



2023 ANNUAL REPORT
The Year of Universal Choice



A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

In just three years, the number of states with universal or near-universal private school choice programs grew from zero to 10 and the number of students eligible for these programs increased by 60 percent.

Iowa kicked off 2023 mere days into the year when it passed the first universal education savings account program of the session. By the time we celebrated National School Choice Week in late January, not one but two states had already created universal education savings accounts programs.

In the coming months, policymakers in 40 states debated 111 educational choice bills—79% of which related to

ESAs. As the months ticked by, a total of seven states enacted new choice programs and 12 expanded ones already in operation. In all, eight states joined Arizona and West Virginia in offering all students choice, making 2023 the Year of Universal Choice.

With the record growth of educational freedom in 2023, approximately 20 million students—or 36%—are now eligible for a private choice program.

While we share allies in this effort across the nation and in the states, your investment in EdChoice empowered us to accomplish these tremendous victories. Thank you.

Your generous gifts equipped our experts to speak at a record number of events, informing nearly 20,000 policymakers, advocates, and community leaders of the robust data and research on educational freedom. Your investment supported 20 major research and thought leadership publications authored in 2023, and the 28 fiscal notes we provided to key state stakeholders. And thanks to the generosity of donors like you, we increased our quality media citations by 60%, ensuring more people than ever before had access to this research, our monthly polling reports, and more.

With the rapid expansion of educational choice, we are at an inflection point. We know ensuring effective and proper implementation of these new programs is critical to their success. Importantly, it will not happen without a groundswell of engagement by parents and activists who help families learn of the new opportunities before them, build new supply to create a robust and competitive supply of educational offerings, and defend programs against challenges in the courts.

That's why EdChoice also doubled down on its efforts to build diverse networks across the country, and created a new litigation center, EdChoice Legal Advocates, to partner with the Institute for Justice and defend parents and their right to educational freedom. Our newly established Parent Corps hosted two trainings in 2023, equipping parents with the tools and knowledge they need to support new and established school choice programs in their states. We supported the creation of innovative learning models through the EdChoice Entrepreneurs Program, and we helped launch new schools in Mississippi and Indiana.

With each passing year, we get closer to the vision of our founders, Milton and Rose Friedman: that every student in America will have full and unencumbered access to the learning environment of their family's choosing.

As we work to maintain this incredible momentum, we invite you to look back on all that we achieved together in 2023.

In gratitude,

Robert C. Enlow
President & CEO

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YEAR IN REVIEW

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

We established new initiatives to foster innovation and build supply in the education space, built new relationships with allies, and convened a diverse and robust network of education reformers to imagine the next frontier of innovation in K–12 education.

- We hosted our first two cohorts of the EdChoice Education Entrepreneurship Program, designed to accelerate the ideas of the growing number of education entrepreneurs by giving them tools and training so they can turn their innovation into reality.
- We launched a Microschool Initiative by supporting microschool partners in Mississippi and beginning a new grant program to provide startup funds to school founders in our home state of Indiana.
- Our Bridge Project continued to create new allies for educational choice, partnering with groups across the country to expand the definition of educational choice to improve education and career outcomes for students.
- Fifty advocates from 24 states participated in the first EdChoice Navigator Network class. This emerging group of new and established thought leaders is working to promote the evolving idea of educational freedom, break into new markets, create new channels for EdChoice to promote its work, and envision the future of K–12 education.

LEGAL

EdChoice expanded its legal work, growing beyond providing advice and consultation through the Legal Defense & Education Center to litigate on behalf of parents through the newly created EdChoice Legal Advocates.

- We created a new litigation center, EdChoice Legal Advocates (EdLA), and embarked upon a new partnership with the Institute for Justice to represent families and their right to educational choice in court.
- We provided legal reviews of bills and regulatory activity and advised on key legislation in 20 states and the Dominican Republic.
- At the request of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, we wrote a brief on behalf of EdChoice and the Texas Private Schools Association regarding the constitutionality of education savings accounts in Texas.
- After successfully launching a nationwide network of school choice lawyers and hosting the inaugural K-12 Legal Coalition Summit in partnership with Yes. Every Kid. in 2022, EdChoice hosted the second annual convening with Yes. Every. Kid. in 2023, bringing together top legal minds in the education space to discuss creating a sustainable network of independent attorneys.

