

How much more privatization of education will be implemented until the public education community amasses the courage to halt the demolition of the public common school system?

The rhetoric of “rescuing poor kids from high poverty school districts with vouchers” is long gone. That is the way vouchers were introduced to the state and nation. Few, if any, public school advocates understood the long game of the 1995 Cleveland voucher initiative. The Governor Voinovich Parent Choice Commission report that precipitated the Cleveland plan recommended that all school districts offer a voucher to each student. Voucher advocates had in mind a universal voucher program from the very beginning when the Cleveland voucher program was adopted.

Now that every student is eligible for a private school voucher, some believe that in the future most kids will continue to enroll in school districts since most of the private school seats are now filled. HOWEVER, voucher zealots are bent on increasing the demand for vouchers.

What is next for school privatization zealots? Increase the demand for vouchers by:

- Expanding tuition tax credits
- Adopting Education Savings Accounts (ESA's)
- Heaping EdChoice voucher funds on top of Jon Peterson vouchers and autism vouchers
- Providing tax support for homeschooling
- Providing tax support for private school facilities

Some in the public education community have awakened to the existential threat to the public common school, but others are still under the delusion that lack of resistance is the best “political” strategy. The latter group seems to grovel to have a “seat at the table.”

The Cleveland Trojan Horse voucher initiative has accomplished what voucher zealots originally set out to implement. But now the zealots want more as stated above. The public education community must decide when enough is enough.