

Centerville School District informed their community regarding the rationale for joining the EdChoice voucher litigation

The information provided in this communication is on the [Centerville School District website](#).

Other school districts that have passed a resolution of joinder may wish to use Centerville's piece as a template for informing their respective school community.

Vouchers Hurt Ohio

During their March 17, 2025, meeting, the Centerville Board of Education approved a resolution to join the Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding.

What is the Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding?

This group is a coalition of more than 300 Ohio school districts that have come together to sue the state over the private school voucher program ([Vouchers Hurt Ohio](#)). This is the same organization that sued the state in the 1990s over the unconstitutionality of Ohio's school funding system.

What is the purpose of the Vouchers Hurt Ohio lawsuit?

The Vouchers Hurt Ohio website lists [five counts](#) included in the lawsuit.

Why did the board feel it was necessary to join this lawsuit now?

Because of the way schools are funded in Ohio, districts like Centerville receive a very small amount of state funding and have to rely on local property taxes. This means we are faced with asking voters to approve new levies every few years to keep up with rising costs. Over the past two years, we have listened to community members' frustrations and concerns about school funding in Ohio. We heard from individuals through emails and letters, during public participation at our board meetings, and during our community forums over the past several months. People want to know what the school board and other district leaders are doing to advocate for changes to state funding.

We have tried talking with our state representatives. The bottom line is Ohio lawmakers have continued to expand the voucher program, spending about \$1 billion on universal school vouchers in fiscal year 2025 alone. This February, Gov. DeWine's office released a budget proposal for FY2026-27 that decreases overall funding for public schools in Ohio by \$103.4 million while increasing funding for voucher programs by \$265.4 million.* We hope that by joining our voice with more than 300 other public school districts, our legislators will work toward a fairer school funding system.

* **Source: Dayton Daily News, [State budget proposes slashing public school funding while increasing voucher funds](#), published Feb. 19, 2025**

How much will it cost to join the lawsuit?

Coalition dues for the 2024-25 school year are \$2 per student, so the total cost to the district will be just over \$16,000.

How many students in Centerville-Washington Township currently take vouchers?

Vouchers Hurt Ohio recently published a spreadsheet based on data from the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce. During the 2023-24 school year, 95 students in Centerville-Washington Township took vouchers. In 2024-25, 928 students who live in the Centerville school district took vouchers.* However, enrollment in Centerville City Schools has remained relatively steady over that same time period (8,239 students in 2023-24 and 8,205 students this year).**

Since the EdChoice voucher expansion went into effect, the number of Centerville students from low-income families who have chosen to take vouchers has increased very little (from 57 vouchers in 2022-23 to 77 this year). Meanwhile, the number of Centerville students from families that do not qualify as low-income and have chosen to take vouchers has skyrocketed – a 2,139% increase.

View graphs [online](#).

*** Vouchers Hurt Ohio using Ohio Department of Education & Workforce data**

**** Ohio Department of Education & Workforce, Fall Enrollment (Headcount)**

Has enrollment in Centerville Schools been affected by Ohio's EdChoice voucher expansion?

Ohio's public schools serve nearly 90% of students in our state. The goal of public education is to provide free education to all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, special education needs, socioeconomic status, or any other distinguishing factor.

The enrollment in Centerville Schools has remained steady for at least the past 15 years, so it does not seem like the EdChoice Expansion Program is impacting the district's overall enrollment.

View graphs [online](#).

There are several private education options located in the Centerville area, and the district is aware that there are Centerville-Washington Township residents who choose to send their children to those schools rather than our public schools. According to Dayton Daily News articles published in June 2024, enrollment at area nonpublic schools also has remained consistent. Therefore, it appears that the increased number of vouchers is going to families who were already enrolled in those nonpublic educational options.

As far as state funding is concerned, Centerville Schools receive about \$1,700 per student from the state funding formula. Ohio's EdChoice voucher amounts are worth up to \$6,166 for grades K-8 and \$8,408 for grades 9-12, depending on family income.*

*** Ohio Department of Education & Workforce EdChoice Scholarship Information**

Don't private schools that accept vouchers have the same accountability standards as public schools?

No. Unlike public school districts, private schools have no financial or academic accountability even when they are taking public funds through the voucher program. In fact, last November, a Republican-sponsored bill that would have provided more accountability for Ohio private schools was bypassed for a substitute bill that eliminated requirements for funding transparency and standardized testing requirements.

Do you know when the lawsuit will go to trial?

Please reach out to the Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding at ohioeanda@sbcglobal.net for more information about the lawsuit. You can also visit vouchershurtoohio.com for more information.

What are some other ways district leaders have advocated for changes to school funding?

District leaders, along with other Montgomery County superintendents and treasurers, meet regularly with our state legislators, both informally and in county-wide meetings, to discuss challenges related to school funding and state mandates. For example, in late January, Superintendent Jon Wesney and Treasurer Laura Sauber participated in a meeting to discuss school funding with state legislators representing districts in Montgomery County.

We also extend invitations to our state representatives in case they want to attend our community forums and informal chats to hear concerns directly from taxpayers.