

**Stephen Dyer's February 18, 10<sup>th</sup> Period—Vouchers' growth will be their demise—an important point being made.**

Steve's February 18, 10<sup>th</sup> Period issues a friendly warning to those who are growing dependent on the voucher scheme.

**Vouchers' growth will be their demise**

Telling the world that more people than ever are taking vouchers isn't the flex proponents think it is, legally speaking. In fact, that's its death knell, assuming judges are acting in good faith.

Stephen Dyer

Feb 18, 2026

So I came across an interesting piece of information today. Since 2021, Ohioans went from unconstitutionally subsidizing the private school tuitions of a little over 3 in 10 private school students to more than 8 in 10 today.

At an astounding pricetag of a 313 percent increase — at least — in taxpayer subsidies<sup>1</sup>.

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Image

Yes, Ohio's private schools have seen an enrollment increase. However, that 22,000 student increase represents barely 1 percent of the 1.9 million students enrolled in all Ohio schools this year.

And the funding has vastly outstripped the rate of unconstitutional voucher growth — resulting in a nearly 20 percent per pupil funding increase for private schools.

So get this.

State leaders have spent the last 5 years increasing unconstitutional voucher spending by \$600 million, demonizing public education, putting on a full-court press to convince people to take unconstitutional vouchers and that's netted them ... barely a 1 percent increase in the private school share of Ohio's school enrollment?

Pretty awful ROI, don't you think?

Especially when you consider that by unconstitutionally subsidizing the private school tuitions of mostly wealthy people like Les Wexner, the state is literally funding a separate, second educational system in direct contravention of the state constitution.

And it has meant they have been unable (unwilling?) to fully pay for the state's school funding formula for the 85 percent of students attending Ohio's public schools. The state's public school funding comes out of the same budget pot as its voucher money.

Image

Ohio Legislative Service Commission Greenbook description of how voucher funding works. Published in 2025.

So the only way for voucher proponents to convince any good-faith judge or group of judges that they are *not* funding a second, unconstitutional and unaccountable<sup>2</sup> school system is to actually *shrink* the number of vouchers.

Which they'll never do.

This fact, as much as any, helps explain state Rep. Jamie Callender's recent attempt to bully the suing school districts into dropping the [case](#) — a threat from which he has (kinda) [weakly](#) backed down.

For if these suing school districts continue to stand strong, Callender and his overlord, Speaker Matt Huffman — lawyers, both — know they are screwed.

Legally speaking.

[1](#)

I'm only including the two EdChoice programs and the Cleveland voucher program because those are the ones at issue in the current lawsuit. These numbers are, obviously, higher if you include the autism and special needs vouchers. Also, as with every current year data analysis of vouchers, the funding numbers are estimates because we don't have readily accessible current year dollar figures for the vouchers, just the number of students whose schools are now eligible to get them. So I multiplied last year's per pupil amount for each of the voucher programs to reach the \$861.6 million figure. It's probably going to be more because per pupil voucher funding always increases.

[2](#)

Remember that not a penny of the \$8 billion+ we've spent on unconstitutional private school tuition subsidies since 1996 has been audited.