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Contacts:
Maggie Garrett
garrett@au.org, 202-898-2140
Sasha Pudelski
spudelski@aasa.org, 703-774-6933

National Coalition for Public Education Denounces Secretary DeVos's Proposal to Create a New Private School Voucher Program

Today, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos released details for her latest taxpayer-funded private school voucher proposal as part of the Education Stabilization Fund as authorized by the CARES Act. The "Rethink K-12 School Models Grant" plan would shift public dollars to pay for any educational service that a private school or online school or company may offer.

The National Coalition for Public Education (NCPE) issued the following statement in opposition to this proposal:

"We recognize the hardship many students and families are currently facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the closure of many schools and the unprecedented need for parents and educators to manage student learning. It is during this challenging time that the federal government should focus on providing more resources to our public schools and public school educators, who are best-equipped to serve all students, rather than siphoning limited resources to individual students to use in private schools and for-profit online learning programs.

"Public dollars should fund public schools. This scheme is no different than other attempts by this administration to divert federal funding to unaccountable private educational entities. Years of research tells us that private school voucher programs don't improve student academic achievement and are unaccountable to taxpayers. Further, they fail to provide better educational opportunities for low-income students and also fail to provide effective services and protections for students with disabilities – two groups of students which the grant proposal singles out for higher priority.

"If Secretary DeVos truly wants to help the most disadvantaged students across the country during this pandemic, the solution is to fund the public schools they attend rather than diverting taxpayer dollars to private school and for-profit programs that lack quality control, oversight, and accountability."

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.