

Education Minnesota

Press conference on school voucher resistance Tuesday

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ST. PAUL, Minn., Jan. 23, 2017 – A group of faith, education, labor and community groups on Tuesday morning will talk about how voucher schemes are a false promise to communities of color – they are unaccountable, irresponsible and discredited.

All of these organization have come together to advance solutions to help students of color and low-income students achieve academically by expanding school improvement strategies that work. But Republican leaders in the Minnesota House and Senate are focusing on something that doesn't work – controversial back-door vouchers.

HF386/SF256 would give people tax credits for private school tuition. Corporations and wealthy individuals also could get tax breaks for donating to private school scholarship funds.

These type of tax breaks are the same as vouchers. They exacerbate inequity by directly draining critical funding away from public schools, hurting low-income and greater Minnesota schools that need the funding most. And they benefit the wealthiest Minnesotans at the expense of our schools.

Last week, all of these organizations took a stand against Betsy DeVos, President Donald Trump's controversial pick for U.S. Secretary of Education, because she doesn't represent our values as Minnesotans. This bill is copied word-for-word from groups funded by DeVos. Parents, educators and our allies will stand up for children and publicly oppose any schemes that will take money from public schools and give it to the rich.

The vision of these organizations for equitable opportunity in education is to fully fund full-service community schools, to recruit and retain educators of color and to adequately support students with highly qualified school counselors, social workers, nurses and other support staff. These solutions require investment in a public school system that is for everyone.

What: Faith leaders, community leaders, parents and educators talk about why they're against school vouchers and other attempts to privatize our public schools.

Who: Education Minnesota, ISIAH, Neighborhoods Organizing for Change and Service Employees International Union Local 284

When: 10-10:30 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 24

Where: Minnesota State Capitol, Capitol Press Room B971

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