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Talking Points for SB1932

The Illinois School Choice Program is designed to be a "pilot" voucher program for students from Chicago Public Schools that are ranked as "lowest performing" based on the number of students that do not meet or exceed performance standards demonstrated by the Illinois Standards Achievement Test or "over-crowded" as determined by the Chicago Board of Education. Please phone, fax, e-mail or write to your state senator to express your opposition to SB1932 for these reasons: |

- The Legislation Platform of the Illinois PTA calls for adequate legislative and/or financial support for operation, maintenance and construction of tax supported schools, and opposes the direct or indirect use of public funds for non-public schools.
- Opening the door to vouchers in any specific school district in the state would be the first step in opening the door to vouchers in every school district in Illinois
- Vouchers divert money from public schools already inadequately funded by the state--in this case, the cost estimated by the State Board of Education is approximately \$3600 per student directly removed from the funds allocated to Chicago Public Schools, which could be as much as \$108M annually;
- Research-based evidence in states where vouchers have been adopted suggests that those students attending non-public schools do no better academically than their public school peers;
- Vouchers do not ensure "parental choice" as non-public schools can deny applications for any reason, thereby creating "administrative choice" or in other words, it is the private school that has the choice; and,
- Public schools, which educate 90% of all school-age children, are required to adhere to standards of accountability, such as student assessment and reporting, which are not applicable to non-public schools.

Let your state senator hear from you, urge them to vote NO on this bill, and remember, always say "I'm PTA!" Should you have any comments, concerns or questions please contact a member of the Legislation Team.

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