

Chicago Voucher Program SB 1932 - Sen. Murphy

OPPOSE

Opponents

Illinois Education Association, IFT & CTU, Citizen Action, AFL-CIO, AFSCME, Ed Red, IASA, IASB, IASBO, IPA, LEND, LUDA, Laborers, SCOPE, ISBE, PURE, Action Now, SEIU

Rationale for Opposition

The IEA opposes the diversion of public funds to any private school or any other private educational institution. This bill will further erode state support of an already underfunded public education system where a majority of school districts in the state face financial difficulty, and many public schools are not receiving the resources needed to provide a quality public education.

Current Options

In response to Race to the Top (RTTT), in January 2010, the General Assembly passed legislation that addressed lowest performing schools. Under the RTTT, the lowest 5% of the schools in the state must be reconfigured in one of four different ways, each of which raises significant collective bargaining issues: 1) a "turn around" in which the school principal is replaced, the new principal is given operational flexibility over staffing and working conditions, and up to 50% of the staff is removed from the school; 2) the conversion of the school to a charter school; 3) the school's closure; or 4) a "transformation" in which the principal is replaced and evaluation systems in which student growth is a factor are used for key personnel decisions including compensation, transfer and termination decisions.

(Over)

Analysis

The bill creates a pilot voucher program for Chicago called the Illinois School Choice Program. The program provides a voucher to any student enrolled in a Chicago Public School that is performing in the lowest 10% or an overcrowded school that has a percentage of low-income students of 70%.

The voucher is \$3,800, which can be redeemed at any parochial or private school in the City of Chicago. The program will be administered by the State Board of Education.