



GOVERNING BOARD RESOLUTION OPPOSING

EXPANSION OF EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS (SB1431)

The Arizona Legislature recently passed, and Governor Ducey signed, Senate Bill 1431 which expands Arizona's Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESA) program to any student in Arizona. This resolution opposes this expansion for the following reasons:

WHEREAS, the Legislature is charged under the Arizona Constitution to provide for "the establishment and maintenance of a general and uniform public school system" (Art. 11, Sec. 1);

WHEREAS, the Legislature is charged under the Arizona Constitution to "make such appropriations, to be met by taxation, as shall insure the proper maintenance of all state educational institutions, and shall make such special appropriations as shall provide for their development and improvement" (Art. 11, Sec. 10);

WHEREAS, the Arizona Constitution prohibits any "tax shall be laid or appropriation of public money made in aid of any church, or private or sectarian school, or any public service corporation" (Art. 9, Sec. 10);

WHEREAS, "the general conduct and supervision of the public school system shall be vested...in such governing boards for the state institutions as may be provided by law" (Art. 11, Sec. 2)

WHEREAS, Arizona ranks 48th in school funding (Education Week, Quality Counts, 2017), with Arizona teachers receiving the lowest salaries in the nation (Bureau of Labor Statistics, Morrison Institute, 2016), the third highest class sizes in the country (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015) and a growing teacher shortage crisis due to low pay and unacceptable working conditions;

WHEREAS, the cost of ESAs is covered exclusively by our state's general fund hurting the ability to fund our public schools and other programs;

WHEREAS, it has been shown that most of those using ESAs are the affluent who may have chosen to attend private school, even absent an ESA;

WHEREAS, the so-called cost savings and accountability measures contained in SB1431 do not safeguard the state's general fund enough and ESA proponents have already vowed to repeal them;

NOW THEREFORE, it is resolved that the school district governing board of the _____ School District, made up of locally elected and accountable school governing board members representing our community oppose the passage and signing of SB1431 into law and urge its reconsideration and repeal.

Adopted by the governing board at a meeting held on _____, 2017.

Signed,

Board President, Governing Board