Steve Dyer's October 8, 10th Period--MAGA fraud hunting account targets money going to Ohio Islamic charter school--reveals a very serious misuse of public money.

Former state legislator, attorney Stephen Dyer reveals that some tax-funded charter schools are teaching religion.

The charter school and the private school systems need to be held to the same standards of transparency and accountability as the authentic public school system. Tax dollars allocated to various school systems should be publicly accountable by the same standards and processes used in school districts.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Development should be required to monitor charter schools to ensure that religion is not taught in charter schools.

MAGA fraud hunting account targets money going to Ohio Islamic charter school
Trouble is, the school is on the state's list of highest performing Charter Schools, there are many other Islamic charter and private schools getting charter and voucher funding.
Stephen Dyer
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I wrote about this issue 12 years ago — Islamic schools getting publicly financed by the Ohio GOP's charter school program. Then, I warned people to not entangle Islamophobia with the problem of giving inferior schools more money than local public school districts.

I continue with that plea.

However, yesterday, a Twitter account with 1.4 million followers named "Wall Street Apes", which has focused a lot on alleged Medicaid and other "frauds" perpetrated by Democratic-friendly organizations, pointed out that Focus Learning Academy of Northern Columbus received about $10 million in state aid while including Islamic education in their curriculum and, of course, focusing on the Somali community in Columbus (which has exploded in population over the last 20 years) — the immigrant group the account hates the most.

Here's what they're *really* going to hate, though.

Focus Learning Academy of Northern Columbus is on the state's highest-performing charter school list and has received about $3 million in quality school grants since 2019.

There have been, in fact, 5 Focus Learning Academies operating throughout Columbus, not just the one Wall Street Apes posted about. One each for Southwest, Southeast, Northern and Central Columbus. Along with Focus North High School.

The Northern, Southwestern and Southeastern Columbus schools have been operating since 2002. Central Columbus has been in operation since 2020 and Focus North High School has been operating since 2011. Those 5 schools have received $145 million since 2019, and probably another $100 million plus before 2019.[1]

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In addition to these charter schools, about $15 million of Ohio taxpayer money last year went to illegally subsidize tuition at 20 Islamic private schools (I say illegal because the overall program has been deemed unconstitutional, not because it's going to Islamic private schools).

But the biggest thing about all these things is this:

This was all the idea of Ohio Republicans, including MAGA Republicans, in the Ohio General Assembly. Especially Jon Husted, who I profiled earlier this year about this.

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But here's the thing: The First Amendment requires no establishment of religion.

So in order for the shit tons of money that have been transferred from Ohio's 1.6 million public school children to go instead to for-profit charter school operators and the wealthy adults already sending their kids to Ohio's Catholic Schools, some has to go to Ohio's Islamic Schools.

Either *all* religious schools get the money, or none do. That's how the First Amendment works.

Oh yeah.

One more thing: The Ohio Constitution explicitly states that "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."

So the issue isn't that Islamic schools are getting taxpayer money; it's that *any* religious schools are.

Which is one of the major reasons why the taxpayer funded private school tuition subsidy was struck down last year.

And it's perhaps why we should look at religiously oriented charter schools, like Focus and others, as well.

1
They roughly cleared about $10 million a year or so between 2003 and 20