Community Education Council District 4

Community Education Council for District 4
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Date: August 12th, 2026
Sponsors: Dr. Kaliris Y. Salas-Ramirez and Lawanda Joyner

District 4 Resolution Urging Governor Hochul to NOT Opt In to the "Federal Education Freedom Tax Credit Program" under Donald Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill"

WHEREAS, the "Federal Education Freedom Tax Credit Program" (the Voucher Program), a provision of the "Big Beautiful Bill" signed into law by Donald Trump in 2025, allows taxpayers to receive a tax credit of up to $1,700 for the value of cash contributions they make to certain scholarship granting organizations (SGOs) that use a portion of those contributions to grant scholarships to students at private K-12 schools located within their states.

WHEREAS, to be eligible for a scholarship under the Voucher Program the income of a students' family must be below 300% of their area median income, which means that in New York City families with annual incomes of up to $312,900 would be eligible to receive scholarships from this Voucher Program to attend a private school (families in Westchester County with annual incomes of up to $510,000 would be eligible).

WHEREAS, 75% of New York City public school students are considered economically disadvantaged, meaning they come from households with annual incomes below 30% of the area median income (which for a family of four would be $61,050) and those students are not prioritized for scholarships under the Voucher Program.

WHEREAS, state governors have the choice to opt in to the Voucher Program and Governor Kathy Hochul has declared her intention to do so.

WHEREAS, in other states with school voucher programs, including Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, New Hampshire, Texas, and Wisconsin, the vast majority of voucher recipients have been students who were never enrolled in a public school.

WHEREAS, charitable donations are generally deductible from taxable income, resulting in a subsidy for charitable giving by taxpayers based on their tax rate, but the dollar-for-dollar tax credit for these donations to SGOs will privilege charitable giving to private schools over charitable giving to other worthy causes, such as food banks, homeless shelters, etc.

WHEREAS, SGOs are permitted to retain 10% of the contributions they receive, reducing the amount that benefits students.

WHEREAS, while no New York State government funds would be used to support the Voucher Program, the total federal spending on the Voucher Program is estimated to amount to anywhere from $5 billion to over $100 billion (as there is no aggregate cap on the Voucher Program, it is difficult to estimate the full impact on the federal budget), and even at the lower end of these estimates this is more than the federal government allocates to either of its largest educational programs — Title I, Part A, which supports schools with large percentages of low income students, and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.

WHEREAS, since "money does not grow on trees", the amount of federal funds expended on this program will be unavailable for spending on other federal programs that might support students with disabilities, low income students, or others.

WHEREAS, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the tax cuts provided under the "Big Beautiful Bill", of which the Voucher Program constitutes one part, will increase the federal deficit by $2.8 trillion, burdening future generations.

WHEREAS, the tax cuts/credits provided under the "Big Beautiful Bill", including those tax credits provided under the Voucher Program, are financed in part by deep cuts in federal support for health insurance for low-income Americans under Medicaid ($700 billion) and for benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ($267 billion), resulting in harm to low-income students whose families need such assistance for their health and well-being.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the District 4 Community Education Council urges Governor Hochul to not opt in to the Voucher Program.

D4 CEC Council members as follows:

Dr. Kaliris Salas-Ramirez, Sophie Oulai, Lacey Jordan, Lawanda Joyner, Vandana Bonilla, Elizabeth Soto-Cardona, Johanna Dominguez, Adriana Tlacomulco, Tia Jackson and Kiera Jerez Alston.

Motion by Vandana Bonilla seconded by Elizabeth Soto-Cardona.

This Resolution was approved unanimously by the Council Members at D4 CEC Calendar Meeting held on August 12th, 2026.