



RESOLUTION

A **RESOLUTION** to express opposition of the Oak Ridge Board of Education to the use of public funds for private schools.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly in the 2017 legislative session will entertain legislation that would use public funds to pay tuition costs for students to attend private, religious and non-religious schools; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly and the Tennessee State Board of Education have adopted high standards of student and teacher performance in the public schools; and

WHEREAS, private schools are not held to the same accountability standards as public schools pertaining to academic performance or student access; and

WHEREAS, many private schools in Tennessee have not adopted similar standards, refusing to administer the same tests given to public school students, not providing special education services required of public schools or accepting all students regardless of ability, making it impossible to determine the academic value of funding private education; and

WHEREAS, the proposal to take resources from public schools comes at a time when the state's Basic Education Program is not fully funded, made worse in the City of Oak Ridge by the repeal of the Hall Income Tax that will sharply reduce local revenues needed for education; and

WHEREAS, the motivation for taking funds from Tennessee public schools comes primarily from groups in California, Texas and Washington, D.C., that seek to establish and manage private schools on a profit basis; and

WHEREAS, large numbers of legislators have openly expressed their desire to expand the use of public funds to all students, regardless of their income, school or community; and

WHEREAS, once authorized, the pressure of interest groups to expand the transfer of public funds to private schools in all communities will be enormous; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to the vitality of Oak Ridge that we protect and sustain a system of public education that for decades has proved to be among our city's most valuable assets;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF OAK RIDGE, that the Board strongly opposes taking funds from public education in any Tennessee community without the concurrence of the local Board of Education, without statutory assurance that schools receiving the funds will comply with the same curriculum and testing standards required of public schools, and until the Basic Education Program is fully funded by the Tennessee General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Oak Ridge legislative delegation and to the Oak Ridge Superintendent of Schools.

Dated this 28th day of November, 2016.

Signed _____
Bruce T. Borchers, Superintendent

Signed _____
W. Keys Fillauer, Board Chairman

Signed _____
Robert S. Eby, Vice Chairman

Signed _____
Angi Agle, Board Member

Signed _____
Laura McLean, Board Member

Signed _____
Paige Marshall, Board Member