

**MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMAN OF THE  
CITY OF FLORENCE, MISSISSIPPI**

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL CHOICE  
PROGRAMS THAT UNDERMINE PUBLIC EDUCATION**

**WHEREAS, the Board of Aldermen of the City of Florence, Mississippi, recognizes the fundamental role of strong, accessible, and adequately funded public schools in providing educational opportunities for all children; and**

**WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi, through the work of the Mississippi Legislature, the Mississippi Department of Education, the State Board of Education and local school boards, has established nationally recognized standards and measures for accountability in public education; and**

**WHEREAS, vouchers eliminate public accountability by channeling tax dollars into private schools that do not face state-approved academic standards or accountability measures, do not make budgets public, do not adhere to open meetings and records laws, do not publicly report on student achievement, and do not face the public accountability requirements contained in major federal laws, including special education; and**

**WHEREAS, Mississippi's public schools serve the vast majority of the state's students, including those most vulnerable, and represent a cornerstone of community cohesion; and**

**WHEREAS, "school choice" initiatives—including vouchers, education savings accounts (ESAs), tax-credit scholarship programs, and tax credits for donations to private schools— redirect critical public funds away from local public school districts and instead subsidize private, unaccountable education providers; and**

**WHEREAS, numerous studies have shown that voucher and ESA programs do not reliably improve student outcomes and more typically result in lower performance when compared to traditional public schools; and**

**WHEREAS, vouchers and other choice programs divert critical public resources to pay private school tuition for students, including many who already attend private schools; and**

**WHEREAS, the diversion of these resources weakens the financial viability of public school systems, and undermines the public's trust in the state's commitment to a quality education for all students; and**

**WHEREAS, vouchers are an inefficient use of taxpayer money because they compel taxpayers to support two school systems: one public and one private, the latter of which is not accountable to all the taxpayers supporting it; and**

**WHEREAS, the Rankin County Public School District is the lifeblood of the Florence community, attracting young families and economic development, and providing the local camaraderie and team spirit that foster the high quality of life our citizens enjoy; and**

**WHEREAS, the state of Mississippi provides no funding for K-1 2 facilities, and the citizens of Florence have elected to raise their local taxes to ensure smaller classes, world-class facilities, and excellent academic, athletic, fine and performing arts, and other programs; and**

**WHEREAS, out-of-district students' families do not pay local property taxes in our community, and allowing out-of-district students to attend Rankin County Public Schools will create large classes and crowded classrooms, and the citizens of Florence will be responsible for further raising our local taxes to add classrooms to accommodate out-of-district students; and**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Florence, Mississippi:**

- 1. Opposes the establishment or expansion of school choice programs—whether public or private—that divert public funding or support from our community's traditional public schools;**
- 2. Urges Florence's legislative delegation, the Mississippi State Legislature, and the Governor to oppose school choice and invest in strengthening public education by fully funding the state's school funding formula, supporting teachers and staff, and expanding services that directly benefit students and families within the public school system;**

3. Supports efforts to ensure accountability and transparency in all publicly funded educational programs, and opposes the use of taxpayer dollars to subsidize private education without equivalent oversight, accountability, or student protections;
4. Commits to advocating for policies that prioritize public education as a public good open to all children in Florence and across Mississippi.

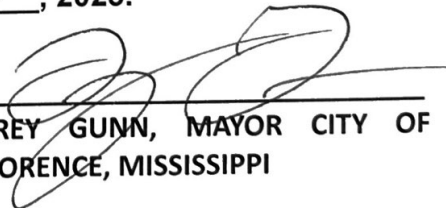
The motion to adopt the foregoing Resolution having been made by Alderman Banks and seconded by Sistrunk, and the Resolution having been considered and put to a roll call vote.

**VOTING:**


(AYE)	NAY	ALDERMAN, JOHN BANKS
(AYE)	NAY	ALDERMAN, BRIAN GRANTHAM
(AYE)	NAY	ALDERMAN, MASON HERRIN
(AYE)	NAY	ALDERMAN, KYLE MARTIN
(AYE)	NAY	ALDERMAN, BRENT SISTRUNK

The Motion having received 5 votes in favor and 0 votes against, with the Mayor having declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted, this the 16<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2025.

RESOLVED this the 16<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2025.

  
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 TREY GUNN, MAYOR CITY OF  
 FLORENCE, MISSISSIPPI

ATTEST:

  
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 LINDA WIGLEY, CITY CLERK  
 CITY OF FLORENCE, MISSISSIPPI