

Senate President says Senate version of the state budget will provide a predictable and more sustainable framework for school funding than the Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan.

A report in a recent Hannah News indicates the Senate President's skepticism of the Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan. The Senate President told Hannah News, "We are drafting a school funding plan that I believe will be sustainable and predictable and fully fund the operations for all the K-12 education in the state of Ohio..."

What is wrong with this picture? Former Speaker Robert Cupp and Representative John Patterson worked diligently with a group of school district practitioners to develop a school funding plan over a period of three years. This involved thousands of hours of work sessions with input from a multitude of knowledgeable individuals and experts. It involved hundreds and hundreds of formal discussions, debates, and conversations. Now the Senate, in a few sessions of a few individuals, is developing a more "sustainable and predictable" formula. What nonsense! The budget must be completed in less than one month, but full details of the Senate plan are not yet finalized, according to the Senate President.

That reminds me of a Senator who requested a meeting with me when I was an assistant superintendent of public instruction to discuss his school funding plan. His self-assured plan was hand-written on the first page of a yellow tablet. Those with the least information and knowledge of school funding are often most assertive and dogmatic about "their plan."

The Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan is the most thoughtful and efficacious school funding master plan ever developed in Ohio. It, when fully funded and adjusted over time, will fulfill the vision and mandate of the 1850/1851 Ohio Constitutional Convention Delegates who established the requirement that the General Assembly secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state.