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QuickPoint! – Education Group Works to Put School Choice on the Ballot in Oregon

By Kathryn Hickok

This year, Arizona became the first state to expand eligibility for its Education Savings Account program to all K-12 children. Parents who choose to opt out of their zoned public schools now can receive 90 percent of the state-level, per-student base funding in an <u>ESA</u> for their child (about \$7,000 per student in 2022). The ESA may be used for tuition, homeschooling, tutoring, online education, education therapy, or other services.

It's time Oregon parents had similar opportunities to match their students with teachers, schools, and resources who will help them learn best. Education Freedom for Oregon, a school choice advocacy group, is making that its goal. The group has received certified ballot titles from the Oregon Attorney General <u>for two separate</u> <u>education ballot measures</u>. One would create an Education Savings Account program for Oregon families. The other would offer statewide public school open enrollment. If enough voter signatures are received, Oregonians may be able to vote on these measures in 2024.

Families increasingly believe one-size-fits-all schools don't work for all children, and polls show a <u>majority of Oregon voters</u> support school choice. Educational choice programs, like those already operating in other states, would increase students' opportunities, improve outcomes, and help make schools accountable to the parents and students they serve.

Kathryn Hickok is Executive Vice President at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization, and Director of Cascade's Children's Scholarship Fund-Oregon program.

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