Vouchers Had a Dark Beginning in the 1950's

Libertarian Economist Milton Friedman started to promote his voucher ideas about the same time the US Supreme Court rendered the 1954 Brown v Board of Education decision. The Brown decision overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine and required education to be provided on an equal basis.

Segregationists, primarily in the South, embraced the voucher idea to avoid integration of schools. In some cases, entire school districts were shut down because of the implementation of vouchers.

President Reagan was a proponent of privatizing government services, and thus supported school vouchers. When accepting the 1983 Nation at Risk report, he stated that he was pleased the report recommended vouchers. (The report did not speak to vouchers)

Vouchers have gotten a foothold in the American education system, in large part, by the constant attack on the public education system over the past 4 decades. Voucher advocates in Ohio started with the disingenuous rhetoric that they wanted to rescue poor kids from "failing school districts" (the Cleveland voucher program was the foot-in-the-door). The voucher advocates' agenda now is a voucher for each and every student (HB290). The current voucher scene is as dark as it was at the beginning.