

**January 11 Letter to Dispatch Editor by Jeanne Melvin, President of Public Education Partners:
Voucher Program Violates Constitutional Call for One System of Common Schools**

The Ohio Constitution is very clear; the state is responsible for securing (protecting) a (ie.) one system of common schools. Jeanne Melvin provides context for that truth in the LTE.

Voucher Program Violates Constitutional Call for One System of Common Schools

To the Editor:

Kudos to the coalition of over 100 public school districts that are suing Ohio because of its unconstitutional EdChoice school voucher program.

According to the Ohio Constitution, the state must secure a single system of common (public) schools, and giving \$2 billion to private institutions over the last decade definitely goes against that requirement.

As expected, there have been negative attacks against the lawsuit by some of the people who benefit from privatizing our public schools.

A lobbyist for school privatization pushed back with a victimized response, saying, "The bottom line is, after maybe the most difficult educational circumstances in our lifetime, for the public schools to try and kick kids out of their schools right now is absolutely disgusting," and calling the public-school coalition "heartless school leaders."

A spokesman for the Ohio Senate Republicans said, "This shows the deep disdain these greedy big government elitists have for parents to make decisions that are best for the education of their children."

Playing the victim, name-calling, and trying to pit parents against public school leaders may be the designated political strategy employed around the country, but it has no place here in the Buckeye State.

The bottom line is, our state leaders must stop discounting the law.

Ohio legislators took an oath of office to support the Constitution of the State of Ohio. The time has come to follow the original intent of the Ohio Constitution, which specifically requires "one system of common schools."

The 1.8 million children served by our public school districts deserve no less.

Jeanne Melvin, Public Education Partners, Columbus

<https://www.dispatch.com/story/opinion/letters/2022/01/11/letters-america-cannot-stand-turmoil-and-division-much-longer/9129935002/>