

An Opposition Letter from Public School Supporters to Members of the Indiana General Assembly and Governor Holcomb

In support of the 94% of Indiana students who attend public schools, we strongly oppose House Bill 1005, Senate Bill 412 and Senate Bill 413. Education Scholarship Accounts will divert adequate and equitable funding away from public school students and open the door to unacceptable practices. Hoosiers all lose when children are not well educated and public tax dollars are not accounted for responsibly.

In Indiana communities, public schools have been and will continue to be the hub for vital services supporting the well-being of the whole child. Passing HB 1005, SB 412 or SB 413 would divert significant monies away from public schools, enhance the opportunity for a lack of oversight related to the intended educational purpose of such funds, further exacerbate insufficiencies tied to Indiana's teacher compensation, and increase the risk to student growth, proficiency, and well-being.

Indiana's most vulnerable youth and families deserve a per-pupil funding level that promotes adequate and equitable funding. Unfortunately, the language of HB 1005 gives advantages to families with high incomes and adds disadvantages for our most vulnerable by shifting risks. HB 1005, if passed, will defeat the spirit of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act and run counter to the initial rhetoric behind Indiana's school choice.

Even with the amendment, HB 1005 would result in 94% of Indiana's students receiving less than the tuition support increase of \$377 million over two years that Gov. Holcomb's proposed. Teacher compensation, support staff pay, COVID-19 academic and operational-related costs, student support service demands, constantly changing graduation and accountability requirements, and K-12 workforce development efforts certainly deserve the funding necessary to serve Hoosier students. We firmly oppose HB 1005, SB 412 and SB 413.

We firmly support the adequate and equitable funding of our Indiana's public schools representing 94% of Hoosier students and families.

Dr. Suellen Reed Goddard
1993-2009 Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

Glenda Ritz
2013-2017 Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dr. Jennifer McCormick
2018-2021 Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

The following organizations support this letter:

