

Ohio statue of Horace Mann, the father of the American public common school, is in a crate: Symbolic of the school privatizers pulling down the public common school and putting it in a crate.

Horace Mann is considered the father of the American public common school. In 1837 Mann was appointed Secretary of the State Board of Education in Massachusetts, the same year Samuel Lewis was engaged by the Ohio legislature as Superintendent of Common Schools. After several years of public service in Massachusetts, Mann accepted the presidency of Antioch University in Ohio in 1852 and served in that position until his death in 1859. At some point after his death, [a statue of Mann was erected](#) on public land on or near Antioch University campus. Later, the land on which the Mann statue was erected changed ownership. The statue was subsequently removed to Antioch University campus where it is now situated in a storage box.

It seems belittling and denigrating to the memory of Horace Mann to have the statue of Horace Mann placed in a crate in a storage area at Antioch University. (However, a statue of Horace Mann is situated on the grounds of the Massachusetts State House in Boston.) Hopefully some folks associated with Antioch University will uncrate the statue and erect it in a notable location on the Antioch campus.

The treatment of the Horace Mann statue is a metaphor for the way the Ohio General Assembly has been treating the public common school in Ohio: The great constitutionally-required common school system is being relegated to the dark recesses of the Statehouse. Many current state officials seem to hold the public common school system in contempt, while lavishing school privatization entities with billions from the public treasury.

A growing number of civic-minded citizens who understand the nexus between the common school system and democracy are laying the groundwork to restore the common system to its rightful platform. The Coalition's EdChoice voucher litigation is part of that movement. Possibly Ohioans, in large numbers, will awaken to the reality that sinister forces in the nation are systematically undermining the common school system by underwriting the unconstitutional transfer of public education