

History of school funding in Ohio: Education measures considered in the 1912 Constitutional Convention

On September 3, 1912, Ohio voters approved 34 of 42 amendments proposed by the delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1912. Two of the amendments approved related to education.

Neither of the education amendments tampered with the 1851 Article VI, section 2 provision of the Constitution.

Some delegates in 1912 proposed an amendment to allow city school districts to separate from the state common school system by state-issued charter. That proposal was thoroughly discussed but totally rejected.

The delegates drafted Article VI, section 3, which addressed some concerns of city school districts (second clause of the article) and strengthened the intent of Article VI, section 2.

Article VI, section 3 states:

“Provision shall be made by law for the organization, administration and control of the public school system of the state supported by public funds...” This amendment was approved by Ohio voters on September 3, 1912.

Another education amendment approved by voters in 1912 was the establishment of the position of Superintendent of Public Instruction, which replaced the legislated office of State Commissioner of Common Schools. The legislature attached this office to the Governor’s office after the 1912 vote.

During the 1912 Constitutional Convention there were no attempts to change the language of Article VI, section 2 or to transfer public funds to private schools.

The next post will review public school legislation subsequent to the 1912 amendment to the 1935 legislation that established the first school funding foundation formula.