

**A state representative in a January 30 Guest Column in the Columbus Dispatch—
Republicans can help rebuild Black families from the ground up—states that expanding
access to charter schools and voucher programs is tied to success.**

The full text of the charter/voucher reference is: “Expanding access to charter schools and voucher programs will allow Black families to escape failing public schools and provide their children with a chance to succeed.”

The representative’s statement is from the education privatizers’ playbook. The rhetoric “failing public schools” and “chance to succeed” in privatized venues is contrary to reality.

Half of the charter schools that the state approved never opened or have closed. Fraud and corruption have been a hallmark in the charter industry. The ECOT MAN stole hundreds of millions from Ohio taxpayers and the state has not recovered one dime. The state’s half-hearted effort to hold ECOT accountable through litigation is no doubt related to the fact that Ohio’s crop of current statewide public officials gained millions in campaign contributions from the ECOT MAN, Bill Lager.

There is no credible evidence that charter school performance exceeds traditional public school performance. In fact, in most cases, traditional public schools outperform charters. Likewise, private school voucher students are less likely to succeed academically than their peers enrolled in public schools.

As a member of the General Assembly, this guest columnist has a responsibility to help his fellow legislators secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools. When he writes about “failing public schools” he is indicting himself and his colleagues. The General Assembly is mandated to perfect a thorough and efficient system of common schools.