

# Charter schools and real estate taxes (10)

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*(10th in a series on Education)*

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*He is also Gadfly #1.*

Note from Stephen as present context for his 2015 article: The process of using real estate taxes to fund the state's public school systems creates a difficulty for districts with a low real estate average, for these poorer districts must now share their meagre funds with the charter schools, thereby depriving already burdened students of higher qualified teachers and needed supplies like text books, etc. So, the real estate values also determine the quality of education.

The plan below is a radical approach.

*["Is it time for radical change in public education?" Morning Call, September 15, 2015.](#)*

"Sen. Lloyd Smucker, a Republican and chairman of the state Senate Education Committee, is proposing legislation [this is 2015] that could put poorly performing school districts under state control."

"Sen. Andrew Dinniman, a Democrat and minority chairman of the Education Committee, noted that the majority of the schools that fail are in poor urban areas. Poverty becomes the common denominator among poorly performing schools."

"Many school districts derive a high proportion of school revenue from real estate taxes. It follows that those communities with high property values have necessary revenues to invest to make their district superior."

"This is quite clearly supported by the fact that school districts in the most affluent communities are rated among the best in performance and those in poverty areas are among the lowest. Is it fair that intelligent children living in poverty-stricken districts be deprived of an education equal in quality afforded to children in affluent districts?"

“The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment is a standardized test administered to public schools to determine the quality of the education in all districts. Can such a standardized test work when the districts are far from standardized — i.e., standardized being equal opportunity afforded to each student? It appears that the PSSAs measure more learning opportunity rather than student ability.”

“One radical approach could be for the state to take over all school districts. Each district could receive 100 percent of necessary funds from state income and sales taxes. This would eliminate the need for personal school real estate taxes, thereby ending possible foreclosures on homes of poverty-level families or seniors on fixed incomes.”

“Clearly, the state’s system of public education, by allowing a class system founded on affluence, is not working. Is it time for a radical change? Nothing might be lost but there is much to gain — better educated children.”

Stephen