

Public officials must serve the Constitution, thus the people. Ohio politicians who are in control of state government ignore the Ohio constitutional provision that requires the state to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools in their endeavor to divert tax funds to voucher schools.

The Senate President was heard to say, "We kind of do what we want." The implication being that with or without the constitutional authority to do so, those controlling state legislation will work their own will, regardless.

The EdChoice voucher scheme and other school privatization schemes cannot be justified by the plain reading of the Ohio Constitution--the supreme law of Ohio.

The end does not justify the means. Voucher advocates regurgitate the talking point that parents of school-age children have the right to choose private education. (They certainly do, but not at taxpayers' expense.)

The state's responsibility for education is to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools. State officials need to focus on that constitutional mandate and quit siphoning off funds for school privatization.

State officials in Ohio need to become acquainted with the preamble of the Ohio Constitution:

"We, the people of the State of Ohio, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings and promote our common welfare, do establish this Constitution."

AND

Article VI, Sections 2,3, and 4 of the Ohio Constitution.

The General Assembly shall make such provisions, by taxation, or otherwise, as, with the income arising from the school trust fund, will secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the State; but, no religious or other sect, or sects, shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control of, any part of the school funds of this State. (Section 2)

Provision shall be made by law for the organization, administration and control of the public school system of the state supported by public funds: provided, that each school district embraced wholly or in part within any city shall have the power by referendum vote to determine for itself the number of members and the organization of the district board of education, and provision shall be made by law for the exercise of this power by such school districts. (Section 3)

There shall be a state board of education which shall be selected in such manner and for such terms as shall be provided by law. There shall be a superintendent of public instruction, who shall be appointed by the state board of education. The respective powers and duties of the board and of the superintendent shall be prescribed by law. (Section 4)

AND

Article I, Sections 2 and 7 of the Ohio Constitution.

All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform, or abolish the same, whenever they may deem it necessary; and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted, that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the General Assembly. (Section 2)

All men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience. No person shall be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of

worship, or maintain any form of worship, against his consent; and no preference shall be given, by law, to any religious society; nor shall any interference with the rights of conscience be permitted. No religious test shall be required, as a qualification for office, nor shall any person be incompetent to be a witness on account of his religious belief; but nothing herein shall be construed to dispense with oaths and affirmations. Religion, morality, and knowledge, however, being essential to good government, it shall be the duty of the General Assembly to pass suitable laws, to protect every religious denomination in the peaceable enjoyment of its own mode of public worship, and to encourage schools and the means of instruction. (Section 7)