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**National Coalition for Public Education Denounces President's Unprecedented Investment in School Vouchers in FY 2020 Budget Proposal**

Today, President Trump released his budget for Fiscal Year 2020, including a proposal that would send an “unprecedented level of resources to promoting school choice” in the form of a new federal private school voucher program. The proposal creates a huge incentive for individuals and corporations to contribute to organizations that provide private school vouchers for students by providing a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. The tax credit does not require participants to contribute any of their own money as they would be fully reimbursed by the federal government for their donation. The budget redirects up to \$50 billion of taxpayer funds over 10 years to private, often religious schools for this program. The budget also proposes \$30 million to fund the private school voucher program in the District of Columbia, doubling funding for the only federally funded voucher in the country.

The National Coalition for Public Education (NCPE) issued the following statement in opposition to the president's budget:

“We strongly oppose the president's enormous, unprecedented investment in private school vouchers, as well as expansion of the D.C. voucher program. The administration should focus on strengthening our public schools, which educate 90 percent of our students.

“The creation of the \$50 billion tax credit is rife with problems. For starters, it is nothing more than the government cherry-picking the charity of its choice – in this case funneling money away from public schools to private, often religious schools. The tax-credit program will be no different than others nationwide, which have the same problems inherent to all voucher programs: They do not provide better educational opportunities for students or improve academic achievement. And, even more so than traditional voucher programs, they are especially susceptible to accountability problems – inviting additional waste, fraud and abuse.

“It is also an irresponsible use to taxpayer funds to expand the failing D.C. voucher program, which has been shown to decrease students' academic achievement. If the administration truly wants to improve education for students across the country, the solution is to fund our public schools rather than diverting taxpayer dollars to private, mostly religious schools.”

*Founded in 1978, the National Coalition for Public Education supports public schools and opposes the funneling of public money to private and religious schools through vouchers, tuition tax credits, education savings accounts, and portability.*