

8 Lies About Private School Vouchers

1. When it comes to education, one size doesn't fit all.

What does this mean? Is this a one-liner that is supposed to indict traditional public schools as having no options or choices within the system? The public system has a variety of choices in curricular, co-curricular and athletic options. In fact, the typical school district has significantly more choices for students than the typical private school. **Grade: F**

2. School Choice saves taxpayer money.

You did not show your work because you can't. Your universal voucher bill creates a new, bloated bureaucracy in the State Treasurer's office with a file for every student that will cost, not save, taxpayers millions and millions of dollars. You are going to refund parents for more than 100,000 students. You're going to write checks to homeschooling parents. **Grade: F**

3. Competition breeds excellence.

Free-market principles have been applied to public schools to promote segregation and institutional racism. Again you don't show your work because there is no credible research to back up your claim. This same misleading answer was given to justify charter schools like ECOT. **Grade: F**

4. All students benefit from education freedom.

Students benefit from a quality educational opportunity. Strong public schools strengthen our communities. Your scheme will harm our students, our families, our taxpayers, our homeowners, our communities. **Grade: F**

5. Parents are powerless to fight against political and sexualized material.

School district patrons have the opportunity to be heard at board meetings with elected school boards. They have access to school administrators and teachers. Parents are not powerless in influencing the direction of traditional public schools. But can the same be said for a parent and student who may disagree with any of the religious, cultural, customs or mores of private schools regarding race, gender, political views, religious freedom, etc.? Public schools accept all children. Private schools pick and choose their enrollees. **Grade: F**

6. Too many public schools are well-funded, but underperforming.

Quick history lesson. In 1997, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled the way lawmakers and the governor funds public education in Ohio is unconstitutional. In 2021, a quarter century later, after passing the two-year state budget, lawmakers and Gov. DeWine admitted they are not fully funding public schools. **Grade: F**

7. Fund teachers and students, not bureaucrats

Again, you can't show your work. This statement is inaccurate. It is meant to inflame Ohioans against the public system. **Grade: F**

8. Ohio doesn't underfund education, we misspend the money.

Your answers are wrong and redundant. See your grade on answer #6. The massive misspending by the state has been the tens of millions of fraudulent dollars given to charter school operators like Bill Lager and ECOT. **Grade: F**

Vouchers Hurt Ohio

Today (1-4-22) we filed a lawsuit in Franklin County Common Pleas court challenging the constitutionality of the rapidly growing private school voucher program that is siphoning away

hundreds of millions of dollars from public school students, teachers, classrooms and communities.

Former Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice and current Columbus City Schools board member Eric Brown said the lawsuit asks the judicial system a simple, but critical question:

“Where does the Ohio General Assembly get the power to fund private school vouchers? That power is nowhere to be found in the Ohio Constitution. In fact, the Ohio Constitution forbids it. Lawmakers have the authority and responsibility to fund “a” system of “common schools,” with common standards and resources for all of Ohio’s taxpayers, parents, and students,” Brown said at a press conference today outlining the lawsuit.

“Funding schools that aren’t for everybody is not the business of the Ohio General Assembly, and it is not the responsibility of Ohio taxpayers to pay for these private schools,” Brown said. “The Ohio General Assembly either knows they are violating the Ohio Constitution and doesn’t care or the members who support expanding the private school vouchers need a history lesson themselves.”

William L. Phillis, executive director for the Coalition of Equity & Adequacy of School Funding, was instrumental in leading the successful court challenge to the way Ohio pays for public schools during the ‘90s.

“The DeRolph school funding lawsuit was the case of the 20th century. The EdChoice private school voucher lawsuit we filed today is destined to be the case of the 21st Century,” Phillis said. “In fact, the private school voucher system is siphoning off hundreds of millions of dollars from an already underfunded system of public schools. The legislature and the governor are putting our state and our public school children at risk and they admit it.”

Nneka Jackson, a school board member with the Richmond Heights School District in Cuyahoga County, said private school vouchers are making school segregation in Ohio worse, not better

“If someone tells you this is about helping poor minority children, hook them up to a lie detector test asap and stand back because the sparks are going to fly,” Jackson said.

“About 40 percent of Richmond Heights residents are white. Before the EdChoice private school voucher program, about 26 percent of the students in the Richmond Heights School District were white and 74 percent were students of color. Today, after EdChoice, Richmond Heights is three percent white and 97 percent students of color,” Jackson said.

“Private schools are allowed to discriminate, plain and simple, based on disability, disciplinary records, academic standings, religion and financial status. These are often proxies for race and other protected characteristics. Ohio is essentially engaged in state-sponsored discrimination in admissions and retention. You know who can’t do this? Public schools. Common schools,” Jackson said.

Dan Heintz, a school board member in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District, said his district lost more than \$27 million to private school vouchers, and this forced voters to pass two levies to raise property taxes.

Heintz said 95 percent of our EdChoice voucher users have never been enrolled in one of our schools.

"So, contrary to the narrative, these families aren't fleeing a failing school."The only thing they're fleeing is a tuition bill. A private school tuition bill that is now being paid by Ohio taxpayers," Heintz said.

Eric Resnick, a school board member for Canton City Schools in Stark County, said high school students receive a \$7,500 voucher while public school students receive far less from the state in basic education funding.

There is no truth to the claim by voucher proponents that “the money follows the student,” Resnick said. “To those who say the money should follow the student, I ask why the

discrepancy? Why should voucher students get \$7,500 and some public school students get one-fifth or less than that amount? If the money was truly following the student, then each public school student would also receive \$7,500.”

Ohio Senate passes bill to allow concealed firearms without a permit

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- The Ohio Senate on Wednesday passed legislation to allow people to carry a concealed handgun without a permit and no longer require them to notify law enforcement during proactively traffic stops that they're armed.

Senate Bill 215, which passed the Senate 23-8, now heads to the Ohio House, which passed a similar but separate conceal-carry bill last month.

It's unclear which of the two bills legislative leaders will decide to pass the general assembly and go to Gov. Mike DeWine's desk -- though Senate President Matt Huffman, a Lima Republican, told reporters Wednesday that the Senate favors its bill over the House's.

Both SB215 and House Bill 227 would allow anyone age 21 or older to carry a concealed firearm unless state or federal law prohibits them from possessing a gun. If either becomes law, Ohio will become the 22nd state to allow conceal-carry in public without needing a license, according to the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

Ohio currently requires conceal-carry applicants to take eight hours of training, pass a background check, and pay a fee, among other things.

Both bills would also no longer require motorists to tell law enforcement about concealed handguns in their vehicles, though drivers would still have to truthfully say whether they have a gun with them if an officer asks.

Right now, drivers who fail to pre-emptively notify an officer in Ohio that they have a gun with them face a first-degree misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail, a \$1,000 fine, and suspension of their concealed-handgun license. The two bills would each eliminate that penalty.

Supporters of SB215 note that both the U.S. and Ohio constitutions guarantee the right to bear arms, and neither mentions anything about training requirements. They also say that so-called “constitutional carry” will make Ohioans safer by lifting restrictions on their ability to carry a concealed firearm.

Opponents argued that the bill would make Ohio less safe – both by allowing people to carry concealed firearms without needing any training or background checks and also by putting police in greater danger during traffic stops.

In recent years, the Republican-controlled Ohio General Assembly has passed several other measures to loosen requirements on concealed firearms, including allowing military service members and veterans to carry without a permit and removing the state's ban on conceal-carry on college campuses and several other locations.