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Education Law Center statement regarding proposed regulations for the federal voucher scheme.

The federal administration in its continuing assault on public schools has put forward a tax wasting federal voucher scheme. Currently the feds are floating proposed regulations for public comment.

The Education Law Center's, Jessica Levin, ESQ recommends that governors reject the federal voucher scheme and that public education advocates submit public comment in opposition to the entire program.

Statement of Jessica Levin, Esq., Director of Public Funds Public Schools, on Treasury Department's Proposed Regulations for the Federal Voucher Scheme

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Today, well over a year after Congress passed the federal private school voucher scheme and only three months before the program is slated to begin, the U.S. Treasury Department issued proposed regulations to implement the program. As expected, the regulations do nothing to make this national voucher program less harmful to students, public schools, and communities.

The proposed regulations confirm that the federal voucher program is intended mainly to divert public funds to private education uses. The documentation accompanying the proposed rules acknowledges that the program could cost tens of billions of dollars per year.

Crucially, the proposed regulations prohibit states from placing requirements on scholarship granting organizations (SGOs), which hand out vouchers, that are more restrictive than the minimal requirements imposed by the statute.

This means states cannot guarantee voucher funds go to public school students and it dramatically limits states' ability to prevent this voucher scheme from funding segregation and discrimination against students and families.

As we have said for months, nothing in the regulations changes the fact that the voucher program will not benefit public schools. Public schools do not, cannot, and should not charge for the vast majority of the programs and services they provide and therefore will receive very little if any of the voucher funding, while they also lose significant resources when students leave to use vouchers at private schools.

Two steps are now crucial: 1) governors should reject the harmful federal voucher scheme by choosing not to participate in 2027, and each year the program remains in place, and 2) supporters of public education should make their voices heard by submitting public comments to the federal government in opposition to the program and its regulations.

PFPS is closely analyzing the regulations and evaluating possible legal and advocacy efforts. Stay tuned for information about tomorrow's PFPS webinar on the federal regulations.

For more information on the federal voucher program and the proposed regulations, visit: https://pfps.org/federal-voucher-program/.