

UPPER MERION AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
435 Crossfield Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING ESA VOUCHER PROGRAMS (SENATE BILL 2) BY
THE UPPER MERION AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

March 5, 2018

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Public School Districts provide a wide range of academic and extracurricular programs focused on the educational development and overall growth of all students within the Commonwealth in order to prepare students for success later in life; and

WHEREAS, the ESA Voucher Program, as currently proposed and known as Senate Bill 2, does nothing to address the issues of poverty, the inequities faced by low achieving schools or students' academic needs; and

WHEREAS, by targeting high poverty schools and diverting key financial resources from districts, this Voucher Program will reduce the educational opportunities currently available to the students remaining in the targeted public schools ; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has ranked high nationally in areas such as graduation rates, higher education admission numbers and reading and math exam scores; and is a leader in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math programs; and

WHEREAS, data from current voucher programs throughout the nation show that these programs do not improve student performance; and

WHEREAS, without strict accountability requirements and measurement data available on the proposed voucher program, there is no clear method to compare student progress; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania public schools ensure that every child with a disability receives a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with Federal and State laws and regulations, and every child receives the procedural safeguards protecting that educational programming; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ESA voucher program limits a child's choices because a private school is permitted to discriminate against children on the basis of gender, religion and disability status and there is no guarantee that a private school would accept the voucher; and

WHEREAS, even if the ESA monies are accepted by the private school, the child with a disability and his/her family must give up their rights and protections under the Federal Law for a Free Appropriate Education; and

WHEREAS, unlike public schools that maintain transparency and accountability, with regards to spending of taxpayer monies, the proposed ESA Voucher Program offers little transparency or accountability causing grave potential for significant abuse, waste or fraud of taxpayer money; and

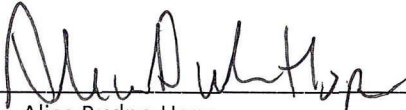
WHEREAS, the Upper Merion Area School District desires to go on record in opposition to the proposed ESA Voucher system, known as Senate Bill 2, now being considered by the Pennsylvania Legislature and/or certain Pennsylvania Legislators;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that UPPER MERION AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT opposes Senate Bill 2 and any other legislation or any effort by the General Assembly to implement tuition vouchers or any other program that would have the effect of a tuition voucher program; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED; that Pennsylvania Legislators must place emphasis on investing in public schools by partnering and sharing in the financial support of education instead of continuing to place the high burdens on local taxpayers; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Pennsylvania Legislature must address the inequities and issues of poverty faced by some school districts and strengthen the quality of all public schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Adopted this 5th day of March, 2018.

Signed: 
Alice Budno Hope
Board President

Attest: 
Michelle O'Reilly
Board Secretary

CERTIFICATION

I, Michelle O'Reilly, hereby certify that I am the Secretary of the Board of School Directors of the Upper Merion Area School District, and the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the Board of School Directors at a duly advertised meeting held on March 5, 2018, at which time a quorum was present, the Resolution being approved by a vote of 9 to 0 on the 5th day of March, 2018.

By: Michelle O'Reilly
Michelle O'Reilly
Board Secretary