

**Maureen Reedy: With universal vouchers comes universal bussing costs for public school districts.**

Maureen Reedy, former Ohio Teacher of the Year and member of the Public Education Partners (PEP) board had a letter to the editor published in the Columbus Dispatch on September 1. Reedy gave the Coalition permission to use the letter, as written by her, and sent to the Dispatch.

As the voucher program expands, so does the cost of transporting students to private schools. The so-called Fair Bus Bill was enacted in Ohio in the late 1960's, and ever since, school districts have been bearing the cost of transporting private school students.

The universal voucher scheme will attract a rash of atypical private schools. The Senate President has made a public statement that he wants to provide state funding for private school buildings, particularly to expand private schooling in rural areas. This would expand the cost of providing private school student transportation.

State officials do not require any state agency to collect data on the cost of private school transportation. This is a hidden cost for school districts to bear.

Possibly some state officials are not aware that school districts bear the cost of private school student transportation.

**BAN PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHERS**

Whaaaa?

How can it be legal to use public tax dollars to pay private school tuition in Ohio's one-billion dollar universal voucher program?

It's not.

After reading the Dispatch article, "LifeWise Academy brings Bible study to kids during public school day," I learned the U.S. Supreme Court requires parents to pay for religious education during their children's public school day. Classes must be held off-site and transportation paid for by parents.

Further, the Ohio Constitution specifically states that no public funds are to be used for private or religious schools (Article VI, section 2).

With universal vouchers comes universal bussing costs for public-school districts who bear the cost of transporting all district voucher students to private schools. Property taxes will continue to rise as the public is forced to pay a billion dollars for private school tuition.

There is a solution. Scores of states across the country have banned private school voucher programs.

Ohio is also on that path.

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About 250 public-school districts have already signed on to "Vouchers Hurt Ohio," the lawsuit against the state for using public tax dollars to pay for private schools.

Please call your local school board and urge them to join the lawsuit to ban private school vouchers in Ohio.

Maureen Reedy, Columbus

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