The meaning of Article VI, section 2 of the Ohio Constitution: "The General Assembly shall make such provisions, by taxation, or otherwise, as, with the income arising from the school trust fund, will secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the State; but, no religious or other sect, or sects, shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control of, any part of the school funds of this State." Part 6

The Ohio Constitution requires the common school system to be "thorough" and "efficient". Those words mean the same today as in 1851.

"Thorough" means complete with regard to every detail; not superficial or partial. The entire system must be comprehensive, all-inclusive.

Since the system is statewide and involves all school districts, it must be uniform in scope. Regardless of where Ohio youth live, the system must deliver a high-quality compendium of programs and services. No student should be denied high-quality educational opportunities because of zip code or residence within a zip code.

"Efficient" means achieving maximum productivity with minimal wasted effort or expense. It suggests such ideas as well-planned, orderly and structured.

In 1923 the Ohio Supreme Court declared: "A thorough system could not mean one in which part or any number of the school districts of the state were starved for funds. An efficient system could not mean one in which part or any number of the school districts of the State lacked teachers, buildings, or equipment. In the attainment of the purpose of establishing an efficient and thorough system of schools throughout the state it was easily conceivable that the greatest expense might arise in the poorest districts; that portions of great cities, teeming With life, would be able to contribute relatively little in taxes for the support Of schools, which are the main hope for enlightening these districts, while districts underpopulated with children might represent such taxation value that their school needs would be relatively over supplied." (Miller v Korns, 1923)

Part 7 will consider the implications of the language "common schools".