

History of school funding in Ohio: School funding the first quarter century of the 19th century

Prior to statehood, a school that was, at least, partially publicly funded, was established in Marietta, the first permanent settlement in the Ohio territory. The date was 1781. Funds from the 16th section of the township may have been used as support.

At the beginning of statehood, state officials, as would be expected, had their plates full in establishing processes and procedures for the operation of the first state in the Northwest Territory. Also, the Northwest Ordinances were still in play at that time.

State officials were not quick to craft a statewide system. Until 1824, the state's role in education was to issue charters to an assortment of local organizations/societies that were formed to provide some kind of schooling. However, in 1819, the legislature authorized a study of the "common school." By 1823, the legislature enacted legislation providing for public schools in Ohio townships. That legislation was not effective because there was no specific provision for funding the schools.

In 1825, legislation was enacted to set up the framework for the public common school system.

The next post will review the state's actions on developing the public common school system from 1825 to the Constitutional Convention of 1850/1851.