

The transfer of the State Board of Education functions to the Governor's office is unconstitutional. This illegal act will transform the Department of Education into a political body wherein professionalism is trumped by political favoritism.

The following excerpt is from the 1989 publication—Milestones: A History of the State Board of Education of Ohio, 1956-1989 (page 1):

“The year was 1953

‘Harold, you turned down Harvey J. McCarthy for a teaching certificate. He’s got a family of thirty-four McCarthy’s down there in Pike County. I need those votes. Give him a certificate.’”

From 1912 through 1959 the Department of Education was attached to the governor’s office.* The 1953 constitutional amendment to establish the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction required the transfer of the Department of Education from the governor’s office to the State Board, which started operations in January 1956. The transfer the citizens of Ohio made in 1953 was illegally overturned by the 135th General Assembly and the Governor, via HB33 (State Budget Bill).

The 1953 amendment transformed the Department of education from a politically-operated entity to one that provided state leadership for education without regard to political partisanship.

The General Assembly and the Governor have, by this illegal transfer, stripped Ohio of any meaningful state leadership for education. The Department of Education will be a partisan political unit.

P.S. Harold in the quote above referred to Harold Bowers, who was an assistant superintendent of public instruction under both the governor’s office and the State Board of Education. Before he retired from the department under the State Board, he admonished his son, Dr. George Robert Bowers, to never let “them” take the department back to the governor’s office.

*From 1837-1840, the Superintendent of Common Schools was employed directly by the legislature. From 1853-1912, the State Commissioner of Common School was an elected position independent of other statewide offices.