

**Brian Trammell**

Apr 11, 2019, 11:13 AM (6 days ago)

to [fsa@etowahcityschool.com](mailto:fsa@etowahcityschool.com)

Teachers and Staff,

Yesterday Senate Bill 795 the Education Savings Account Bill (the alternative name for Vouchers to make the general public feel good about the Bill) passed the Senate Education Sub-Committee. It has the following amendments that made this Bill even more devastating to Public Education.

The response from our Senators and Representatives will be that it will not effect McMinn County/Etowah City School students and families, but it will. Once pandoras box is open, parent groups, such as, Homeschool parents start suing wanting the same "benefit" in every district in the State. The courts will see this as discrimination and open it up in every district.

Please read the following and email the following concerns about this Bill. I implore you to email Senator Mike Bell (who by the way, voted for this Bill yesterday) and Governor Lee and tell them you are opposed to this Bill. I am also asking you to have your friends and family to email them as well. If they do not live in McMinn County have them contact their Representative and Senator from their district (See the Link Below). What is being communicated is "the folks in favor of this Bill are out numbering the opposition. If you do not email them, they believe by default you are in favor of this Bill. Please get this done ASAP, they are moving this Bill fast so it will pass before it too much attention!

If you have time please email Representative Mark Cochran and thank him for standing up in opposition to this Bill. He is under extreme pressure from very wealthy and powerful lobbyist, inside his Party and from folks not even from Tennessee.

[sen.mike.bell@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.mike.bell@capitol.tn.gov)

[rep.mark.cochran@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:rep.mark.cochran@capitol.tn.gov)

[Bill.Lee@tn.gov](mailto:Bill.Lee@tn.gov)

<http://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/Apps/fmlv3/districts.aspx> -link for Senator or Representative look-up.

## Me MUST Act Now!

What's different?

1. The Senate Bill does allow the ESA to be used for **HOMESCHOOLING**
2. The Senate Bill caps the program at **30,000 students** (while the House caps at 15,000)
3. The Senate Bill does not *require* TNReady tests to be taken by participating students; allows them to choose between TCAP (Math & ELA) and a nationally-normed test (like ACT or PARCC).
4. The Senate Bill allows the money to be spent on:
  - a. Tuition or fees at a participating school;
  - b. Textbooks required by a participating school;

- c. Tutoring services provided by a tutor or tutoring facility that meets the requirements established by the department and the state board;
- d. Payment for purchase of curriculum, including any supplemental materials or instruments required by the curriculum. As used in this subdivision (a)(4)(D), "curriculum" means instructional educational materials for an academic course of study;
- e. Fees for transportation to and from a participating school or educational provider paid to a fee-for-service transportation provider;
- f. Fees for early postsecondary opportunity courses and examinations required for college admission;
- g. Services provided under a contract with a public school, including individual classes or extracurricular programs;
- h. Computer hardware or any other technological device approved by the department, if the computer hardware or technological device is used for the student's educational needs and is purchased through a participating school, private school, or provider;
- i. School uniforms, if required by a participating school;
- j. Tuition and fees for summer education programs and specialized afterschool education programs, as approved by the department, which do not include afterschool childcare;
- k. Tuition and fees at an eligible postsecondary institution;  
Textbooks required by an eligible postsecondary institution;
- l. Educational therapy services provided by therapists that meet the requirements established by the department and the state board; or
- m. Fees for the management of the ESA by a private or non-profit financial management organization, as approved by the department. The fees must not exceed two percent (2%) of the funds deposited in a participating student's ESA in a fiscal year

For your reference, the votes for this bill were as follows:

- 1. YES: Bell, Crowe, Gresham, Haile, Kelsey, Lundberg
- 2. NO: Akbari, Dickerson, Hensley

I think it's safe to say that 99% of you would agree that this is a step in the wrong direction, and NOT what is best for Tennessee's children. Keep up the fight and stand up for our public schools!

Thank you,

*Brian Frammell*

Principal

Etowah City School

Office 423-263-5483

Warriors...Be Awesome Today!

