

Parents Outraged as President Obama's FY 2012 Budget Eliminates Funding for the Successful D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Outraged D.C. parents are crying foul today after President Obama's FY 2012 budget zeroed out funding for the highly-effective D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. By cutting all funding for the program in his budget request, the President risks violating his own promise to D.C. parents that existing school voucher recipients would be able to stay in the schools of their parents choice through the 12th grade.

If the program is not funded in 2012, there is no guarantee that all 1,012 current children will finish their education in the program, which means some will be forced to return to an already overburdened D.C. Public School system.

"By submitting a budget that ignores the educational needs of low-income students in Washington, D.C., President Obama is cutting an educational lifeline for children," said Virginia Walden Ford, executive director of D.C. Parents for School Choice. "It is clear that for all of his rhetoric, President Obama, a man who received scholarships to attend private schools throughout his life, simply does not believe low-income families who live just blocks away from the White House deserve the same opportunity."

D.C. leaders instrumental in the passage of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program -- and who are fighting to see it restored and extended for five additional years -- expressed frustration at the president's failure to include funding for the Opportunity Scholarship Program.

"The president's position on this issue is confusing and unacceptable," said Kevin P. Chavous, former D.C. Councilman. "Instead of recognizing the effectiveness of the program, respecting its broad base of support, and working with local leaders to see it funded and extended, the Administration instead changes its position on this position on a yearly basis and throws into jeopardy the education of thousands of low-income children. We call on the President to join with leaders in his own party and settle this matter once and for all by supporting a full reauthorization and improvement of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program."

SOURCE D.C. Parents for School Choice