RESEARCH

We worked alongside state and national partners to inform policymakers, advocates, and the media. When surveyed about the value of our work, 90% of our panel including researchers, partners, and influencers reported EdChoice’s research was useful. They also rated our publications as more timely and relevant than in the previous year.

We produced:

- 20 major research/thought leadership publications;
- 28 fiscal notes/memos/briefs;
- 18 national polling reports; and
- 44 state polling briefs—updated monthly.

POLICY & ADVOCACY

We worked with policymakers, advocates, and community leaders in 19 states, helping to achieve a record number of policy reforms and build foundations for the future.

- This was the Year of Universal Choice, with eight new states creating universal or near-universal choice programs, joining Arizona and West Virginia in offering all families the freedom to choose the learning environment that best meets the needs of their children. EdChoice provided advice and support to each of the 12 states that expanded educational choice programs, and in each of the seven states that created new programs.
- As states quickly shifted from adoption of policy to implementation, EdChoice remained engaged to aid in successful program kickoffs around the country, hosting an ESA implementation summit, monthly calls and assisting partners in curating best practices for program administrators. It also published an ESA implementation guide for stakeholders to ensure programs are implemented in a family-centric, user-friendly way.

COMMUNICATIONS

We elevated the EdChoice brand and ensured our work reached more people than ever before. We launched a new storytelling initiative, increased publications and content by 125%, and published *The ABCs of School Choice* a full two months early, ensuring stakeholders and policymakers had access to this critical data when they need it most.

We achieved:

- A 68% traffic share compared to other leading groups in the education reform space;
- A 60% increase in quality media hits, including citations in major outlets including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *C-SPAN*, *Fox News*, the *Associated Press*, and key local outlets across the country; and
- A 21% increase in visitors to EdChoice.org and more than 3.39 million page views.

TRAINING & OUTREACH

Our experts spoke at a record number of speaking engagements to equip and empower legislators, partners, and influencers, and through 38 EdChoice-hosted trainings and events, we trained 1,661 people.

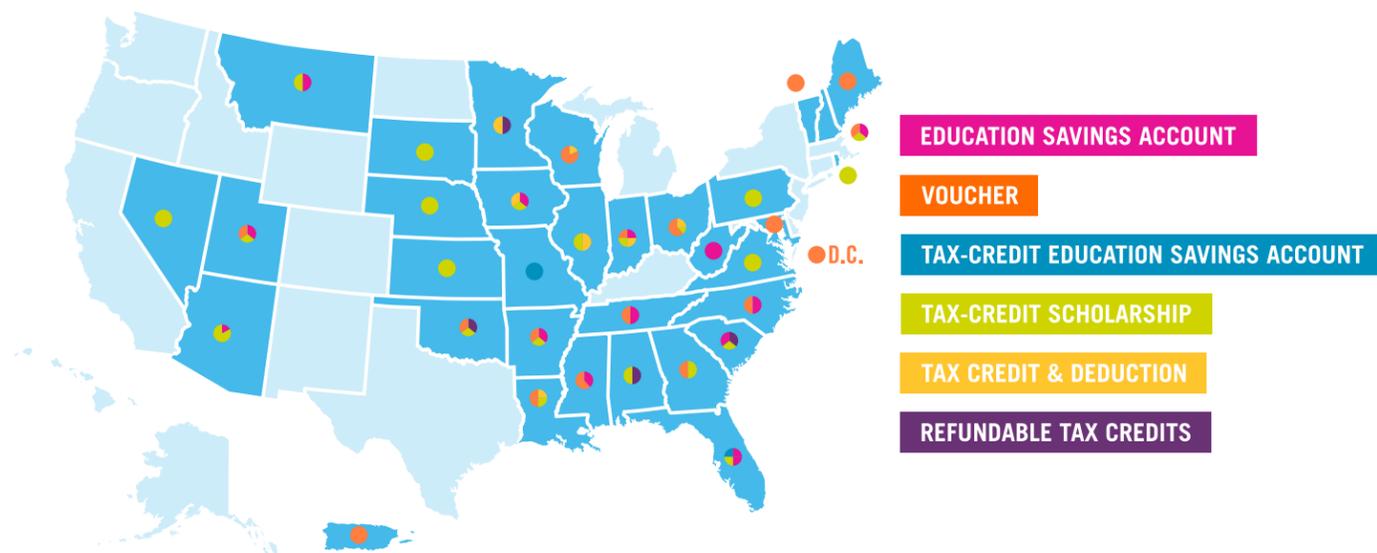
- EdChoice launched the Parent Corps to engage parents around educational choice. In the first year, we hosted two trainings just for parents.
- We trained 976 state-based partners and advocates in 19 states.
- We sponsored 117 events attended by a combined 104,446 attendees. EdChoice experts spoke at 279 events attended by 19,864 policymakers, advocates, and community leaders.
- We granted \$220,000 in outreach grants to national and state-based organizations to support, grow, and develop conversations around educational choice and educational leadership.



