

# News Of Education



## One Million Students Now Using Private School Choice

(NAPS)—Here's news many parents may be interested to learn: According to the most recent data available, 1,038,487 K–12 students are currently enrolled in an education savings account (ESA), voucher, tax-credit scholarship, tax-credit ESA, or refundable tax credit program. While some states provide data for the most recent school year, others lag behind, so actual participation is likely higher.

“When Milton and Rose Friedman founded EdChoice in 1996 to lead the way for universal education freedom, there were about 10,000 students participating in choice programs,” said EdChoice President and CEO Robert Enlow. “Today, that number has grown a hundred-fold. Over 1 million students can learn in the environment of their family’s choosing thanks to policies that empower parents with the freedom and flexibility to be in the driver’s seat of their child’s education.”

### Trends in Education

Participation in these programs has grown steadily in recent decades, with rapid growth taking off around 2020, and roughly doubling since. At the same time, policymakers across the country have been increasing student access to private school choice programs at record pace. In 2021, West Virginia created the nation’s first school choice program with universal eligibility, and the following year, Arizona made its ESA program available to all students. Today, 12 states offer educational choice programs for all or nearly all students. Nationwide, there are 75 school choice programs spread across 33 states, plus Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

In all, nearly 22 million students, or 40%, now have access to a private school choice program. With so many families gaining eligibility to programs in only the last few years, participation is expected to rise. This school choice momentum, which was build-



**Many families are seizing opportunities created by new and expanded educational freedom programs to get what's best for their kids.**

ing for years and years, exploded after the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents took what was solid growth and supercharged the movement for educational freedom. Prior to the pandemic, many state choice programs, although broad, were limited in who could apply.

“We know from survey data that parents aren’t getting what they want in their child’s learning environment,” Enlow said. “More than 60% say, if given the opportunity to choose something other than their local public school, they would. Yet, only about 20% are doing so. As states increase access to school choice programs, we know the gap in parent preferences and actual enrollment will continue to close, and students will be happier and more successful because of it.”

### About EdChoice

EdChoice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. Its mission is to advance educational freedom and choice for all as a pathway to successful lives and a stronger society. It’s committed to understanding and pursuing a K–12 education ecosystem that empowers every family to choose the learning environment that fits their children’s needs best.

### Learn More

For further facts and stats, visit [www.edchoice.org](http://www.edchoice.org).