



**Resolution Urging the State to Fulfill its
Constitutional Duty to Provide Funding for Public Schools**

WHEREAS, the state of North Carolina is consistently ranked high nationally for its healthy business climate and was recently ranked the #1 state for business; and

WHEREAS, our state has been known nationally and internationally for its research and discovery due to our commitment to public education; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly is currently finalizing a state budget for the 2023-25 biennium; and

WHEREAS, the Office of State Budget and Management projects a state budget surplus of \$3.25 billion dollars for 2022-2023 and predicts a 10.7% revenue increase; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina State Constitution requires the State to ensure all children in the State have the opportunity to receive a sound, basic education; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina courts have upheld that the State of North Carolina is not meeting its constitutional obligation to provide the opportunity for a sound basic education to all public school students; and

WHEREAS, public education is the most important investment the State makes; and

WHEREAS, ninety-two percent of all students in kindergarten through twelfth grade are educated in public schools; and

WHEREAS, the social, emotional, and academic needs of children have become more severe and varied since the Covid-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the State's private school vouchers program, "Opportunity Scholarships", currently provides taxpayer funding to students from low- to moderate-income families to attend a K-12 private school; and

WHEREAS, the current private school voucher program already receives \$133 million public dollars; and

WHEREAS, bills in the House and Senate and the Senate's budget proposal are seeking to radically expand the private school voucher program by opening eligibility for the program to all students, regardless of family income or if the student currently attends a private school; and

WHEREAS, these bills would direct billions of dollars of available public funds to private schools; and



BURKE COUNTY

Public Schools

Igniting Learning For A Brighter Future

WHEREAS, expanding the private school voucher program in this extreme way will result in steep cuts to our public schools, harming the educational opportunities students, especially in rural and lower wealth counties; and

WHEREAS, in 2026-27 alone, if the private school voucher program is expanded, our state's public schools could lose more than \$200 million in state funding, and Burke County could lose \$3.3 million or 3.3% in state funding, with hundreds of millions lost in coming years; and

WHEREAS, private schools are not mandated the same testing requirements for students, are not mandated the same licensing requirements for staff, and are not mandated the same reporting procedures for finances; and

WHEREAS, research on private school voucher programs in other states demonstrates that students who moved to private schools fell academically behind their peers who stayed in public school; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina has zero evidence of student outcomes for those enrolled in the Opportunity Scholarship Program—the only program of its kind in the nation that doesn't require rigorous evaluation of student performance.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Burke County Board of Education requests that the North Carolina General Assembly vacate the proposal for unlimited expansion of the State's private school voucher program and members recommit themselves to properly funding for the overwhelming majority of our young people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chair and Superintendent are authorized to disseminate this Resolution to members of the General Assembly and Governor, and the Board encourages parents, students, and community members to contact their North Carolina legislatures to implore them to abide by their oath to uphold the North Carolina State Constitution.

Adopted by the Burke Board of Education this 7th day of June, 2023.

Ms. Wendi Craven, Board Chair

Attest:

Dr. Mike Swan, Superintendent/Secretary