

## **Cleveland.com—Private school vouchers: Ohio’s richest families access scholarships.**

Laura Hancock, in a March 11 article in Cleveland.com, reviewed the nonpartisan research staff report of the distribution of EdChoice expansion voucher participants and payments by income level in FY2024. She concluded that nearly 20% of voucher money goes to families whose income is in the six and seven-figure annual salary range.

This is an egregious twist in that this nefarious program was foisted on Ohioans in the 1990’s as a program to aid in allowing poor kids in a high poverty school district to choose a private school education. Strategies to increase vouchers have always been disingenuous.

### **Private school vouchers: Ohio’s richest families access scholarships**

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A chart from a report by the nonpartisan research staff of the Ohio General Assembly shows many 35,000 upper-income families receiving private school scholarships. Ohio Legislative Service Commission. (Read [online](#) to view graph)

### **By**

- [Laura Hancock, cleveland.com](#)
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COLUMBUS, Ohio - Nearly 20% of state spending on private school vouchers goes to families at the top income brackets in the state – people who make six- and seven-figure salaries or more, a recent state report shows.

Ohio has five scholarship programs to assist families with tuition at private schools. In recent decades, public spending on private schools has skyrocketed, including last year, when the state spent just short of [\\$1 billion on private school vouchers](#). Last year was the first when families of all incomes could qualify for at least a partial scholarship under a voucher program known as EdChoice-Expansion.

About 19% of the EdChoice-Expansion state payments during the 2023-2024 school year went to families with incomes of 451% or higher of the federal poverty level, [according to the report](#) by the nonpartisan Legislative Service Commission.

EdChoice-Expansion amounts are determined by a family’s income level relative to federal poverty rates.

For a family of four, 451% is \$140,712 a year.

For context, the median annual income of a household in Ohio was \$69,680 between 2019 and 2023, [according to the U.S. Census Bureau](#). The per capita income was \$39,455.

Ohio is poorer than most other states. The [national average](#) household income is \$78,538 and per capita income is \$43,289.

But that doesn’t mean there aren’t people in higher tax brackets in the Buckeye State.

According to the LSC report sent to state lawmakers Nov. 12, just under 35,000 students were from families of incomes of 451% or higher -- about 39% of all scholarships awarded. About 86,800 students used EdChoice-Expansion vouchers last year, an increase from the previous year of 22,600, the report states.

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Previous reporting by [cleveland.com/ The Plain Dealer](#) showed that most of the families new to EdChoice were not new to private schools, fleeing low-performing or troubled public schools.

They just hadn't been eligible for vouchers until the 2023-2024 school year.  
(Read [online](#) to view chart)

The GOP-dominant legislature has expanded vouchers, [saying taxpayers' money](#) should go to whichever school they choose.

A coalition of over 100 school districts [are suing the state over vouchers](#), saying that the spending is hurting public schools.

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