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QuickPoint! – Now Is the Time: Oregon’s Educational Opportunity Act, The Power of Choice

By Steve Buckstein

Oregon now has the chance to become an early adopter of a universal [Education Savings Account](#) program. An ESA program allows Kindergarten through 12th grade students to use part of the state funds allocated to their local school districts for other educational expenses and services of their choice, such as private or home schools, tutors, and online courses. Funds not used by the student in a given year can be rolled over, all the way to college.

[Senate Bill 437](#) as Introduced would allow 100 percent of the average annual state funding (currently \$8,781) for disabled and low-income students, and 90 percent for all other students, to fund ESAs for any students wishing to use them. This likely would result in a \$200 million fiscal impact on the state and local school districts combined. A small price to pay for educational freedom, but not likely to happen in a legislative session facing a budget shortfall.

So, the bill has been amended to virtually eliminate any negative fiscal impact. It lowers ESA accounts to \$6,000 for disabled and low-income students and \$4,500 for all other students. These accounts represent real money...for real educational opportunities...for every student—with no fiscal impact on the state budget.

Please [share your interest](#) in Senate Bill 437, the Educational Opportunity Act, with your state legislators. And get involved at the [Educational Opportunity Act Facebook page](#) and at SchoolChoiceforOregon.com.

Steve Buckstein is Founder and Senior Policy Analyst at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.