

In the last 5 decades, the state has adopted 3 excellent public school funding plans but has ditched each of them.

In 1975, 45% of the state General Revenue Fund (GRF) budget went to public school districts. By 1991 only 34.5% of the state GRF was appropriated to school districts. In response to the DeRolph school funding decisions by the Ohio Supreme Court, the percentage of the state GRF allocated to K-12 education increased to over 40%; however, since 2000, the percentage of Ohio's GRF going to school districts has been decreasing due to state support for vouchers and charter schools.

Since the 1970's there have been 3 serious attempts to fund public school students on the basis of the educational needs of students. In the mid-1970's, after a university-level professional study of school funding, the state adopted the Equal Yield Formula. Because of the underfunding of the formula, the Equal Yield Formula was ditched after 4 years.

During the 2008 and 2009 recession, Governor Strickland, along with the expertise of then-Representative Steve Dyer, developed the Ohio version of the Evidence-Based model. But this model was ditched by the Kasich administration.

Representatives Robert Cupp and James Patterson, with the assistance of several school superintendents and treasurers, created the Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan based on the cost of high-quality educational opportunities. This plan was adopted by the legislature, subject to a 6-year phase-in.

Early in the state's budgeting process for the fiscal years 2026 and 2027 budget, the House Speaker announced that Cupp/Patterson was "unsustainable". The universal EdChoice scheme cost the state the same amount of money as required to fully fund Cupp/Patterson.

Although K-12 school funding requires a large portion of the state GRF, school funding has never been based on the needs of students. Hence the state has never provided for a thorough and efficient system of common schools as required by the state Constitution.

Legislators seemingly have no clue as to what the Constitution requires of the legislature.

The voucher scheme is causing the slow death of the common school system. The EdChoice voucher litigation is destined to preserve and strengthen the public common school system.