Public education is our nation’s great equalizer—in our schools, our children have access to opportunities, experiences and knowledge regardless of their race, religion, ability or socioeconomic status. It is our public schools that will provide the educated, innovative and creative workforce of tomorrow—the entrepreneurs, engineers, scientists, artists and political leaders who will ensure that our nation will flourish in an increasingly competitive global economy. However, the public education system must be strengthened and supported with adequate funding. PTA advocates to invest more funds into our public schools so that all children—regardless of their race, religion, ability or socioeconomic status—can reach their full potential, rather than diverting funding into unaccountable private school voucher programs that can pick and choose who to educate.

**THE DATA**

The federal government provided $15 million in funding for private school vouchers in Fiscal Year 2018 [1]

Math scores of students educated in private schools receiving federal funds were **10%** lower than the math scores of students educated in public schools [2]

Reading scores of students educated in private schools receiving federal funds were **3.8%** lower than the reading scores of students educated in public schools [2]

Students with disabilities who leave the public-school system to attend private schools forfeit many of their IDEA protections, including their IEP plan [3]

83% of students enrolled in specialized private school programs for students with disabilities were provided no information or inaccurate information about changes to their IDEA rights [4]

**WE ADVOCATE TO**

Guarantee public funds are not diverted to any private school choice proposal and/or voucher system, including tax credit scholarship programs

Robustly fund public schools to ensure students have access to a well-rounded education and receive high-quality instruction from well-prepared teachers

Ensure all public-school choice and public charter school programs are accountable to the public, open to all students, comply with federal health and safety and discrimination laws, and are supported by public funds that do not divert funding from non-charter public schools
VOICE FROM THE FIELD

While private school voucher schemes rarely gain any traction in the California State legislature, when Carol Kocivar saw that two bills that would divert public funds into private schools were introduced in the legislature she knew she needed to take action. Carol advised her state PTA to oppose these two bills that would divert public funds for public schools into a private school voucher scheme.

With the backing of California State PTA, Carol sent letters to the legislative committees that would be considering the bills, urging legislators to oppose both bills. Language from one of her letters was included in the official analysis of the bills that was provided to the legislators before their vote.

Carol also shared California State PTA’s opposition to these bills with other members of the Education Coalition, a statewide group that works to support funding for public schools in California. The coalition includes teachers, administrators, school boards and financial officers. By the end of the legislative session, both private school voucher-related bills were defeated.

COALITIONS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

National PTA is a founding member of the National Coalition for Public Education (NCPE). Founded in 1978, NCPE supports public schools and opposes the funneling of public money to private and religious schools through vouchers, tuition tax credits, education savings accounts and portability. NCPE now consists of over 50 education, civic, civil rights and religious organizations devoted to the support of public schools. To learn more about NCPE and the negative impact private school vouchers have on public schools, visit NCPECoalition.org.

Our association is also a proud founding member of Learning First Alliance (LFA), a partnership of leading education organizations representing more than 10 million members who support improved student learning in America’s public schools through leadership and advocacy. National PTA Executive Director Nathan Monell is LFA Board Chair for 2018-2019. To learn more, visit LearningFirst.org.

[1] Public Law No: 115-141