

Ohio educator and administrator, T.J. Glassmeyer: Fully fund the Fair School Funding program, fund vouchers from another pot of money, and hold private schools to the standards applied to public schools.

Mr. Glassmeyer sent this article to the E&A Coalition with permission to use it as one of our daily emails.

**School Funding in Ohio: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back
By Terrence Glassmeyer**

In the classic comic strip, *Peanuts*, the gullible Charlie Brown believes Lucy every time she promises not to pull the football away when he attempts a kick. Even though Charlie Brown hopes this time will be different, Lucy pulls the ball away at the last second, leaving Charlie Brown flat on his back every time.

Like Charlie Brown, Ohio's public schools go through the same cycle every time the State threatens to slash their budgets in favor of vouchers, charter schools, and private schools.

Their hope was buoyed in 2021 when Ohio instituted the [Fair School Funding Plan](#). The new funding model filled Ohio's public schools with hope because they finally received the funds necessary to educate students. That hope was recently dashed with [Governor Dewine's planned expansion of EdChoice](#) and the [introduction of Senate Bill 11](#). Like Charlie Brown, Ohio's public schools could end up flat on their backs once again.

[The expansion of the EdChoice Scholarship proposed by Dewine would make nearly 80% of the children in the State eligible for a scholarship to attend a private or charter school.](#) SB 11 takes it a step further, giving every student in the State a sum of money that students could take to any school. Both of these efforts are the State's latest attack on public education and if left unchecked could have disastrous effects on Ohio's children.

While details remain murky about how each initiative will be funded, more than likely it will come at the expense of public schools. Instead of tax dollars supporting a robust system of public education, money will flow unchecked to private schools or for-profit charter schools.

Higher funding in public schools ensures students who struggle have their needs consistently met and it makes sure classrooms, students, and teachers are equipped with the tools they need to learn.

When money is siphoned off from public education and given to private schools, it creates inequities and prevents public school students from having their diverse needs met. The State of Ohio should not be supporting private education at the expense of public education.

If Governor Dewine and the sponsors of Senate Bill 11 insist on their measures being included in the next state budget, they need to protect public education first. They should commit to fully implementing the Fair School Funding Plan and ensure that private and charter schools are not funded

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at the expense of public education. The funds used to support the EdChoice Program or the vouchers proposed in Senate Bill 11 should not come from pots of money already earmarked for public education.

In addition, if private schools are going to receive taxpayer dollars they should be treated like public schools. Private schools accepting taxpayer funds should do away with admission requirements, accept any student that applies, and should not be able to charge any tuition over and above the funding they get through either program. They should also have to abide by the same laws, regulations, and rules that govern public schools.

If private schools are going to accept public funding, then they need to be treated like public schools in every respect. This ensures Ohio's public schools are not lying on their backs when state politicians pull their funding away at the last minute in favor of private education.

Terrence Glassmeyer is a practicing public school principal in Southern Ohio. He is also a doctoral student in Educational Leadership at Miami University. The views expressed are solely his own and not on behalf of any school district or entity.