

History of school funding in Ohio: State officials botched a golden opportunity to fix the system in the June 2025 state budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

The Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan presented the 136th General Assembly a golden opportunity to adopt a system of school funding that could have passed constitutional muster. Same thing happened during the Kasich Administration. The Strickland Administration, with the skilled efforts of then-Representative Stephen Dyer, had developed the Ohio version of the Evidence-based school funding model during the 2008 recession. With a greater state revenue base with which to work, the Kasich Administration could have worked with the legislature to fully fund and improve the model but instead scrapped it.

Same thing happened with the Equal Yield school funding formula in the mid-1970s. It was a workable formula but not fully funded. Within four years of its adoption, the Equal Yield formula had to be discontinued because most of the districts were on a guarantee.

The current economy of Ohio is sufficient to have supported the complete phase-in of the Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan from its beginning. However, instead of meeting the constitutional responsibility of securing a thorough and efficient system of public common schools, the 136th General Assembly chose to lavishly fund charter schools and the unconstitutional EdChoice voucher scheme.

The Ohio Constitution is very clear and definite regarding state responsibility for the public common school. Article VI, section 2 directs the General Assembly to secure, by taxation or otherwise, a thorough and efficient system of common schools and prohibits the use of tax funds for private, religious schools.

It seems that some state officials blatantly disregard the Ohio Constitution—the same constitution they take an oath of office to uphold.