

Math teacher and Ohio Education Association President Jeff Wensing adds up Ohio's neglect to adequately fund public education.

State officials in Ohio get an F grade in meeting their constitutional responsibility to adequately fund the constitutionally-required common school system while throwing money at the voucher industry.

A math equation: Ohio – Property Taxes = Total devastation for our communities

[Jeff Wensing](#)

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As a high school math teacher, I have spent my career sharing my love of equations. There is beauty in the simplicity of knowing that the inputs will always equal the outputs, no exceptions.

Our state lawmakers know this well. They fiddled with the inputs of the Fair School Funding Plan formula in the last state budget, resulting in massive underfunding for our public schools once again.

And because of the increasing burden our state lawmakers have therefore placed on local property taxpayers to fund our public schools and other essential public services, we now have a new calculation for Ohioans to confront: What would Ohio look like if we eliminate property taxes from the funding equation?

The result: An Ohio where none of us would want to live.

Let's look at the math.

Property taxes make up the largest source of funding for most public schools across Ohio.

If our state lawmakers refuse to have the state pay its fair share of funding for the public schools that serve nearly 90% of students in our state, then local property taxpayers must pick up a bigger portion of the bill.

This has been the case here for decades.

Meanwhile, our lawmakers cut taxes for corporations and the wealthiest Ohioans, leaving the rest of us to make up the difference – all while continuing to funnel critical resources away from public schools to fund their unaccountable private school voucher schemes.

Remember, private school vouchers come out of the same line in the state budget as public school funding.

One dollar more for private school vouchers in that shared pool of money = one dollar less for public schools.

So, the \$1 billion+ our state spends every year on private school vouchers (mostly for wealthy families who were already sending their kids to private schools in the first place) equals more than a billion dollars less every year to fund our public schools.

And contrary to what many Ohioans have been led to believe, lottery profits do not increase that shared education funding pool.

Instead, our lawmakers can simply subtract lottery revenue from what they would otherwise have to contribute from other revenue sources.

The 'solve for x' is the same; the total amount our lawmakers spend on education is unchanged, with or without lottery profits.

And now, because of the failures of our General Assembly and other economic factors, some Ohioans are feeling the squeeze from rising property taxes. That's a real problem.

Eliminating property taxes without a real plan for how to replace that funding for our schools, fire departments, libraries, parks, roads, and other services is not the answer.

Eliminating property taxes would result in ballooning class sizes, huge cuts to student supports, and massive layoffs across public schools, many of which are the largest employers in their local communities.

The job losses for educators, firefighters, police officers, and other public employees that would come from eliminating property taxes would decimate local economies.

To avoid this catastrophe, Ohio would have to replace the \$24 billion generated annually by property taxes with enormous hikes to sales taxes, income taxes, or both.

[Policy Matters Ohio](#) notes that even doubling the state income tax wouldn't be enough – you would still need to increase the state sales tax by more than half.

And that's without considering the significant increases in local income and sales taxes or the substantial spikes in electricity and gas bills consumers would encounter.

I understand why people are frustrated.

Ohioans deserve meaningful, targeted property tax relief with measures like a circuit breaker and the expansion of the homestead exemption.

But property tax relief should not be achieved on the backs of our public school students, communities, and economies.

The math just doesn't add up.

Eliminating property taxes doesn't solve our problems. It multiplies them.

Jeff Wensing

Jeff Wensing, a high school math teacher in Parma City Schools, was elected OEA President in 2025 after serving as the Association's vice president for six years. A public education advocate and leader for more than 30 years, Jeff believes OEA's commitment must be unwavering in protecting, promoting, and strengthening Ohio's public schools.

<https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2026/03/20/a-math-equation-ohio-property-taxes-total-devastation-for-our-communities/?emci=0ac385e6-9223-f111-9a48-000d3a14b640&emdi=fbd64e97-4324-f111-9a48-000d3a14b640&ceid=142234>