

## Resolution NO. 2021-01

### Resolution Opposing the Iowa Legislature SF, 159

*WHEREAS*, the Clarinda Community School Board of Directors is responsible for providing a local system of public education, and,

*WHEREAS*, there is pending legislation before Iowa Legislature to consider enacting SF 159, a scholarship fund for the purpose of enacting educational savings accounts or vouchers, expanded open enrollment leading to segregation and expanded tax credits and, expanded charter schools that can open in a school district without the locally elected school board's consent. And

*WHEREAS*, educational savings accounts or vouchers eliminate public accountability by channeling tax dollars into private schools that do not face state approved academic standards, do not make budgets public, do not adhere to open meetings and record laws, do not publicly report on student achievement, and do not face the public accountability requirements contained in major federal laws, including special education, and

*WHEREAS*, vouchers leave many students behind, including those with the greatest needs, due to vouchers channel tax dollars into private schools that are not required to accept all students, nor offer the special service they may need. Public schools funding currently does not close the gap on funding needed for special education, and

*WHEREAS*, voucher programs divert critical dollars and commitment from public schools to pay private school tuition for a few students, including many who already attend private schools: and

*WHEREAS*, the Clarinda Community School District Board of Directors has determined that the Iowa Legislature should not enact any type of legislation that weakens support public school students and should continue to promote and fully invest taxpayer resources in Iowa's public schools, who are barred by law from discriminating against any student and who are held to standards set forth by both federal and state government. Public schools are provided oversight by locally elected school boards and by the state of Iowa. Public schools must adhere to strict state testing requirements and ensure equitable success and outcomes for each learner regardless of income, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or disability. Nonpublic schools are not held to the same public accountability standards. Iowa taxpayers deserve to know how their public funds are being used. School choice already exists in Iowa in the form of open enrollment, enrollment in private online institutions, and tuition tax credits, and school tuition organization scholarships for families below 400% of the federal poverty level, and

*WHEREAS, the Clarinda Community School District Board of Directors believes that Iowa public schools provide a strong educational experience for all students, the overwhelming majority of students attend public schools in Iowa, and families choose to remain in Iowa due to quality public school systems, we denounce any attempt to divert public funds from chronically underfunded, highly accountable public schools to private institutions that lack accountability and are not subject to rigorous academic scrutiny or financial oversight by publicly elected school boards.*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Clarinda Community School District Board of Directors, that the Board reaffirms its commitment to free accessible public schools which are adequately and equitably funded to guarantee a comparable education for ALL students and therefore opposes and respectfully requests the:*

*Iowa House of Representatives reject SF 159, specifically the Students First Scholarships (vouchers), and expansion of Charter schools by any entity without the approval of the local school board.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board opposes any funding programs, vouchers or otherwise, that have the effect of diverting public tax dollars from public schools to private/parochial schools.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to forward copies of this Resolution to all Iowa state legislators, the Director of the Iowa Department of Education, the State Board of Education Members, and the Governor of the State of Iowa.*

*ADOPTED by ACTION of the BOARD this day of ..... by unanimous vote.*

Board President \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: Board Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_