SCHOOL CHOICE IN THE STATES

If there ever was a watershed moment, or a watershed year, in educational choice, 2023 was it. Seven states enacted new private choice programs. Twelve states expanded existing private choice programs. Of the states that created new programs or expanded existing ones, eight will be available to all or nearly all students in the states, making 2023 the Year of Universal Choice.

32 STATES (plus Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico) are Using School Choice in 2023



ABOUT EDCHOICE

Mission Statement

The EdChoice mission is to **advance educational freedom and choice for all as a pathway to successful lives and a stronger society.**

The EdChoice team works tirelessly with supporters of educational freedom to build support for state programs that expand educational opportunities for all students. It does this through its Research and Thought Leadership, Policy and Advocacy, Training and Outreach, and Legal departments.

“
Our goal is to have a system in which every family in the U.S. will be able to choose for itself the school to which its children go.”

MILTON & ROSE FRIEDMAN





EDCHOICE AND INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE LAUNCH PARTNERSHIP TO REPRESENT PARENTS IN COURT

Despite the mounting victories for educational choice in recent years, tremendous battles lie ahead as opponents of choice use any means necessary to preserve the public-school monopoly.

Each new state affording students educational freedom is another target for opponents in court.

To safeguard choice programs for families, EdChoice has joined the litigation battle directly, creating EdChoice Legal Advocates (EdLA) to house these new efforts. EdLA is partnering with the Institute for Justice to represent families and their right to educational choice in court, eventually fully assuming education litigation duties from IJ.

“To realize Milton and Rose Friedman’s vision of universal choice, we must not merely create educational freedom programs, but also ensure they withstand legal challenge in state courts,” said EdChoice President and CEO Robert Enlow. “Just as we anticipate a need to help implement school choice, we also anticipate an increased need to represent parents and defend these statutes across the country. By partnering with IJ and launching EdChoice Legal Advocates, we will safeguard the Friedmans’ legacy and preserve choice programs for families.”

In recent years, the battle over school choice has increasingly moved from federal to state courts, with more lawsuits focused on state constitutional and statutory claims. For 27 years, EdChoice has educated key stakeholders and influencers about the methods and merits of empowering parents to choose any educational option for their children. Its national reputation as a leader in advancing educational freedom in the states, combined with its strong nationwide partnerships, make EdChoice a natural fit for this work.

EdChoice has hired Thomas M. Fisher, longtime solicitor general of Indiana, to lead EdLA. Fisher, one of the top appellate litigators in the country, has argued five times at the Supreme Court of the United States and has developed a wealth of experience in federal and state courts. He represented the State of Indiana in its successful defense of the Choice Scholarship Program in the seminal state constitutional case *Meredith v. Pence*, which resulted in a unanimous opinion upholding vouchers in Indiana.

“The power and promise of educational freedom for all families has been important to me for many decades,” Fisher said. “One of my proudest moments as a lawyer was arguing in the Indiana Supreme Court in defense of our choice scholarship law, so when EdChoice asked me to advance the legal defense of educational choice in other states, I was eager to take on the mission.”



