Economist Milton Friedman was to vouchers as Horace Mann was to the universal common school system.

Horace Mann is considered the father of the American common school system. Both Mann and Samuel Lewis, the Superintendent of Common Schools in Ohio (1837-1840), were leaders in the common school movement beginning as early as the 1830s. Mann was the State Secretary of the State Board of Education in Massachusetts during the same era that Lewis served as State Superintendent of Common Schools in Ohio. They each believed that all children had the fundamental right to high-quality educational opportunities via the common school system.

In the 1950s Friedman began to advocate that government had no role in education except for providing vouchers for use at private schools.

Friedman was an advisor to President Ronald Reagan. It was no wonder then that Reagan publicly advocated for school vouchers in 1983 subsequent to the release of the bogus Nation at Risk report.

Near the end of his life, in about 2006, Friedman, during a speech before the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) said that parents should be solely responsible for their children's education.

Some radicals in the voucher promoter's crowd seem to subscribe to Friedman's final view that parents should be solely responsible for their children's education just as they are for feeding, clothing, and sheltering their children.