

**Year-end message from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Development to the education community has a major deficiency and a misfire.**

A message from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Development indicates that every child has a fundamental right to a quality education. Amen, this is absolutely right! It is refreshing for a state official to put that statement in writing. Fundamentality demands that all students are guaranteed a high-quality education on an equitable basis; hence, regardless of geography, demographic, anything—high quality programming and services will be uniformly available. This scenario is not the case in Ohio. Far from it.

In the message, five action items are listed. One of those items is choice for families. (Families have always had choice, but the issue at hand is at whose expense.) The Department's promotion of choice at taxpayers' expense is antithetical to the State's responsibility to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools. Ohio 's current "choice at taxpayers expense" promotes inequity and racial and economic segregation. The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Development should have a primary focus of establishing a constitutional system of school funding—not on giving school funds to alternative systems, each of which has a record of dubious results.