

Public Common Schools Post HB290—(The Universal Voucher Bill)

HB290 would entitle all school-age students in Ohio eligible for vouchers—home-schoolers, current voucher students, private school students whose tuition is already covered privately, and those who are not enrolled in any program. (I personally know of a family whose children are not in any education program.)

So, how would the passage of HB290 affect the public school districts?

In the range of 40% of Ohio's General Revenue Fund (GRF) is appropriated in support of K12 education. That percentage of the State GRF will likely not vary much, regardless of how the state divvies up the funds among charters, vouchers, school districts, and any other schooling schemes.

Between \$600 and \$800 million would be required from state coffers to fund home-schoolers and students now being funded privately at private schools. Universal vouchers would entice a multitude of public school students to private schools. New private schools would spring-up rapidly to take advantage of the voucher flood.

Do private schools have the reputation of choosing to educate the disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students with unfavorable records of behavior? Are private schools champions of racial or economic integration? Are private schools exempt from some of the laws and regulations that protect the rights of students?

Post HB290, school districts would have less funds and higher concentrations of the students that cost more to educate. The demographics of school districts would change dramatically.

The EdChoice voucher litigation is the only game in town to stop the drain of K12 funds from school districts; likewise, to maintain the common school system as an institution to serve a cross-section of the population.