



**STOUGHTON
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Administrative and Educational Services Center
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RESOLUTION in Support of Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill

(Assembly Bill 267 and Senate Bill 183)

WHEREAS, the Stoughton Area School District Board of Education, administrators, educators, staff, parents and community members of the Stoughton Area are united in our effort to provide all children with the highest quality educational opportunities possible; and

WHEREAS, the Stoughton Area School District Board (SASD) supports local control and the ability of the elected Board of Education to make decisions to support the learning of our students; and

WHEREAS, private school voucher advocates have consistently pushed for expanding the use of taxpayer-funded vouchers to pay tuition for students in private schools in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and members of the Wisconsin Legislature have proposed expanding voucher programs into many more communities and have proposed increasing state payments to voucher schools; and

WHEREAS, recent enrollment figures from the Department of Instruction show that for the 2017-2018 school year, the enrollment across all three programs has increased, and payments to voucher schools range from \$7,530 to \$8,176 at a total cost of \$269.7 million and the payments for the 2018-2019 school year will range from \$7,747 to \$8,393; and

WHEREAS, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau has shown that tax dollars for voucher operators are increasing 12 times faster than total public school aids and that voucher payments would more than double over eight years. At the same time, net general aids that support public schools and reduce property taxes would fall by 1.3%; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 267 and Senate Bill 183, the "Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill," authored by state Rep. Dana Wachs (D-Eau Claire) would require property tax bills to include information from the school district where the property is located regarding the amount of any net reduction in state aid, if any, to the district as a result of pupils enrolled in the statewide voucher program, the Racine voucher program, or the Milwaukee voucher program; and

WHEREAS, the increase in statewide property taxes due to school boards levying to offset lost aid due to the voucher system was over \$25 million in 2016-17 and is estimated to grow to \$37 million in 2017-18 and to \$47 million in 2018-19; and

WHEREAS, when private school voucher programs expand in our community, SASD loses state aid (to the voucher schools) and our School Board must raise additional property taxes to replace the aid lost to the voucher schools or lose that funding permanently under the state-imposed revenue limits; and

WHEREAS, just as property tax bills show how much money goes to public schools and technical colleges, taxpayers deserve to know the cost of expanding the voucher program; and

WHEREAS, it bears repeating that voucher schools are not bound by most state instructional requirements or graduation standards, are not subject to either the state's accountability system (i.e., no school report cards are issued for voucher schools), are not held to the public accountability requirements contained in major federal laws, including special education, are not governed by locally elected Board of Education members who must stand for election or reelection, do not have to accept all students, nor do they have to provide students with the same due process protections in public schools, do not have to employ teachers who have a background in the subjects they teach, and do not have to adhere to open meetings and public records laws; and

WHEREAS, the voters of Wisconsin have never had an opportunity to vote on whether or not Wisconsin should have a taxpayer-supported voucher program; and

FURTHER, multiple studies throughout the nation have shown that school voucher programs do not perform better in reading and math than students in public schools, and the nonpartisan Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau released a five-year longitudinal study in 2011 which concluded that students in Milwaukee using vouchers to attend private schools perform no better on standardized tests than their counterparts in public schools.

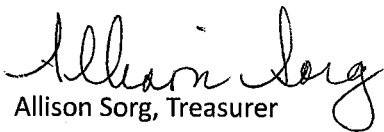
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stoughton Area Board of Education calls on Governor Walker, the Wisconsin State Assembly, and the Wisconsin Senate to support the Wisconsin Voucher Taxpayer Transparency Bill in an effort to be open, honest, and transparent with the taxpayers of the Stoughton Area and of Wisconsin.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being all of the members of the Board of Education for the Stoughton Area School District, have executed this resolution this 20th day of November 2017.



Scott Dirks, President

Joe Freye, Vice President



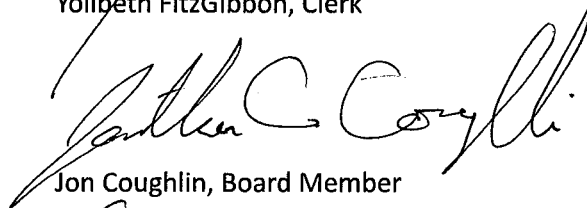
Allison Sorg, Treasurer



Yolibeth FitzGibbon, Clerk



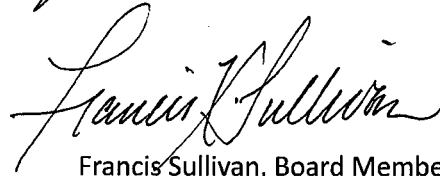
Tim Bubon, Board Member



Jon Coughlin, Board Member



Steve Jackson, Board Member



Francis Sullivan, Board Member



Donna Tarpinian, Board Member