



# FIVE INDIANA'S BILLION DOLLAR BAKE SALE SUPPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## NO BAKE SALE CAN SAVE OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS - CAN WE?

### A Budget Reflects Priorities

- Indiana's public schools have been chronically underfunded for years. We have 200 cookies here at the statehouse today in our bake sale. **We would need to sell each cookie for \$25 million dollars to make up for the FIVE BILLION dollars that has been siphoned away from our public schools due to bad education policies.** Take a look at our leaky bucket graphic by scanning the QR code below.
- We are 37th in the country with school funding; it is not keeping up with inflation. Ball State economist, Michael Hicks, pointed out in 2024 that Indiana's public schools need an extra \$1.7 billion or so a year to catch up.



- Per an analysis by Dr. Phil Downs, as of October 2024, on a per-student allocation, the 2024-25 Tuition Support Budget is still \$323.7 million behind the inflation adjusted 2009-10 school year budget.

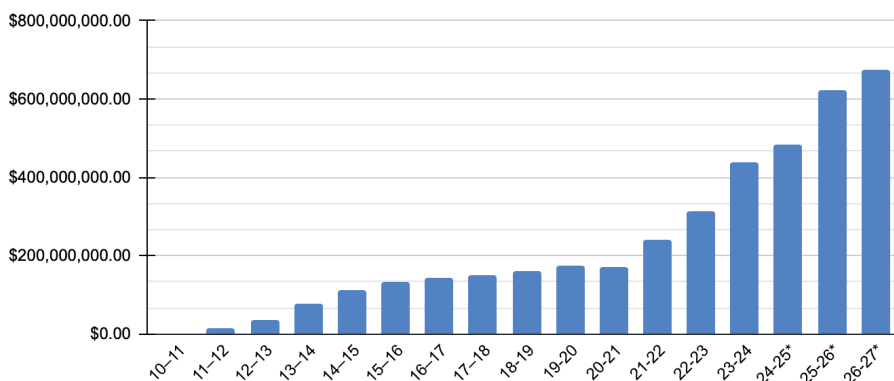
### Fighting over crumbs

- Public school families are no stranger to bake sales, clipping box tops, outlandish fundraisers and even crowdfunding for teacher classroom needs, projects, pencils, hand sanitizer and band uniforms.
- After years of cuts to public school budgets across the country, many districts are relying on families to pay for classroom supplies, extracurricular activities and even teacher salaries.
- Enough is enough! If we were having a real bake sale, how many cookies would we need to sell to give Hoosier children the fully and equitably funded education they deserve? Just the mere concept of school fundraising highlights the issues of *privilege, elitism and exclusion*.

### Voucher Schools

- Since 2011, over **\$2.3 billion** public tax dollars have been siphoned away from our children's public schools to private, nearly all religious, schools at a staggering rate.
- Originally intended for students in poverty, now a family of 4 with an income of \$230,000 can get a voucher. This year's House-proposed budget will make vouchers universal, allowing the top percent of income earners access to the program. Vouchers are a government subsidy for private schools.
- Voucher schools can openly discriminate against families and kids, don't have to show us where the money goes, and don't have to follow most of the laws for transparency and accountability that are required of public schools.

Indiana Choice Scholarship Cost



\* Estimated



## Bake sales or other fundraisers are not going to make up for the continued budget shortfalls that public schools face due to bad education policies.

- Every public school district loses with the voucher program. Scan the code below to see how much your local district is losing just due to the voucher program (even if you have no students using vouchers or have no voucher schools in your district). *NOTE: turn phone to horizontal for best view.*

What could **Westfield** have done with an extra \$19.6 million over the last eight years? What could **Carmel** have done with an extra \$34 million? What could **IPS** have done with an extra \$92.6 million? Or even tiny **Medora** with \$434,000?



Would your district have been able to hire more teachers? Teacher's aides? More counselors and social workers? More special education professionals? Would they have been able to pay sustainable raises to retain our existing teachers?

### Charter schools

- Public in state law, but privately run and not accountable to all of the same laws, charter schools create a competition where children are on the losing end of equal educational opportunity.
- Equating charter and traditional public schools is mixing apples and oranges. Charter schools have different funding sources, different governance structures, and different forms of accountability and are exempt from some state laws.
- Also, when charter schools fail to deliver, they default on their common school loans and do not pay back our tax dollars.
- Funding that went to charter schools since 2012 was **\$2.4 billion** at the end of 2023.

### Virtual Charter Schools.

- We are still waiting for the **\$154 million** settlement for what Indiana Virtual Schools and Indiana Pathways Virtual Academy scammed from our state treasury!
- **How many cookies would we have to sell to make up for that loss?**

### Career Scholarship Accounts (CSAs)

- Taxpayer funded accounts for students to use for career tech training outside of a public career tech center.
- Each scholarship is \$5,000 per year.
- It is unclear if employers are required to do background checks on all employees who would work directly with students.

### Education Scholarship Accounts (ESAs).

- These are taxpayer-funded accounts for parents (currently available to students with special needs and siblings) who withdraw their child from public school - a super voucher with minimal guard rails.
- Parents can receive \$6,000 plus special education service (Adjusted Pupil Count) award amounts that vary depending on level of disability to spend on participating schools and services.
- Most parents don't realize that key federal and state protections for their child are forfeited when they take an ESA.
- Income caps will be lifted this session, allowing the top percent of income earners access to the program.

### Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGOs)

- This is a pre-tax voucher as donors donate to a private organization. In turn they can get a 50% tax credit for the donation.
- The SGO tax credits may expand if the Federal Government establishes SGO federal tax credits.
- The taxpayer money can go to private schools that discriminate.
- Income caps will be lifted this session allowing the very wealthy access to this program.

**Now is NOT the time for universal vouchers of any kind. This is NOT the time to expand charter schools or give them property tax dollars. It IS the time to reinvest in and prioritize PUBLIC EDUCATION!**

Join our grassroots coalition to help keep public education in Indiana PUBLIC.

