SEPTEMBER 24, 2010

Sink, Scott should support vouchers, coalition says

A coalition of voucher supporters are pressing Democratic gubernatorial candidate Alex Sink and Republican rival Rick Scott to support tax-credit scholarships. At this point, coalition members say, it's not clear where either one comes down on the controversial but rapidly growing program.

"We'll lay out the question and wait for the answer," Julio Fuentes, president and CEO of the Hispanic Council for Reform in Educational Options, one of the coalition members, told The Gradebook.

Scott's campaign site says he supports vouchers, but he also wants to eliminate the state corporate income tax - the main funding stream for tax-credit scholarships. Sink's campaign site doesn't mention vouchers at all.

The coalition has slated a press conference Monday morning in Fort Lauderdale. Members include Hispanic CREO, the Florida League of United Latin American Citizens, the Black Alliance for Educational Options, the Black Ministers Parental Choice Alliance and Agudath Israel of Florida, which represents about 100 Orthodox Jewish rabbis and synagogues.

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SEPTEMBER 27, 2010

Rick Scott: I will support vouchers

In response to questions from voucher supporters, Republican gubernatorial candidate Rick Scott says he will protect and expand Florida's tax-credit scholarship program.

Scott's position wasn't and isn't entirely clear, given that he wants to end the corporate income tax, the primary funding source for tax-credit vouchers. And he's still not offering any specifics about alternative funding.

But in a letter yesterday to the Hispanic Council for Reform and Education Options, Scott said he strongly supports school choice, strongly supports the tax credit scholarships and is "committed to finding a solution that will continue to allow families more choice in where to send their child to school."

"I want to create an education system that allows for more opportunities like those currently provided by these scholarships," he wrote.

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