

For Immediate Release

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The National Coalition for Public Education Statement on the President's Budget

Today, NCPE issued the following statement opposing President Donald Trump's budget proposal:

We are greatly disappointed that President Trump's budget would spend \$250 million of taxpayer money to fund a private school voucher program. It is incumbent upon our President to ensure that all students have access to quality public schools.

We oppose using \$250 million under this budget proposal to study and expand vouchers. Recent research in Indiana, Louisiana, Ohio, and Washington, D.C. is clear: students who use vouchers perform worse academically than their peers who do not use vouchers. In the wake of this research, Congress gutted provisions in the reauthorization of the D.C. voucher program that would have ensured a higher level of rigor in analyzing student performance. Taxpayers should not pay for the Department to conduct new research on vouchers, especially when Congress has chosen to weaken studies of vouchers in the future.

Vouchers divert desperately needed resources away from the public school system to fund the education of a few voucher students in private schools, including religious schools. Voucher programs are an ineffective and damaging education policy: they do not improve—and can even lead to declines in—student achievement. And, vouchers underserve many students, including low-income students who often cannot afford private schools even with a voucher, students in rural areas who may have no other educational options nearby, and students with disabilities who often cannot find private schools to serve their needs.

Among their many additional flaws, vouchers lack accountability to taxpayers, deprive students of rights provided to public school students, and threaten the religious freedom of both taxpayers and religious schools. We believe that public funds should fund public schools and, therefore, we urge Congress to reject this budget's voucher proposal.

Founded in 1978, the National Coalition for Public Education supports public schools and opposes the funneling of public money to private and religious schools through vouchers, tuition tax credits, education savings accounts, and portability. For more information, contact Maggie Garrett (garrett@au.org or 202-898-2140) or Sasha Pudelski (spudelski@aasa.org or 703-8773-6933).