BREAKING DOWN THE IMPACT OF PRIVATE SCHOOL CHOICE

On the heels of one of the busiest—and most transformative—legislative sessions for educational freedom, many policymakers, parents, members of the media, and concerned citizens may be asking themselves: What will be the impact of these new school choice programs?

Fortunately for inquiring minds, there’s a wealth of research on the topic, with nearly 190 empirical studies on how private educational choice programs affect important outcomes for students, families, and communities. To help readers better understand how choice programs affect students, the education system, and society, EdChoice regularly publishes *The 123s of School Choice*.

In 2023, our team added a new section devoted to the research surrounding private school choice’s impact on school safety, including reported student bullying, physical conflict, discipline issues, and safety practices. Student safety is an important outcome to better understand, especially as parents tend to rank school safety at or near the top of the list of factors they deem essential for their children’s schooling.

Most studies of educational choice evaluate a single program, making it difficult to generalize the effects of choice writ large because programs and their state educational environments vary widely. Yet, by synthesizing the eight different lines of research on school choice outcomes, we believe the body of evidence can provide a helpful vantage point to see the forest through the trees.

School Choice Program Studies to Date

Outcome	Numbers of Studies	Any Positive Effects	No Visible Effects	Any Negative Effects
Program Participation Test Scores	17	11	4	3
Educational Attainment	7	5	2	0
Parents Satisfaction	33	31	1	2
Public School Students’ Test Scores	29	26	1	2
Civic Values and Practices	11	6	5	0
Integration*	8	7	1	0
Fiscal Effects	74	68	5	5
School Safety	8	8	0	0
TOTAL	187	162	19	12

*One study employed multiple measures of racial integration and concluded that the program’s net effect was neutral. We included this study in the “No Visible Effect” column.

Source: 2023 123s of School Choice



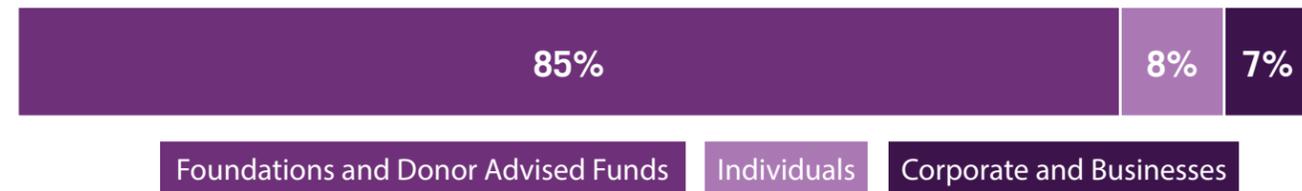
2023 FINANCIALS

Thank you to all our friends and supporters who made the Year of Universal Choice possible. Because of your investment in EdChoice and our partners, approximately 20 million students now can learn in the environment of their family’s choosing. Entering 2023, we knew the hard work of previous years had set us up for never-before-seen opportunities; it would be an extraordinary year for school choice. To seize that moment and achieve the success we now celebrate, EdChoice chose to heavily invest in states, utilizing a small portion of our reserves to achieve these results. With the start of this new year, we remain engaged in states where reform is possible, and are working with new choice states to ensure programs are properly implemented. Because of this, we expect revenue and expenses to be more closely aligned in 2024. Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to universal educational freedom.

EXPENSES (\$12,998,831)



REVENUE (\$9,667,186)



YOUR IMPACT THROUGH EDCHOICE

In 2023, EdChoice was recognized for its contributions to the Year of School Choice with two important awards. The first came from State Policy Network, which honored EdChoice as one of its recipients of the 2023 Network Award, which credits the culmination of state-level reforms that create a national impact. The second award came from The Policy Circle, which recognized EdChoice with the Excellence in Civic Partnership Award, an honor for our work to engage communities and partners affected by educational choice policies.

