

**RESPONSE TO A COMMUNICATION REGARDING HB290—UNIVERSAL VOUCHER BILL—FROM  
MIDVIEW SUPERINTENDENT BRUCE WILLINGHAM**

His view may be representative of superintendent colleagues across Ohio (and the nation). It is critical that the public education community come together to preserve public education.

"I personally think the entire idea is preposterous. We have a group of legislators that are focused on taking money away from public schools in the false name of competition. They judge our schools unfairly compared to private schools and often fail to even hold their precious charter schools accountable to the same standards with which we are "ranked".

This isn't about competition; this isn't about what is right for kids. This is purely about pushing their own agenda to prove that "school choice" will "fix" education. They fail to notice that school achievement can be interchangeable with zip codes in most situations.

I've been a superintendent for six years and in education for 23 and during that time I've worked in both suburban and inner-city schools. I've seen how difficult it is to pass levies and I've seen how difficult it is to spend federal funds in certain situations. But what I haven't seen is a willingness to fund our public schools appropriately. We don't focus on our special needs costs, nor do we ever applaud the work educators do daily. We do not get asked to be on committees to help craft legislation or policy. We are not valued or respected enough to be invited to help discover solutions. We are handed mandate after mandate and expected to carry them out.

The Fair School Funding Plan is a step in the right direction, yet they still didn't fund it properly (even though their miscalculations of tax collection could have easily offset the cost). I don't know the solution, but I'd be willing to help discover one that doesn't include pillaging public schools. "

--Bruce Willingham