November 13, 2026

Governor Ferguson:

Public funds belong in public schools, where 87% of K-12 Washington's students learn.

As organizations with public school students, alumni, educators, families, and community members, **we call on you to reject President Trump's voucher scheme**.

The federal voucher program will drain revenue from federal coffers at a time when we've already seen Title I and IDEA grants cut, with more cuts threatened. Cuts will force state and school district budgets to let some kids fall through the cracks and try to make up the loss of federal funding with higher state and local taxes. States will also be responsible for funding the oversight of voucher recipients. If states like Florida and Arizona are any indication, the levels of waste, fraud, and abuse will be extremely troubling and impossible to root out due to the current federal regulations.

Furthermore, the Treasury Department will not allow meaningful input from state leaders or families, which means opting into the program is ceding control of educating our students to outside forces. Voucher programs often leave behind low-income families and students with disabilities, as well as students from rural communities. It's partly why so many voters — liberal and conservative — vote against voucher programs whenever we have the opportunity. We take pride in the transparency, accountability and quality of Washington's public school system; the voucher program could fuel a "Race to the Bottom" that puts students at a disadvantage in tomorrow's economy.

And like many state-based voucher programs that already exist, this federal program will largely subsidize tuition for students already enrolled in private schools while undermining our equitable, inclusive public schools. This is tax policy disguised as education policy, and it's part of the larger push by the Trump administration to pad the pockets of his wealthy backers.

Let's not fall for the same false promises other states have bought into. You need to send a powerful statement to all Washingtonian students and families that you support public schools by saying "no" to Trump's voucher scheme. This is a moment to prove to our students and families that you have our backs.

Sincerely,

AFT Washington
Building Changes
Children's Campaign Fund
League of Education Voters
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Public School Employees of WA/SEIU 1948
SEIU 925
Teamsters Joint Council 28
Teamsters Local 763
The Arc of King County
The Arc of Washington
Washington Education Association
Washington State Parent Teacher Association

CC: Washington State Senate, Washington State House of Representatives, State Superintendent Reykdal