“When it comes to developing accurate and helpful school choice research, no organization does this essential work better than EdChoice—and it isn’t even close. EdChoice’s approach is consistent, adheres to industry standards, and is genuinely interesting. This isn’t blind praise, either. In just the last week, I’ve used EdChoice’s data in three op-eds.”

Andrew Campanella
Chairman and CEO, National School Choice Awareness Foundation

“EdChoice has provided valuable resources that help inform our call center employees and staff about school choice policies. We utilize and share EdChoice resources regularly with our staff and parents, as they are accurate and easy to understand. Also, several staff members have participated in EdChoice trainings and convenings, these provide invaluable opportunities for our staff to better understand the programs we are helping parents navigate.”

Colleen Dippel
Founder and CEO Families Empowered

“The EdChoice polling data and research has been invaluable to informing our work in Virginia. The credibility and longevity of the polling data has been useful to multiple secretariats outside of education, informing cross collaboration on issues like school safety, transportation, and youth mental health efforts. The EdChoice website is a fast and reliable source for monitoring our regional competitiveness and my ability to keep the Governor informed of the latest trends in education wins.”

Emily Anne Gullickson
Deputy Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia



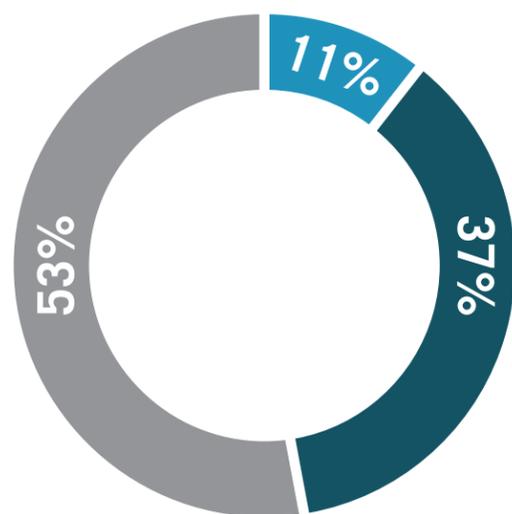
Credit: The Policy Circle



SCHOOL CHOICE: POPULAR IN STATEHOUSES AND KITCHEN TABLE ALIKE

When one considers the data, it's little surprise educational choice reform has swept the nation. Month after month, year after year, EdChoice and its partners at Morning Consult find policies that put parents in the driver's seat of their children's education are overwhelmingly popular. In 2023, the EdChoice research team continued its well-earned reputation as being the national leader in public opinion research in K-12 education, surveying more than 36,000 Americans and reporting their opinions in 18 national polling reports and 44 monthly state polling briefs. Consistently, parents, teachers, and the American public express strong support for school choice policies, including education savings accounts, vouchers, and charter schools.

Roughly one in ten school parents report having a child enrolled in a 'microschool'



Yes, my child is enrolled in a 'microschool'

No, but I'm interested in learning more about 'microschools'

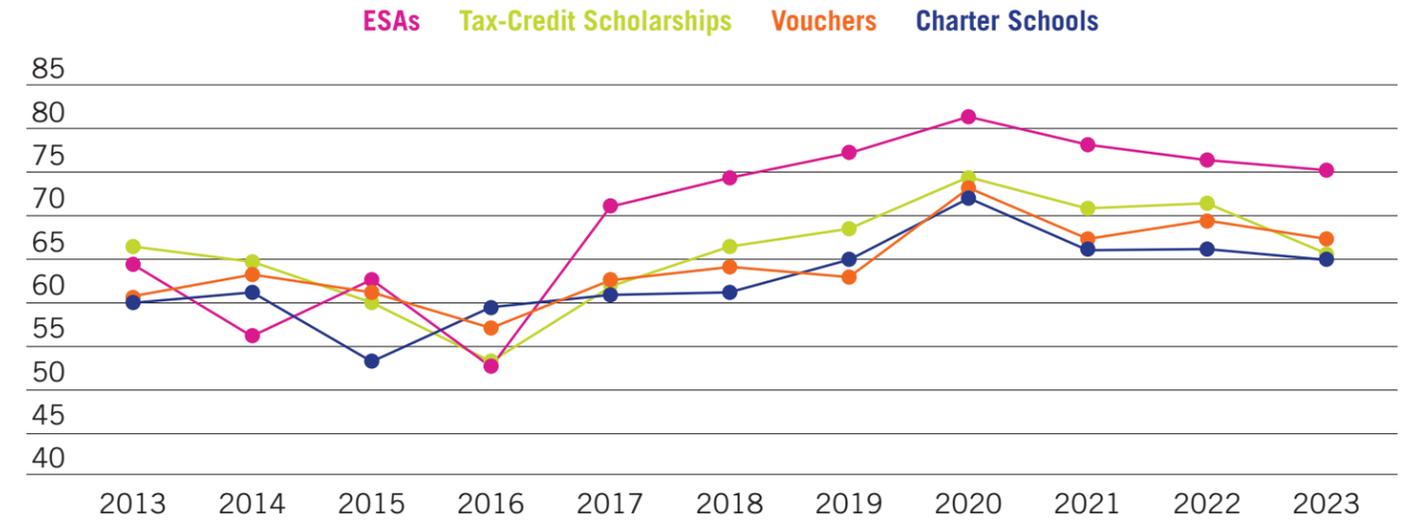
No, and I'm not interested in learning more about 'microschools'

