Delegate Miner, During the Constitutional Convention of 1873 and 1874 Opposed Dividing the Funds for Common Schools with Private Schools

The debates regarding the common school system during the Constitutional Convention of 1873 and 1874 give concise insight into what was intended by the wording inherent in Article VI, Section 2 of the Ohio Constitution (adopted in 1851).

Delegate Miner was adamant that the common school fund be used only for common schools. He stated: "I am utterly opposed to a constitutional provision, or to *any* legislation, having in view the allotment of *any* part of the common school fund to any schools *except* those established, maintained and controlled by, or under the authority of the state. The moment we consent to do so, we deal with a death blow to the system of common schools, upon which, expanded and improved by increasing experience and wisdom, more than upon anything else, it is my profoundest conviction, depends on the perpetuity and efficiency of our American institutions and government."

His statement borders on being prophetic. He foretold that diverting common school funds to other entities would be a death blow to the common system.

Article VI, Section 2 states: "§2 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 religious or other sect, or sects, shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control of, any part of the school funds of this State."

Section 2 is very clear in intent and wording—the state is responsible for a thorough and efficient system of common schools. Period! Voucher and charter school funds are currently being extracted from the public common school appropriation line-item. What are state officials thinking? The public common school system is being dealt a death blow as Delegate Miner predicted.

Join the litigation challenging the constitutionality of the EdChoice voucher scheme.