

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SCHOOL CITY OF EAST CHICAGO  
RESOLUTION NO. 2021-03**

**JOINT RESOLUTION BETWEEN  
SCHOOL CITY OF EAST CHICAGO  
AND  
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS LOCAL 511  
IN OPPOSITION TO INDIANA HOUSE BILL 1005, SENATE BILL 412 AND  
SENATE BILL 413**

**WHEREAS**, the Indiana General Assembly during its 2021 legislative session is considering HB 1005, SB 412, and SB 413; bills that establish Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) and dramatically increase funding for school choice scholarships or, vouchers; and

**WHEREAS**, the aforementioned entities (“Entities”) believe that such legislation diverts much needed resources from public schools; and

**WHEREAS**, the voucher expansion bills in Indiana are part of a long-term coordinated effort to diminish public schools as evidenced by the fact that Indiana’s cumulative state spending for private school vouchers has now topped \$1 billion; and

**WHEREAS**, Indiana’s spending of tax dollars on vouchers has increased exponentially. In 2011-2012 the state spent \$15.5 million on vouchers; in 2019-2020 it was \$172.8 million dollars; 11 times more than the initial expense; and

**WHEREAS**, Indiana currently ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in the Nation for total K-12 education spending as a percentage of gross state product; and

**WHEREAS**, Indiana’s voucher system already deprives every public school system in Indiana of \$172 per student. That means a school system of 6,000 students is losing more than \$1 million each year; and

**WHEREAS**, according to legislators, the voucher program was created to help poor and minority children “trapped” in low-performing schools. The most recent statistics show that 57% of students receiving vouchers for the 2019-2020 school year were white, and 26% of voucher families have annual incomes of more than \$75,000; and

**WHEREAS**, the taxpayers of Indiana are currently paying all, or part, of private school tuition for families earning up to \$95,000 annually. In Indiana’s current voucher system, if a family qualifies for vouchers and their income increases, they remain eligible even if they make approximately double Indiana’s median household income. This means that wealthy families with students already attending private school would have their tuition bill paid for by all taxpayers, including low-income taxpayers. (School Matters, March 5, 2018); and

**WHEREAS**, the need for increases in special education funding in traditional public schools remains critical and unmet by our State legislature; and

**WHEREAS**, State legislators are proposing an expanded multi-million-dollar voucher expansion program while traditional public schools remain short on funding during the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, teachers are still waiting for significant State action on teacher pay and prioritization for teachers to receive the Covid-19 vaccine; and

**WHEREAS**, the Entities believe that public schools provide a strong educational environment for Indiana's children while this legislation, if enacted, would put this environment at risk by directing resources away from public schools to nonpublic schools which are not subject to the same rigorous scrutiny for their use of taxpayer resources.

**WHEREAS**, Indiana has one of the nation's largest voucher programs; it does not need to expand again; and

**WHEREAS**, public funds should fund public schools.

**IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of the School City of East Chicago, with the full support of its Superintendent:

- 1) Continue to support Indiana's public schools to the maximum degree as they have gone above and beyond to deal with the demands of the pandemic and as they face the challenges of making up for lost learning and providing additional services for students.
- 2) Oppose the expansion of vouchers because this system is funding thousands of families that could afford private schools without help from taxpayers (School Matters March 5, 2018). These vouchers divert state dollars from the poorest and neediest of public school students in order to give to the wealthiest.
- 3) Encourage every public school family, and every business-conscious member of the public to protest the voucher expansion and discourage legislators from diverting scarce public education dollars.
- 4) Urge our State legislators to vote NO to HB1005, SB 412, SB 413 and any other legislation that directs funding away from Indiana public schools.

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED**, by the Board of Trustees of the School City of East Chicago, with the full support of its Superintendent, that the Board Attorney is directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to the offices of our local State legislators, the Indiana General Assembly and the Office of the Governor to see that the objects and purpose of this Resolution are achieved.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, we have electronically affixed our names as the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of the School City of East Chicago, this 1<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2021.

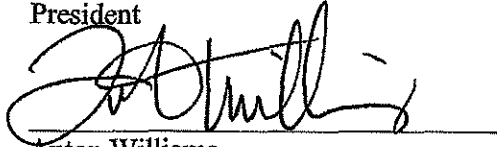
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SCHOOL CITY OF EAST CHICAGO:**

  
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Vanessa Hernandez-Orange,

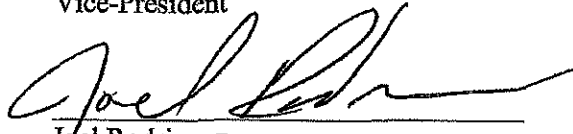
President

  
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Diane Smith,

Vice-President

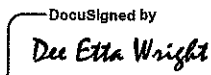
  
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Anton Williams,

Secretary

  
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Joel Rodriguez,

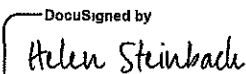
Trustee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jesse Gomez,  
Trustee

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Dee-Etta Wright, Superintendent

**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS LOCAL 511:**

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Helen Steinbach, President