



## ICPE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2024

### **Public schools need more funding.**

- ICPE supports increasing tuition support to fully fund public schools and account for the loss of purchasing power caused by high inflation rates.
- We encourage the legislature to provide public schools with needed resources and funding for staff, curricular and programmatic needs. The state can't raise teacher pay or provide adequate services to students when it siphons funding away to "school choice."
- We support simplifying referenda/ballot questions to help voters understand exactly what they are voting for.

### **Public funds belong in public schools.**

- ICPE supports a moratorium on further draining public funding and resources into private, unaccountable hands. We oppose any expansion of so-called "school choice" including, but not limited to, ESAs (education scholarship accounts), vouchers, microschools, and charters.
- We oppose mandatory sharing of referendum dollars with charter or private schools. It would be hypocritical to force consolidation of local traditional public schools while supporting the creation of more small charter schools that aren't held to the same rules for transparency and accountability.
- We support sunseting the SGO program as, with the radical expansion of vouchers, we question the need for this further drain on funding.

### **Schools that take public funds should play by the same rules.**

- All schools (and other private or nonprofit education providers) that accept public tax dollars should be required to "open the books" and report how state tax dollars are spent and be as transparent by law as traditional public schools.
- They should also accept and be willing to educate all children—no exceptions.
- ICPE supports transparency in curriculum.
- ICPE supports legislation on transparency and accountability for all.
- We also support legislation that would give public school foundations the same tax credits that scholarship granting organizations (SGOs) receive.



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**Public schools must provide all children with an education that prepares them for democracy as well as the workforce.**

- We support educating the whole child through the work of social-emotional learning and removing barriers to learning through diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.
- We support historically accurate and inclusive curriculum as well as local control over educational materials.
- ICPE supports legislation that prepares all children for a bright future through pre-K, general education and special education. Children learn best in a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment.

**All children deserve fully-resourced, inclusive public schools with teachers who are educated and experienced in their fields.**

- ICPE supports funding for the education and licensing (certification) of teachers. We oppose watering down requirements for the teaching profession. Teachers not qualified or under emergency license should eventually work toward a license and be supported financially.
- We reject mandatory retention of third graders using IREAD-3 or any other high-stakes testing. We propose providing supports and interventions for students and professional development for teachers. We support conducting holistic and accurate assessments of students and expanding options for learning (all of which require more funding).
- We support the work and professional expertise of all who help our children: nurses, psychologists, counselors and social workers and we recognize the need for funding in these areas to bring student to professional ratios in line with best practices.

**Keep the public in public education.**

- ICPE supports local control of education through nonpartisan publicly-elected school board members who ensure schools are accountable to the communities they serve.
- ICPE supports legislation that would return local control through the process of electing school board members in Gary and Muncie.