



Commit to Student Success

These are our values, and I demand that our secretary of education and every elected official respect and uphold this vision for high-quality public schools for every single student.

Public education is the foundation of our 21st-century democracy. Our public schools are where our students come to be educated in the fullest sense of that word, including as citizens of this great country. We strive every day to make every public school a place where we prepare the nation's young people to contribute to our society, economy and citizenry. We expect our elected leaders and policymakers, regardless of party affiliation, to value and support this American vision for a strong and inclusive public education system that ensures that all students can succeed, regardless of their ZIP code.

With the recent nomination of Betsy DeVos as U.S. secretary of education, the nation is entering dangerous, uncharted territory. For the first time, our secretary of education could be someone whose sole "qualification" for the job is the two decades she has spent attempting to dismantle the American public school system.

DeVos has used her extraordinary wealth to undermine our public schools and, in so doing, has harmed our students. She and her family have spent millions to promote failed private school vouchers and unaccountable for-profit charter schools while working to destabilize and defund public education. This is a dangerous direction that will do nothing to help our most vulnerable students and will exacerbate glaring opportunity gaps.

We call on DeVos and political leaders at every level to commit to the American vision of public education for all—one that welcomes and includes students of all backgrounds, identities, origins and abilities. Our leaders must understand that our students and communities need schools that answer to them and their elected representatives. This compact is undermined when billionaires, corporations, hedge fund managers and others seek to substitute their will for that of educators and the people and communities who rely on our public schools. Ninety percent of American children attend public schools. They deserve leaders who are committed to building up our students with supportive policies that ensure equal opportunity rather than continuing discriminatory policies that abandon the students who need us most.

We hold these values because all children, regardless of family circumstances or where they live, have the right to an education that helps them reach their full potential and does not depend on living in advantaged circumstances, getting accepted by a private school or being selected in a charter school lottery.

The record is clear: Betsy DeVos is an anti-public education activist. A true leader for all students must reject the ideological demands that isolate, outsource and abandon, and instead commit to this American vision for public education.