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**February 23, 2022 Panel to Discuss**  
**“Vouchers Hurt Ohio” Lawsuit and the Crisis in Public School Funding**  
**Are School Vouchers Legal?**

Cleveland Heights, OH— On January 4 a coalition of 100 school districts known as “Vouchers Hurt Ohio,” filed suit challenging the constitutionality of Ohio’s EdChoice vouchers that use public funds to pay for private school tuition.

The Heights Coalition for Public Education will convene key players in the lawsuit to discuss the litigation during an online forum on February 23, 2022 at 7:00 PM. This is an opportunity for the public to learn more about the impact of vouchers on public school funding, the details of the suit, and next steps for concerned citizens. Speakers will be members of plaintiff districts — Dan Heintz of Cleveland Heights-University Heights SD, Nneka Jackson of Richmond Heights SD, Eric Resnick of Canton City SD, and Eric Brown, former Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice and Columbus City Schools board member — along with William Phillis, director of the Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding, another plaintiff in the case.

The Ohio Constitution makes funding a system of public schools one of the state government’s primary responsibilities. The suit charges that the state is failing to fulfill this responsibility in part by diverting public funds to private schools.

The lawsuit claims the growth of vouchers has hastened segregation and depleted the pool of public funds available to finance a high-quality public education as required by the Ohio Constitution. It challenges the legality of the state operating two systems of education. Five school districts are named as lead plaintiffs. They are Cleveland Heights-University Heights, Richmond Heights, Columbus, Barberton, and Lima.

Vouchers began in Ohio with the Cleveland Scholarship Program in 1995. The Ohio legislature has since added four more voucher options that expand who can use public funds to pay for their private school education. Ohio Department of Education data shows that in 2020 more than \$394 million of state funds were spent on the five programs that paid for more than 59,000 vouchers that year, without providing for adequate public school funding as mandated by an earlier lawsuit.

The forum is sponsored by the Heights Coalition for Public Education, an all-volunteer group of parents, teachers and concerned citizens dedicated to a system of public schools that provides all children an education that gives them the opportunity to succeed. Co-sponsors included the CH-UH and Richmond Heights boards of education; CH Teachers Union; Northeast Ohio AFT, AFL-CIO Retirees; Ohio PTA and CH-UH PTA Council; Reaching Heights; League of Women Voters of OH, and the Greater Cleveland and CH-UH chapters; Public Education Partners; Ohio Public School Advocacy Network; and Northeast Ohio Friends of Public Education.

**Registration for the forum is required.** Visit the Heights Coalition for Public Education website at <https://chuh.net/coalition/lawsuit> to register, for more information about the forum, and for a complete list of sponsors.

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For full text of the lawsuit & link to Vouchers Hurt Ohio website, visit <https://chuh.net/coalition/lawsuit>