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## Our Children/Our Schools

*Our Children/Our Schools (OC/OS), a statewide network of education, civil rights and children's rights advocates, has long opposed the Opportunity Scholarship Act (OSA), the corporate tax credit legislation that would establish a voucher program in New Jersey.*

*In anticipation of the re-introduction of the OSA in the lame duck legislative session now underway, OC/OS members and allies signed on to the statement below in opposition to vouchers.*

*The size, reach and reputations of the organizations listed here should give legislators pause before deciding to pass a bill creating a program with little public support, no basis in research and a dubious track record in other states.*

*OC/OS urges students, parents, community members, policy makers and all those who support our public schools to SAY NO TO VOUCHERS!*

We, the undersigned, oppose the implementation in New Jersey of a voucher program of any size, under any guise, or for any school district. Our opposition to vouchers in any form (including the "Opportunity Scholarship Act") is based on the following core concepts:

- We believe public schools serve the public good, accept all children, and are guided by community values.
- We believe public dollars must be used only for public education.
- We believe that NJ should not repeat the mistakes of other states; studies have shown that voucher programs have not improved student achievement, have increased student segregation, waste public money, and hurt public schools.
- We believe NJ students need and deserve the anti-discrimination, anti-bullying, freedom of speech and freedom of religion protections afforded them in the public schools, but not required of private and religious schools.
- We believe the absence of academic and fiscal accountability in private and religious schools, as compared with public schools, makes it impossible to

ensure that public money spent there will be used to improve students' academic experience or achievement.

- We believe that NJ students deserve adequate and equitable resources, implementation of best practices in education, and protection from political experiments, including voucher programs.

We urge all those who support public education to contact their legislators and legislative leadership to express strong opposition to vouchers and to demand that the NJ State Legislature cease its flirtation with this harmful privatization scheme.

Signed,

American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey  
Coalition for Effective Newark Public Schools  
Delaware Valley Chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State  
Education Law Center  
The Latino Institute, Inc.  
League of Women Voters of NJ  
NJ Black Issues Convention  
NJ State Conference of the NAACP  
NJ NAACP Units:  
    Asbury Park and Neptune  
    Irvington  
    New Brunswick Area  
    Oranges and Maplewood  
    Plainfield Area  
NJ Working Families Alliance  
Paterson Education Fund  
Save Our Schools NJ  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Statewide Education Organizing Committee  
Teachers as Leaders in Newark