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Ohio Lawmakers Admonished to Defend the Public Common School System in a February 12 Letter to the Editor of the Columbus Dispatch

The LTE by Chip Santer is timely and most appropriate in the context of the constitutional challenge of the EdChoice voucher scheme. As the writer stated, the legislature is required to “protect” the one constitutional system public school. That is another way of framing the constitutional language: “The General Assembly shall secure...a thorough and efficient system of common schools.” “Secure” means to “protect and defend” in the constitutional context.

**The Columbus Dispatch | Saturday, February 12, 2022 | OPINION | Letters to the Editor | 14A
Lawmakers must defend public school system outlined in Ohio Constitution**

As a lifelong supporter of public schools and volunteer member of many school levy campaigns, I am outraged that our vital property taxes are being sucked away to pay for private, for-profit and religious schools (Feb. 7 column, 'School vouchers take public funds; they give neither 'choice, justice'.')

Handing off billions of dollars of public funds over decades to private, for-profit and religious schools is a violation of Ohio's constitution.

Our constitution states that one system of public education be 'thoroughly and efficiently' funded by the state.

Public funds should only go to public schools with publicly elected school boards having fiduciary oversight.

The separation of church and state are fundamental to the founding of our country. Ohio's constitution specifically states that 'no religious sect' should receive public school funds.

Pouring public school funds into private, for-profit and religious school vouchers has forced more levies on the ballot and cut vital resources for the 95% of Ohio's children who are enrolled in our public school system.

The Dispatch has reported on the recent lawsuit by over 100 public school districts, demanding that the state follow the letter of the law in Ohio's Constitution; public funds only for public schools.

It's way overdue for the legislature to do the right thing and protect Ohio's one constitutional system of public schools.

Chip Santer, Columbus