

PACE

October 25, 2024



Established 1959

A Publication of Canton Professional Educators' Association

1327 Market Avenue, North, Canton, OH 44714

(330) 455-2158

Website: cpea.us

e-mail: cpeaoffice@cpea.us

MISSION STATEMENT: *The Canton Professional Educators' Association initiates and supports positive changes in the public school system, promotes the educational profession, and actively serves as an advocate for its members.*

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

PRIVATIZED EDUCATION: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

In **1825**, and then again in the Ohio Constitution in **1851**, language was adopted to create funding systems to create a continual stream of revenue to properly fund public education. **The Ohio Constitution states:**

*“The General Assembly shall make such provisions by taxation, or otherwise, as, with the income arising from the school trust fund, will secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state, **but no religion or other sect, or sects, shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control, any part of the school funds of the state.**”* (Article VI, Section 2 / School Funds)

Clearly, there is no room for an alternative interpretation of this language. A distinct line was drawn by the Ohio General Assembly declaring a separation between the church and state, indicating the state would be obligated to fully fund a system of public instruction while expressly declaring and forbidding any funds be accessible to any academic institution that is not a public school.

BUT THEN . . .

For more than 100 years, private schools continued to meet their operational needs through private tuition and private donations. However, as the footprint for non-public schools began to expand, private schools pounded the Ohio Legislature for aid in transporting students. Finally, in **1965**, public school systems were ordered by the state to transport all students in each local school district, both private and public. In **1990** the state continued to violate the Constitution by providing additional tax payer dollars to fund auxiliary services and administrative costs for private schools.

THEN IT GOT MUCH, MUCH WORSE . . .

In **1997**, the Ohio Legislature decided to trample over the Ohio Constitution and set aside \$800,000 for a pilot program in Cleveland in an effort to create a “privatized” competitive schools concept. Relying on a competitive business market plan, the idea was that by creating “competition”, that in and of itself, would help the Cleveland Public School system produce better results, even though this pilot program permitted unaccountable organizations to operate charter schools immune to public reporting. In essence, this pilot program was the first model of the creation of two systems of education that compete for public funds. One system is public and accountable to the citizens for the greater good of the whole, the other private and unaccountable for the good of an individual organization(s).

SINCE THEN . . .

Since the **1997** Cleveland Pilot program, Ohio now has eight private school voucher programs, five school voucher programs, one tax-credit scholarship and two individual tax credit programs. Obviously this is a massive explosion, and the monetary investment has become astronomical and untenable and has become an imminent threat to public education. Since **1997**, Ohio’s privatized education system has siphoned unspeakable amounts of money from public schools and taxpayers, extracting hundreds of thousands of dollars during the on-set, moving to millions in the early 2000’s and ballooning to billions

continued on the back . . .

currently. Despite the clear distinction of the separation of church and state in the Ohio Constitution, and the clear distinctions of the state's obligation to fund public education, Ohio's politicians continue to ignore the Constitution. Still to this day, the Constitution requires one public educational system, not two, let alone one system that remains a threat to the state's capacity to properly fund public education while being immune from public accountability.

PRIVATIZED EDUCATION AND ISSUE ONE (GERRYMANDERING)

Ohio is now one of 10 states that has created a universal voucher system with the goal of privatizing education. In Ohio, this is the result of unfettered political platforms. In all of these states, this happens because politicians continue to pick their voters, not voters picking candidates, in a process known as Gerrymandering.

GERRYMANDERING . . .

After every 10-year Census, Ohio must make new congressional maps to represent the new data from the Census. This task is left to politicians to create new congressional maps. Unfortunately, when one party owns a super majority, incumbent politicians create maps to maintain their power with the intention of influencing elections to their advantage. This is accomplished in two ways. Incumbents will pack like-minded voters into one area so that they will have little to no effect on the rest of the congressional districts, or they may take voters of a political party or demographic group and split them up into several voting districts to dilute their voting power and influence. So if you're wondering how did Ohio get to ignore the Constitution and allow prior legislators to pass laws that are unconstitutional? The answer is Gerrymandering, the process of creating districts that are stretched out or broken into jagged areas, which undermines equal representation.

ISSUE ONE . . .

How do we stop the murderous onslaught against public education in Ohio? We do this by voting **YES** on **ISSUE ONE**. **ISSUE ONE** is a constitutional amendment that would expressly prohibit any politician or special interest groups from participating in the process of drawing congressional voting districts. In fact, this amendment would create a special panel of ordinary citizens with equal representation. The panel of citizens would be comprised of 5 independents, 5 republicans, and 5 democrats with the task to draw fair and impartial districts that do not favor or discriminate against or favor any political party or individual politician.

UNFORTUNATELY . . .

The party in power is already leading a campaign to remain in power by creating verbiage and signs that say to vote NO on Issue One to stop gerrymandering. This is bull---t! This is abhorrent behavior. Only a Yes vote ends the gerrymandering process. Remember, **YES, YES, YES. Vote YES on ISSUE ONE.**

THERE IS ONE OTHER THING . . .

Since the super majority party in power has privatized Ohio education, over 100 school districts in Ohio have sued the State over the unconstitutionality of the voucher system. The lawsuit was filed in **2021**, and the Supreme Court of Ohio, which has become a political extension of the party in power, has decided to kick the can down the road and hear the case in **2025**. That actually works in our favor. There are three State Supreme Court candidates who are running for office who have sworn to uphold the Ohio Constitution. Please vote for **Melody Stewart, Michael Donnelly, and Lisa Forbes**. With these justices and **YES to ISSUE ONE**, we have a path moving forward.



Please Vote On November 5th!