

Dr. Jim Lloyd, Superintendent of Olmsted Falls City School District

Dr. Lloyd wrote a piece expressing his utmost concern regarding the “transfer of public dollars away from schools that serve a majority of children.” Dr. Jack McKay, former executive director of the Horace Mann League, created a template for widespread use. (Dr. Lloyd is a member of the board of the prestigious Horace Mann League.)

As the superintendent of our local public schools, I have been following the growing national push for private school vouchers with deep concern. I understand why the idea of “more choice” sounds appealing. Every parent wants the best for their child. But the public deserves a clear explanation of what voucher policies actually do—and what they risk doing to communities like ours.

Dr. Lloyd’s piece is below.

Public schools are the only education system required to serve every child. We educate students with disabilities, students who are homeless, students learning English, students who arrive mid-year, and students who need specialized support. We do so with full transparency and accountability: public budgets, public records, elected school boards, annual audits, and civil rights obligations. This is not a talking point. It is the structure of a public institution.

Voucher-funded private schools often operate under different rules. Many can limit enrollment, require additional fees, or decline to provide the full range of services that public schools are legally required to offer. In rural and small-town areas, the reality is even clearer: there are often few private school options available, meaning vouchers do not create meaningful “choice” for most families.

What vouchers do create is a transfer of public dollars away from the schools that serve the majority of children. When funding is reduced, districts cannot simply “cut costs” without harming students. We still must operate buses, maintain buildings, provide special education services, and offer counseling and academic support. These are fixed responsibilities.

Our community should be proud of its public schools. Are we perfect? No. But we are improving every year, and we do it in the open, with the community’s partnership. The right response to challenges in public education is not to weaken it further. The right response is to strengthen it—by investing in teachers, mental health supports, career and technical education, and stable school funding.

Public education is not a consumer product. It is civic infrastructure. It is one of the few institutions still designed to serve everyone. If we dismantle that foundation, we will not just harm schools—we will harm the strength and future of our community.

Sincerely,

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Dr. Jim Lloyd, Superintendent for the Olmsted Falls City School District