

**Linn-Mar Community School District
Board of Directors**

**RESOLUTION AGAINST SF159 – SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS, VOUCHERS,
EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS, AND EXPANDED TAX CREDITS**

WHEREAS, the Iowa Legislature is considering enacting SF159, a scholarship fund to endorse education savings accounts or vouchers, expanded open enrollment leading to segregation, expanded charter schools that can open in a school district without the locally-elected school board's consent, and expanded tax credits; and

WHEREAS, the Linn-Mar Community School District Board of Directors has determined that the Iowa Legislature should not enact any legislation of any kind that weakens support for 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 students and are held to standards set forth by both federal and state governments. 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 access 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, tuition tax credits, and school tuition organization scholarships for families below 400% of the federal poverty level; and

WHEREAS, the State of Iowa has the constitutional responsibility to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools and provide for public schools, including those in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvements; and

WHEREAS, the *Student First Scholarship* voucher program will have exactly the opposite effect by providing funding to private/parochial schools at the expense and to the detriment of public schools and their students; and

WHEREAS, private/parochial schools accepting students with public tax vouchers would not be required to accept all students but would be permitted to retain their selective admission policies without enforcement of other laws applicable to public schools; and

WHEREAS, the Linn-Mar 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, including participation in and reporting of student performance on the Iowa tests, and are not provided public transparency or financial oversight by publicly-elected school boards.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Linn-Mar Community School District Board of Directors, that we reaffirm our commitment to free, accessible public schools which are adequately and equitably funded to guarantee a comparable education for ALL students and, therefore, oppose and respectfully request the Iowa House of Representatives reject SF159, specifically the *Students First Scholarship* (voucher program) and expansion of charter schools by any entity without the approval of the local school boards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Linn-Mar Community School District Board of Directors opposes any funding programs, vouchers or otherwise, that have the effect of diverting public tax dollars away from public schools to private/parochial schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Linn-Mar Community School District Board Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to forward copies of this resolution to Iowa 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 CONSENSUS of the Linn-Mar Community School District Board of Directors on this _____ day of February 2021.

Sondra Nelson
Mrs. Sondra Nelson, School Board President

February 2/8/21, 2021

Shannon Bisgard
Mr. Shannon Bisgard, Superintendent

February 2-8-21, 2021

