

EdChoice vouchers in Ohio disproportionately going to the high-income folks

Remember the disingenuous pleas the voucher schemers made ostensibly on behalf of the poor children in Cleveland back in the mid 1990's? The duplicitous political voices that instigated the Cleveland Voucher Program understood that using the "give the poor children of Cleveland the same opportunity to attend a private school as rich kids" rhetoric would be the siren call to lure folks to embrace a pilot voucher scheme and eventually tolerate an expanded program.

The game plan from the beginning was to use poor kids as a ploy. When Governor George Voinovich invited President G.H.W. Bush to Columbus on November 25, 1991, to pitch the vouchers-for-everyone notion, Ohioans did not buy into it. Hence Voinovich appointed a voucher-oriented committee to incubate a voucher project.

Surprise! The handpicked voucher committee, headed by a political ally of Voinovich and Bush, Akron industrialist David Brennan, recommended that every school district provide vouchers to students. That went over like a lead balloon, but some of Voinovich's political allies in the legislature crafted a narrow voucher pilot project. At that time, the Cleveland school district was struggling primarily due to a high concentration of poverty students. Cleveland was a vulnerable target in which district officials seemingly were without standing to resist.

Fast forward to 2023, the year of the universal voucher scheme. Few new vouchers go to the poor kids. Even with a voucher in the amount of \$8400, poor kids cannot typically afford the ever-increasing tuition rates. (The universal voucher program has given rise to higher tuition rates.)

The universal voucher scheme is shifting tax funds from average taxpayers to the more affluent folks. But Ohio voucher zealots have overplayed their hand. Ohioans are beginning to realize that they have been snookered. The public support for the litigation challenging the constitutionality of the universal EdChoice voucher scheme is gaining the support of Ohioans.

Article I, section 2 of the Ohio Constitution opens with the declaration, "all political power is inherent in the people." The stranglehold of the Ohio politicians in control of the Statehouse will come to an end sooner than they think.