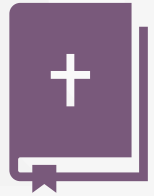


What does the Bible say?

Do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight, preserve sound judgment and discretion; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble. **(Proverbs 3:21-23)**



I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. **(Psalm 32:8)**

Only be careful, and watch yourself closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. **(Deuteronomy 4:9)**

What does The United Methodist Church say?

We believe that every person has the right to education. We also believe that the responsibility for education of the young rests with the family, faith communities, and the government. In society, this function can best be fulfilled through public policies that ensure access for all persons to free public elementary and secondary schools and to post-secondary schools of their choice. **(Social Principles ¶164.E)**

At a moment when childhood poverty is shamefully widespread, when many families are under constant stress, and when schools are limited by the lack of funds and resources, criticism of the public schools often ignores an essential truth: we cannot improve public schools by concentrating on the schools alone. In this context, we must address with prayerful determination the issues of race and class that threaten both public education and democracy in America...Local churches and all communities of faith must become better informed about the needs of the public schools in their communities and in the country as a whole. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #3165, “United States Public Education and the Church”)**



We specifically oppose tuition tax credits, school vouchers, or any other mechanism that directly or indirectly allows government funds to support religious schools at the primary and secondary level. Persons of one particular faith should be free to use their own funds to strengthen the belief system of their particular religious group. They should not, however, expect all taxpayers, including those who adhere to other religious belief systems, to provide funds to teach religious views with which they do not agree. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #5012, “Church-Government Relations”)**

EDUCATION REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES



CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

Living **FAITH** Seeking **JUSTICE** Pursuing **PEACE**

What do the facts say?

- Three out of four public school teachers report that students regularly come to school hungry.¹ In 2015, at least half of the children in public schools in 21 states were eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch.²
- 2015 data show that the unemployment rate for adults aged 25-34 was 2% for college graduates, 8.4% for those with a high school diploma, and 13.8% for those with no high school diploma.³
- Out-of-school suspension, expulsion, “zero tolerance” policies, and other measures are disproportionately applied to students of color. The “school-to-prison pipeline” names how, rather than educating these children, educational systems are failing them and funneling them to incarceration through disproportionately applied disciplinary policies.
 - ◆ In 2012, black students comprised less than 20 percent of pre-kindergarten enrolment, but nearly 50 percent of preschoolers with out-of-school suspensions.
 - ◆ Black, Latino, and Native American students are, respectively, 300%, 150%, and 30% more likely to be suspended and expelled than white students.⁴



1 www.hungerinourschools.org, 2 *Washington Post*, 3 Bureau of Labor Statistics 4 US Department of Education

What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

Champion public education as a basic human right; and curb school districts’ reliance on school fund-raising and state-alternative revenues, such as gambling, for financial support.

Advocate at the state and local level for adequate public school funding, equitable distribution of state funds, free and reduced-price school meal programs, and policies to end unjust educational disparities. Call for an end to punitive policies, out-of-school suspensions, and other practices supporting the school-to-prison pipeline.

Visit your local school, build relationships with teachers and administrators and volunteer your time.

Establish and **nurture** partnerships with local public schools supporting free and reduced-price school meal programs, summer meal provision programs, after-school and vacation enrichment programs, adopt-a-school programs, teacher appreciation programs, updated library materials, and parenting enrichment classes.



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