



Laura Harrison
Board Chair

Jeremy Burnett
Board Vice Chair

Keith Acton
Board Member

Michelle Childs
Board Member

Deborah Thomas
Board Member

Dr. Ted Horrell
Superintendent

RESOLUTION 2024/12-01
RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE EDUCATION FREEDOM ACT

WHEREAS, Article XI, Section 12 of the Constitution of the State of Tennessee, requires that the General Assembly “shall provide for the maintenance, support and eligibility standards of a system of free public schools;” and

WHEREAS, Public schools that provide a free and appropriate education for all, including students with disabilities, require all available state funding in order to continue to improve without necessitating an increased burden on local taxpayers or reducing services for students; and

WHEREAS, Vouchers are not an evidenced-based practice to improve student achievement or close the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, Vouchers often divert public funds from the many who attend public schools to supplement those families who already attend private schools or home schools; and

WHEREAS, Lakeland School System educates and serves every eligible student in our community who wishes to enroll; and

WHEREAS, Vouchers leave students behind, including those with the greatest needs, because vouchers channel tax dollars into private schools that are not required to accept all students, nor offer the special services they may need; and

WHEREAS, Lakeland School System is fully transparent to parents and the public as the district adheres to open record requests and state-mandated academic and financial standards; and

WHEREAS, All educational institutions receiving public funds should have the same accountability and performance reporting expectations so that parents and the public may better understand the use and efficacy of those public funds; and



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WHEREAS, Most voucher programs do not require the same standardized testing as public schools leaving parents and the public uncertain of the academic achievement outcome; and, of the few that do, have poor academic outcomes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lakeland School System Board of Education strongly urges the Tennessee General Assembly to reject the Education Freedom Scholarship Act or similar voucher initiatives that would divert public dollars away from public schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be delivered to the Governor, each member of the Tennessee General Assembly, and the Commissioner of Education for the State of Tennessee.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Lakeland Board of Education, Lakeland, Tennessee on this 11th day of December, 2023, public welfare requiring it.

Laura Harrison, *Board Chair*

Ted Horrell, *Superintendent*