



March 3, 2025

Rep. Glenn Cordelli, Chair  
House Education Policy and Administration Committee

**Re: Opposition to HB 748**

Dear Chairman Cordelli and Honorable Members of the House Education Policy and Administration Committee,

I am writing to you today to express our opposition to HB 748, which would establish a local school voucher program on top of the state voucher one we already have.

This is the fourth time in three different legislatures this bill has been introduced and each time the bill has been sent to the floor, the House has rejected it because the majority of State Representatives have recognized the damage this legislation could mean for our local public-school students, and property taxpayers.

As you are aware, local communities are the ones who raise the overwhelming majority of the funds necessary to operate their local public schools. Local community school budgets would also be the ones to fund this program. The state remains at or near the bottom of the country in its share of per pupil spending as compared to what must be raised locally through property taxes. Allowing communities to adopt the provisions of this bill, even with the 60% adoption requirement, still sets communities up to commit twice the amount of funds they would receive in state aid for a student plus any special education costs. The bill also would also add in homeschool students as eligible as well. All of this put together could wreak havoc on local school district budgets and property taxpayers.

This bill would expand school vouchers to families with unlimited means and use local property tax money to do so. HB 748 also contains limited accountability measures like its state counterpart. The bill tasks a 3<sup>rd</sup> party organization to make decisions on what vendors meet the criteria of educational for children, not the local school board. However, it will still be the local school district which remains obligated to fund those curriculum and costs that will not maintain the same level of standards as the schools it manages for most students.

HB 748 would also never allow a locally funded voucher amount to go down. If someone were to come into town meeting one year and cut the budget by half like was nearly done in Croydon,

these vouchers would still need to be funded at the levels formulated by this bill. If a community is under an arbitrarily set tax cap, the local private school vouchers would still need to be funded at the prescribed levels. Regardless of other circumstances occurring in the district these vouchers would still need to be absorbed by the school district.

Finally, as we have testified time after time at other voucher expansion bill hearings, while we have no achievement data to speak of here in New Hampshire, in other states over the last decade we know their impact has been harmful to student academic achievement.

Instead of expanding this private school option for wealthy families and obligating local taxpayers to pay for it, we should focus on public schools – where nearly 90% of our children attend. We should be focused on how the state can deliver a greater share of our public education funding so that each community can have a robust public education available for their resident students. This way local districts can afford to pay their educators competitive wages that help attract and retain qualified teachers and staff. A program like the one in HB 748 will only make it more challenging for the vast majority of students that remain in their local neighborhood school, because we would now be asking local taxpayers to pay for a second school system, one they cannot hold accountable, and one that would be difficult to plan for its long-term cost.

With these questions and concerns in mind, NEA-New Hampshire respectfully asks the House Education Committee to find HB 748 Inexpedient to Legislate. I appreciate your time and attention in reviewing our comments.

Sincerely,



Megan Tuttle  
President  
NEA-NH