsible for managing all public schools within the city limits of Lakeland, TN; and

WHEREAS, there is pending legislation before the Tennessee General Assembly that would create a voucher program allowing students to use public education funds to pay for private school tuition (voucher programs also are known as “opportunity scholarships,” “education savings,” “tax credits” or similar terms); and

WHEREAS, vouchers eliminate accountability, by channeling taxes to private schools without the same academic or testing requirements, public budgets or reports on student achievement, open meetings and records law adherence, public accountability requirements in major federal laws, including special education laws; and

WHEREAS, vouchers have not been proven effective at improving student achievement or closing the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, vouchers leave students behind, including those with the greatest needs, because vouchers channel tax dollars into private schools that are not required to accept all students, nor offer the special services they may need; and

WHEREAS, vouchers divert critical funds from public schools to pay private school tuition for a few students, including those who already attend private schools; and

WHEREAS, vouchers are inefficient, compelling taxpayers to support two school systems: one public and one private, the latter of which is not accountable to all taxpayers supporting it;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lakeland Board of Education opposes any legislation or other similar effort to create a voucher program in Tennessee that would divert money intended for public education to private entities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be delivered to the Governor, each member of the Tennessee General Assembly, and the Commissioner of Education for the State of Tennessee.

ADOPTED BY THE ELECTED LAKELAND BOARD OF EDUCATION, at a business meeting on the 11th of February, 2019, with this Resolution to take immediate effect, the public welfare requiring it.

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Kevin Floyd, Chairman  Dr. Ted Horrell, Superintendent
Lakeland School System  Lakeland School System
Board of Education