

## QuickPoint! – Education Savings Accounts Would Make Oregon Students Better Off

By Kathryn Hickok

This is [National School Choice Week](#), an annual celebration of opportunity in K-12 education. Students and families need more education options now. School choice means giving parents access to the best options for their children.

Critics of school choice programs like Education Savings Accounts claim such programs would harm district public schools by reducing their state funding. However, a new report published by Cascade Policy Institute shows ESAs do not reduce public school funding at the state level or for individual school districts.

The report, “[Education Savings Accounts: A School Choice Solution That Can Save States Money](#),” examines the effect an ESA program would have on Oregon’s state budget. It finds that a universal program in which all Oregon students would be eligible—similar to Arizona’s Empowerment Scholarship Accounts—would require a 3% increase in state spending on K-12 education. And, because many eligible students would not participate in the program, per-student spending for public school students would *increase* by 2%.

Contrary to critics’ claims, ESA programs don’t “defund” public schools. A carefully constructed program could provide school choice to students, with no noticeable effect on the state budget. Enacting a universal ESA program would be a significant step to help K-12 students get a solid education in the academic settings that are best for them.

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