Source: EdChoice-Morning Consult Monthly Tracker, February 2023

Public Favorability of K-12 Choice Policies, 2013-2023

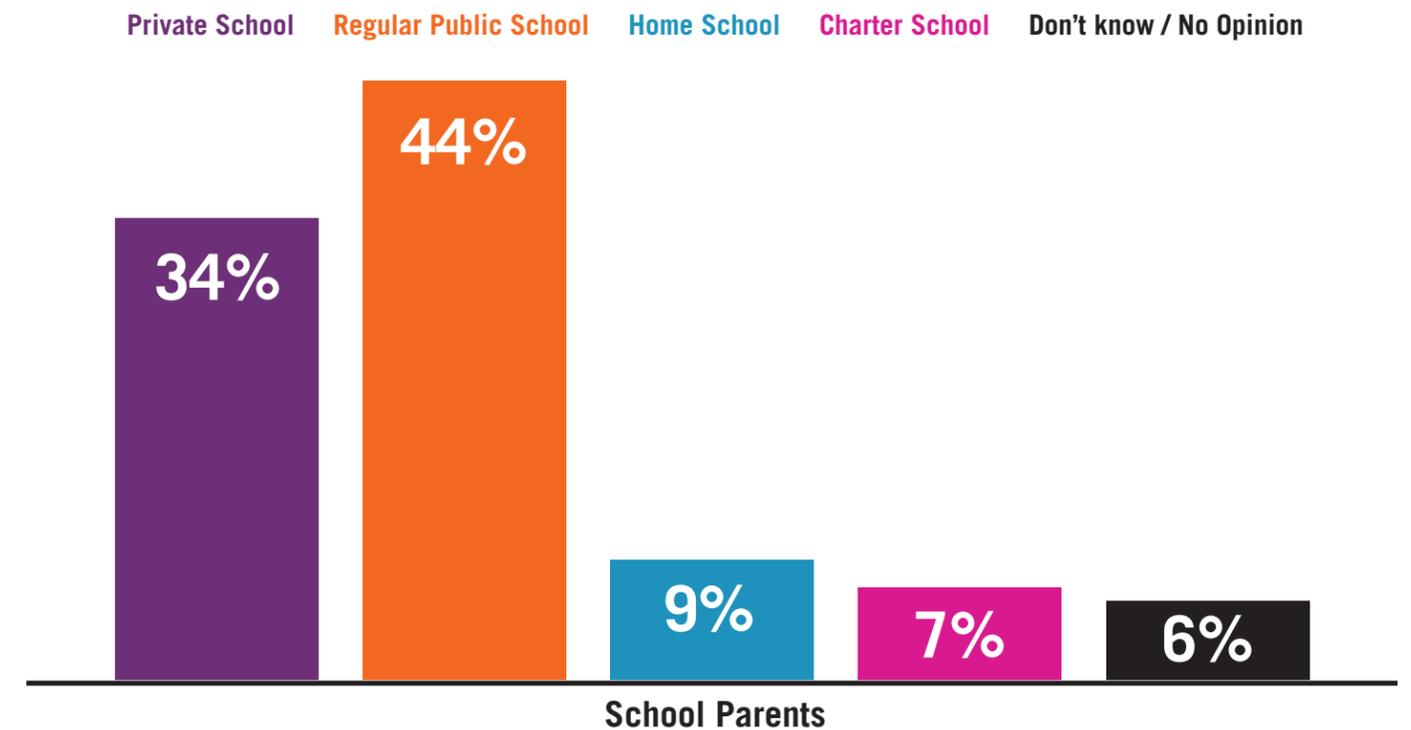
At least two-thirds of Americans support four types of educational choice policies.

