PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release
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The following statement is from DeVane Trigiani
President of the SC Parent Teacher Association (SCPTA):

The South Carolina PTA (SCPTA) is the state’s largest parent organization that advocates and supports children in public schools. We have 268 local units across the state, with over 45,000 parents, students, and teachers as members of this organization. In the 2019-2020 school year, local parents and volunteers have raised over $3M, which goes directly back to benefit the students and the school. This total would have been much greater if we had not had the impact of COVID-19 as many schools have additional spring fundraisers in March and April. While one small function of PTAs is to support the schools with much-needed funds, we have almost 500,000 reported volunteer hours were spent in our local schools. We believe in every child has what they need and the SCPTA is deeply disappointed by Gov. McMaster’s decision to divert public funding from assisting public school students to benefit a few private schools that are not accountable or transparent to the taxpayers who provided those dollars. We understand the federal funding allocated to governors is discretionary. We believe federal funds should be used for “emergency support grants” to K-12 schools, colleges, and universities, and childcare education providers to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

SCPTA is for ALL children, and the governor’s funding decision is not for ALL children.

- How is giving $32 million (out of $48 million) to private schools an effective and prudent use of public dollars?
- Shouldn’t these limited funds be used to benefit the many and not the few?
- Which is better: give 5,000 families $6,500 each to pay for private school tuition or:
  - purchase electronic learning devices for 100,000 students
  - install 1,600 miles of fiber infrastructure ($19,000 per mile)
  - $45 in supplies for every public school student (700,000)

This action shines a bright light on the inequities across our state during this pandemic, and they have real implications for children, such as the lack of access to the internet, electronic devices, transportation and access to food in some cases. Our state leaders should continue to focus on addressing the needs of all children, especially the ones who most vulnerable and needy.
Under the current COVID-19 crisis, PTA units in schools will encounter many obstacles this year supporting their schools – as some areas are not allowing volunteers due to safety concerns - when our students and teachers need it the most. Combine that with the likelihood of not getting more state funding for school operations or higher teacher pay … it makes it even more imperative for every available public education dollar to go to every public school, or at least the public schools with the most vulnerable children.

The SCPTA makes ALL decisions focused on the needs of every child, as it is a great responsibility to make sure every voice is heard. #everychildonevoice

For additional information, email president@scpta.org or view the SCPTA statement here: https://bit.ly/PressRelease72320.

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