

Ohio

This excerpt is taken from the [Public Funds Public Schools](#) report [The Fiscal Consequences of Private School Vouchers](#) by Samuel E. Abrams and Steven J. Koutsavlis. The report documents the growth of voucher programs and spending in seven states between 2008 and 2019.

Ohio was the second state, after Wisconsin, to enact vouchers, through the Cleveland Scholarship Program launched in 1996. The state's voucher sector was expanded through the Autism Scholarship Program in 2004, Educational Choice Scholarship Program in 2006, Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program in 2012, and Income-Based Scholarship Program in 2013. A tax credit voucher program was enacted in 2021 but is not included in this analysis. The five voucher programs in place in 2019 served approximately 52,000 students. This total represented 3.1 percent of the state's nearly 1.7 million PK-12 students.

In fiscal year 2008, total spending on vouchers in Ohio was \$69,772,755.* By fiscal year 2019, total spending for all five then-existing voucher programs amounted to \$360,646,965, an increase of 416 percent and an annual growth rate of 16.1 percent.

Between 2008 and 2019, as voucher spending increased by 416 percent, per-pupil funding for public PK-12 schools increased by 14.2 percent, from \$11,148 in fiscal 2008 to \$12,736 in fiscal 2019.

This substantial increase in per-pupil funding for public education in Ohio bucks the trend among the voucher states in this study and outpaces the mean increase of 9.1 percent over this time period for the 49 other states.

This increase in per-pupil funding coincided with a 3.1 percent annual growth rate in GDP for the state from 2008 to 2019, consistent with the mean annual growth rate in GDP for the 49 other states over this time period.

In terms of educational effort, measured as the percentage of state GDP allocated to PK-12 funding, the situation of Ohio is unclear. In fiscal year 2008, Ohio allocated 4.1 percent of its GDP to PK-12 funding, giving it a rank of 12 among the 50 states. In fiscal year 2019, Ohio allocated 3.5 percent of its GDP to PK-12 funding, conferring a rank of 21 among the 50 states. However, over this time period, enrollment in Ohio public primary and secondary schools dropped by 7.5 percent.

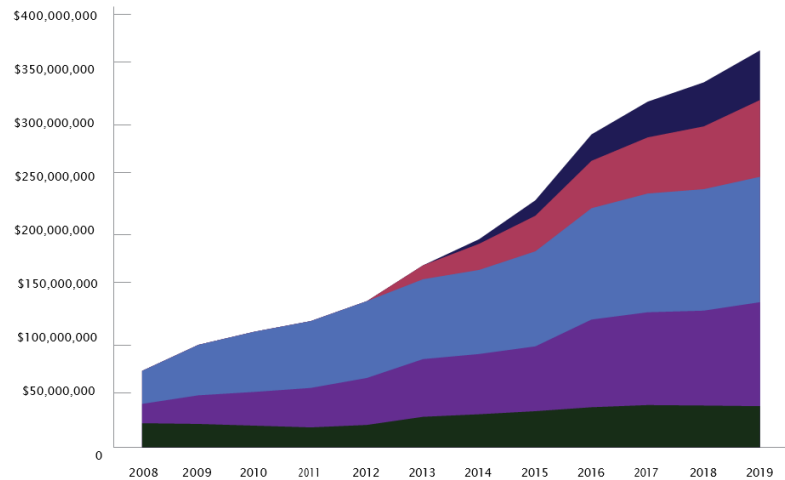


Fig 6 Ohio Voucher Spending 2008-2019
Voucher spending total in 2019 equals \$361 million.
See Table 6 in Appendix for details.

- 1 Cleveland Scholarship Program, 1996
- 1 Autism Scholarship Program, 2004
- 1 Ohio Educational Choice Scholarship Program, 2006
- 1 Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program, 2013
- 1 Income-Based Scholarship Program, 2014

* All spending amounts presented here are in 2020 dollars.