

Voucher addiction in the 135th Ohio General Assembly is rampant, pandemic, out of control.

[HB407](#) and [SB304](#) (companion bills) would give parents of students enrolled in non-chartered, non-public schools (08 Schools) vouchers for use at these schools. Non-chartered, non-public schools in Ohio are essentially unregulated by the state. Legislation was enacted about four decades ago that permitted the operation of private schools whose patrons opposed government regulation based on truly held religious beliefs. These schools currently are not entitled to student transportation at public expense, auxiliary services, administrative cost reimbursement, or vouchers. But now it appears that patrons of these schools and their school privatization legislator allies want a piece of the state tax budget. Legislators have latched on to Education Savings Accounts (ESA's) as a mechanism to flow voucher-type funds to the unregulated schools via grants to parents. The patrons of these schools, in testimony at the Statehouse, have hooked on to the mindless talking points of the school privatization crowd—Education dollars should fund students not systems, competition will improve education, etc.

Their original truly held beliefs, which was the basis for escape from state regulations, now seem to have been compromised by the lure of tax-funded tuition. They want public tax funds without the strings of accountability and transparency.

Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.