

The State of Ohio has reversed its longstanding policy to consolidate public schools and districts into larger, more efficient, and effective operating units.

The state mandate for a thorough and efficient system of common schools became a part of the revised Ohio Constitution adopted in 1851. The common school system has always been based in political subdivisions known as school districts. The 1850/1851 Constitutional Convention delegates never alluded to having the state fund any private or even chartered privately-operated school entities.

In the early 1900's, Ohio had 10,000 one-room school buildings situated within about 3000 school districts. Upon the recommendation of the delegates of the Constitutional Convention of 1912, Ohioans adopted Article VI, section 3 of the Constitution which requires the legislature to "make provision by law for the organization, administration, and control of the public school system of the state supported by public funds."

A paramount result of this constitutional provision over time was the reduction of the number of school districts to 617 and the elimination of all but a couple of one-room schools by 1976.

The reorganization of school districts and the consolidation of school building attendance areas were determined to be necessary to accomplish the thorough and efficient system mandate of Article VI, section 2 of the Ohio Constitution.

The craze for disorganization and deconsolidation of the public common school system began in the 1990's with the emergence of legislation to permit tax-funded, partially regulated, privately operated charter schools and vouchers for unregulated private schools. Currently there are 1071 private schools and about 375 charter schools. (The state has issued over 600 charters, but nearly one-half of the charter schools have closed or never opened due to gross mismanagement and outright fraud.)

The goal of the privatization crowd is to farm out the public common school system to private, market-driven, unregulated providers. The universal voucher scheme will spawn a proliferation of fly-by-night counterfeit education ventures.

One can predict that the universal voucher scheme will engender hundreds of start-up private schools, particularly if the state starts to fund capital projects for the private school sector.

Ohio currently has over 1100 private schools and about 375 charter schools or a total of about 2100 school units (612 public school districts, 375 charter schools, and 1071 private schools).

Since the mid 1990's at least 400 private and privately operated education units have been added to Ohio's education landscape.

The state has reversed its longstanding policy of consolidating public education units by policies that scatter funds to any provider that wishes to hang out a shingle—[Education for sale here.](#)

The 612 public school districts comprise the constitutionally-required common school system which is highly regulated and transparent due to public governance and oversight.

The private school sector is an array of hundreds of individual education units that have little in common with each other or the public common school system.