% of General Population



Source: Schooling in America Survey, 2023

If school parents could choose any school for their kids, they would prefer...



Source: EdChoice-Morning Consult Monthly Tracker, December 2023



BRINGING HOPE TO FAMILIES THROUGH UNIVERSAL CHOICE

Though Indiana has always been home to EdChoice, it was not until 2023 that it became a model of Milton and Rose Friedman’s vision of universal choice. It was one of the eight states to join the ranks of West Virginia and Arizona last year in offering all families the freedom and funding to choose the learning environment that best meets the needs of their children. Policymakers expanded eligibility in the state’s voucher program to include 98% of families.

In addition to the Choice Scholarship voucher program, Indiana is also home to an ESA, individual tax credit, and tax-credit scholarship program that provide options to families there. It ranks fifth—behind Florida, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Vermont—in what it spends on private school choice programs as a share of the total amount of money it spends on current K-12 education altogether. Candace Pate, one of the founding members of EdChoice’s

Parent Corps, which launched in 2023, wanted a private education for her two children, but it was always just out of reach.

“I found myself in a situation of wanting to be able to afford private school, but still having a love for the nonprofit world,” she explained. “I wasn’t making the income that I needed to be able to pay for private school, but I really wanted my kids to get that experience.”

Candace began travelling the country to share her story with parents and community leaders. As Indiana policymakers debated expanding eligibility in the state’s voucher program, she testified in front of lawmakers on behalf of the program. In part due to Candace’s work, Indiana’s Choice Scholarships were expanded to include nearly all students, and for the first time this year, both of her daughters qualify.

“We are very grateful because it (Indiana’s voucher program) makes a significant difference in helping us both pay for school and ensure our child has a great educational experience,” Candace reflected. “I think it’s important to empower parents across the country and let them know that there are other options out there and resources to make it happen.”

For other parents, like Corey Burkehardt, educational choice has provided support and opportunities her children Vance and Evelyn (Evie) were missing in their assigned district school. Both children have dyslexia and are recipients of Indiana’s ESA for students with special needs.

“I’m excited I don’t have cookie-cutter kids, but they definitely need a different approach,” Corey explained in a video series EdChoice created in 2023 to raise awareness about the Indiana education savings account program. “It was quite a journey with our kids when they were in their previous setting. We felt like we had to fight and advocate just to try to help our kids not fall through the cracks.”

After applying for and receiving Indiana Education Scholarships for Vance and Evie, Corey had hundreds

of vendors at her fingertips. She can now make sure her children receive an education that is customized for them.

“We’ve always heard this saying, ‘It takes a village to raise your kids.’ And so, this is where you’re picking your village,” Corey said. “For our kids to have a successful individualized education plan, we need that reading interventionist. Then we also have tutors that come in and help our kids on Mondays and Fridays with their homework. We wouldn’t have been able to afford that without the ESA.”

Thanks to their scholarships and customized learning plans, both Evie and Vance found a new love for reading.

“I now know how to read books and I don’t have to pretend to read anymore,” Evie said.

Corey said the program has had an “amazing” impact on her family.

“This is focusing in on your child’s strengths. It’s individualized solely to them, and you get to pick and choose because you know your child best. And that is what is going to make your child successful in the long run.”

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