

**Public school advocates, teachers, other school employees, and especially school administrators and elected school board members must ramp-up their support for the preservation of the public common school system in Ohio and the nation**

Prior to the 1851 constitutional requirement that the state General Assembly secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state, Ohio's General Assembly did not have a constitutional mandate to establish and support "by taxation or otherwise" a statewide system of common schools.

Beginning in 1824, the state, by legislation, established a common school system, and in 1837 provided for a Superintendent of Common Schools. However, since there was no constitutional mandate for a public common school system, the legislature eliminated the superintendent position and assigned state education duties to the Secretary of State.

Delegates to the 1850/1851 constitutional convention expressed an abundance of dissatisfaction with the state's support of a common school system and thus crafted a very substantial requirement that the state General Assembly to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state.

In 1853 the General Assembly enacted K-12 education provisions including the provision for a State Commissioner of Common Schools. This enactment was an important step in implementing the 1850/1851 constitutional requirement to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools.

The 1912 constitutional amendment requiring the state to "make provision by law for the organization, administration and control of the public school system of the state supported by public funds..." added more state responsibility for public common school system.

Another 1912 constitutional amendment replaced the State Commissioner of Common Schools with a Superintendent of Public Instruction. This office was attached to the Governor's office until the constitutional amendment in 1953 which required a State Board of Education and the appointment of a Superintendent of Public Instruction to be employed by the State Board; hence, the 4th branch of government—the State Board of Education—was established. The State Board of Education operated as an independent state agency until the Ohio General Assembly illegally and unconstitutionally transferred the Department of Education to the Governor's office.

Meanwhile the General Assembly misdirected funds that should have gone to public school districts to the EdChoice voucher scheme.

Ohio is close to a tipping point wherein the education privatization movement could overtake the public common school. If Boards of Education, administrators, and education personnel and advocates don't become fully engaged in advocacy for public education, who will?

The EdChoice voucher litigation is all about preservation of the public common school.