**Brian Trammell**

Mar 26, 2019,  
11:15 AM

to fsa@etowahcityschool.com

Please note the amendments to the Bill. Also, while you are writing emails, please go ahead and email the Governor and let him know how you feel.

Here is a link!

<https://www.tn.gov/governor/contact-us.html>

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**From:** Mike Frazier <[frazierm@etowahcityschool.com](mailto:frazierm@etowahcityschool.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2019 9:35:26 AM  
**To:** ECS Staff  
**Subject:** Fwd: [TOSS Superintendents] LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: ESA/Voucher Amendment

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Sara Bunch <[sara@tosstn.com](mailto:sara@tosstn.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 26, 2019 at 8:29 AM  
**Subject:** [TOSS Superintendents] LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: ESA/Voucher Amendment  
**To:** [toss-superintendents@lists.ena.com](mailto:toss-superintendents@lists.ena.com) <[toss-superintendents@lists.ena.com](mailto:toss-superintendents@lists.ena.com)>

Good Morning Directors,

I wanted to share a *potential* amendment to the Governor's ESA/Voucher bill that's been floated around. Because it has yet to be voted on in any committee, it is NOT OFFICIAL yet.

**Some important notes from this amendment, if passed:**

- It removes the option to home school – requiring that an eligible student be enrolled in a private school
- It allows the funds to be spent on the following (removed 3 items, including 529 account contributions, contracted services with an LEA, and curriculum):
  - (A) Tuition or fees at a participating school;
  - (B) Textbooks required by a participating school;

- (C) Tutoring services provided by a tutor or tutoring facility that meets the requirements established by the department and the state board;
- (D) Fees for transportation to and from a participating school or educational provider paid to a fee-for-service transportation provider;
- (E) Tuition and fees for an eligible nonpublic online learning program or course that meets the requirements set by the department and the state board;
- (F) Fees for early postsecondary opportunity courses and examinations required for college admission;
- (G) Computer hardware, technological devices, or technology fees approved by the department, if the computer hardware, technological device, or technology fee is used for the student's educational needs and is purchased through a participating school, private school, or provider;
- (H) School uniforms, if required by a participating school;
- (I) Tuition and fees for summer education programs and specialized afterschool education programs, as approved by the department, which do not include afterschool childcare;
- (J) Tuition and fees at an eligible postsecondary institution;
- (K) Textbooks required by an eligible postsecondary institution;
- (L) Educational therapy services provided by therapists that meet the requirements established by the department and the state board; or
- (M) Fees for the management of the ESA by a private or non-profit financial management organization, as approved by the department.

**We still have a great deal of concerns with this bill! To name a few:**

- The students participating in ESAs will only be required to take the grades 3-11 ELA and math TCAP tests.
- Other than a report released by the department that must include the aggregate participating student performance on annual assessments required by this section and aggregate graduation outcomes for participating students in grade twelve (12), there is little to no accountability for the participating private schools.
  - The General Assembly has spent the past several years adding to and strengthening our public school accountability system, yet they would be sending state and local dollars to a school that would use only a tiny portion of that.

- The ESAs would still be available to students zoned to attend ANY school in an LEA with 3 or more schools in the bottom 10% of schools. If their goal is to help students in low-performing schools, then why isn't it limited to only students zoned to attend those schools in the bottom 10%?
- The program is still open to students from a household with an annual income for the previous year that does not exceed twice the federal income eligibility guidelines for reduced-price lunch. In a family of 4, that's over \$90,000.
- One of our greatest concerns is with the provision that once a student is in the program, they are always qualified. Even if their circumstances change (they move to a district with less than 3 or NO schools in the bottom 10% or their family's income increases far beyond the maximum required to qualify).
  - In addition, if they move out of the district they were in when they qualified for the ESAs into another district in TN, the local portion of the student's funding continues to go from the original district into the student's ESA.

Please keep up the great work advocating for our public schools and against **House Bill 939**! This bill will be heard tomorrow morning in the House Education Committee at 8:00 am CT. If you are able to attend this meeting, please let Dale or me know so we can meet up with you.

Thank you,

## Sara Bunch

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