

QuickPoint! – National School Choice Week Celebrates Options and Opportunities in K-12 Education

By Kathryn Hickok

January 23-29 is [National School Choice Week](https://www.schoolchoiceweek.com), a 50-state celebration of opportunity in K-12 education. Every January, tens of thousands of independent events and activities draw attention to the ways school choice brings quality education to millions of students. School Choice Week provides free, practical resources year-round on its website to help families looking for options in their states. Resources specific to Oregon can be found on National School Choice Week’s website at [schoolchoiceweek.com](https://www.schoolchoiceweek.com).

During the past two years, increasing numbers of parents have “voted with their feet” for school choice. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, 8.7 million children switched from public to private schools nationwide. Between the last two school years, charter school enrollment in Oregon increased 20.8%, and the number of Oregon homeschooled students increased 73%.

Oregon’s education policies should value all options that empower students to learn successfully, and parents should be free to choose the best fit for their children. Oregon can expand educational opportunity in many ways. We could lift the cap on charter school enrollment; let state education funding follow the child, thus funding students rather than systems; and remove regulatory barriers to the GED test, so high schoolers can more easily demonstrate graduation-level proficiency. As education in Oregon moves forward from the pandemic school closures, we can serve all students better through educational choice.

Kathryn Hickok is Executive Vice President at Cascade Policy Institute and Director of Cascade’s Children’s Scholarship Fund-Oregon program. CSF-Oregon has provided private scholarships worth more than \$3.5 million to lower-income Oregon children to help them attend tuition-based elementary schools since 1999.

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