A sample of misinformation being distributed to parents by private school officials

Private school officials are scrambling to assure their patrons that the Ohio Supreme Court will rule in favor of the EdChoice voucher. A sample of such follows:

Dear Parents and Guardians,

An Ohio Appeals Court has affirmed a lower court decision that ruled the EdChoice program unconstitutional. **Despite this ruling, the EdChoice program remains in place** as the case proceeds to the Ohio Supreme Court. Attorneys defending the EdChoice program are very confident that the constitutionality of the program will prevail at the Ohio Supreme Court. No changes in scholarships will occur during the upcoming school year.

Additional Talking Points:

1. EdChoice Scholarships are on strong legal ground:

- Previous Supreme Court rulings support school choice programs.
- In 2002, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Cleveland Scholarship program, which is the original school choice program in Ohio.
- Since then, Ohio and many other states have started and expanded school choice programs.

2. State EdChoice scholarship programs do not divert funding from public schools.

- While the Ohio Constitution requires a “thorough and efficient system of common schools,” it does not preclude the state from providing parents with educational options and assistance.
- Funding is not taken from public schools to pay for any EdChoice scholarship program – the funding is separate. If legislators choose not to fund EdChoice scholarships in the future, public schools do not automatically receive increases in their budget.

3. Parents control EdChoice scholarships – not the schools.

- EdChoice scholarships are awarded to parents who may use them at any chartered nonpublic school of their choice.
- If a student leaves a chartered nonpublic school, the school does not keep any scholarship money.

4. Catholic School parents pay the same share of federal, state, and local income taxes and property taxes as parents who send their children to public schools.

- A robust system of educational options is good, pro-family public policy.
- The wealthiest scholarship recipients account for 17% of applications but receive only 3% of the funds at individual scholarships of $616 (K-8) or $840 (high school).
- The average cost to educate a public-school student in a K-12 school is now $17,609.
- The average EdChoice Scholarship is $5,470 (Expansion, Traditional, Cleveland).
- Add $1,338 in state funding per student—Auxiliary ($910 per student) and Admin Cost Reimbursement ($410 per student) to reach the total average State assistance to chartered nonpublic students.
- If all EdChoice scholarship students suddenly attend public schools, the state and local school districts would need to spend significantly more money to account for the new students.

5. Catholic Schools adhere to state “chartering” requirements.

- These include teacher licensing, adherence to state “operating standards,” state audits, and approved testing.
- All Catholic schools are accredited through the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association.

6. Catholic schools in Ohio are ethnically and racially diverse.

- Statewide, Catholic schools on average contain the same percentage of African American students as the public schools and an even higher percentage of Hispanic students.

Additional information will be sent out as we receive information.