

The DeRolph school funding decision (1997) which declared the school funding system unconstitutional may have aroused the folks with a superiority complex to ramp up the assault on the public common school system

BACKGROUND OF DEROLPH CASE

Before the DeRolph school funding decision on March 24, 1997, a congressional report indicated that Ohio had the worst public school buildings in America. In 1996 a PBS documentary highlighted Ohio's decrepit school buildings and the gross inequalities in school funding in Ohio.

Those woeful and dismal conditions of Ohio's public schools were featured in the PBS documentary, Children in America's Schools with Bill Moyers that was broadcast throughout the USA. It was broadcast multiple times in Ohio and many other states. State political leaders in Ohio were embarrassed but could not deny the disgraceful situation. The Ohio Supreme Court likewise could not gloss over these deplorable conditions, ruling the state's school system unconstitutional.

It is an understatement to say that then Governor George Voinovich and the two legislative leaders, during a news conference on March 25, 1997, expressed vehement hostility toward the decision and the court. Their behavior set the stage for substantial resistance to the task of fixing the system. Some state officials had filed amicus briefs in support of the Coalition plaintiffs, but the ruling party leaders resisted efforts to develop an adequate, equitable, constitutional system. Now thirty years later, Ohio General Assembly leadership ditched the Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding plan that could most likely pass constitutional muster if fully funded.

MY HUNCH

Instead of fixing the common school system, certain legislators and governors have exacerbated the public school funding problem by diverting state education funds to the unconstitutional EdChoice voucher scheme. Why? This is my hunch.

Some elites seem to believe that they are more worthy of quality education than others. During the DeRolph school funding era, in response to learning about the inadequacies of the school funding system, some student groups in affluent school districts reached out to the Coalition asking how they could help to remedy the school funding situation. In some cases, the student groups formally organized to provide support for an adequate/equitable system.

In a few cases, parents of those concerned students warned their offspring that a universally adequate/equitable system of education would heighten competition for jobs, college admissions, etc.; hence they could lose their advantaged status. In this context, I had been "informed" by some elite types that I should not be concerned about those kids in poor areas because "they would never achieve professional employment status anyway."

Possibly the reason that the elitist in-crowd lobbies to defund the public common school system by funding of vouchers and other privatization schemes is because these folks believe they are more worthy than "those people".

The reason our nation's founders put so much emphasis on instituting and perfecting a common school system is that they believed all folks are worthy of fair treatment and a level playing field; that education in

CC4133 8.29.25 Friday

the common school system would permit students, regardless of social standing, to climb the ladder of success. The voucher movement is about creating a permanent underclass.

Children in America's Schools, Part 1: [Children in American Schools Part 1](#)

Children in America's Schools, Part 2: [Children in American Schools Part 2](#)

Children in America's Schools with Bill Moyer (transcript): [Children in America's Schools | BillMoyers.com](#)