



Desperate, yet still waiting...

By
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An Open Letter to Congress:

It's been two months since Hurricane Katrina ravaged communities in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, leaving unthinkable devastation in her path. Yet, instead of taking action, there are proposals in Congress and from the Administration that would use this tragedy to push an ideological agenda in support of private school vouchers.

Vouchers by any name, such as education accounts, have no place in this debate. The real needs speak volumes:

- 370,000 students torn from their homes and schools
- More than 1,500 Louisiana schools closed – some obliterated and many others beyond repair
- 400 schools in Mississippi destroyed; thousands more in need of significant repair
- Homes, jobs and communities ripped out from under thousands of teachers, college faculty, and education support professionals
- Thousands of schools across the nation stretching tight budgets to welcome displaced students into their classrooms
- The Administration proposing redirecting FEMA dollars for the reconstruction of religious schools – before a single dime has been spent to rebuild public schools

Vouchers are divisive and inappropriate – putting roadblocks in the way of action.

The National Education Association calls on Congress to act NOW to OPPOSE VOUCHERS and instead provide real help to students, educators, and schools. We urge you to use as a model current “equitable participation” law, which allows the public school system to pay for services used by private school children in need.

We need to work together to help rebuild our public schools and communities.

Reg Weaver



*Great Public Schools
for Every Child*

NEA's 2.7 million members are the nation's leading advocates for children and public education.

