

EDUCATION CHOICE



WHAT IS SCHOOL CHOICE AND WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

School choice allows families to choose the best education available for their child. Regardless of their social or economic status, parents know their children best, care the most and are most impacted by their children's success or failure. Therefore, it is the parents' role to choose the school that best fits their child's individual educational needs.

TYPES OF SCHOOL CHOICE

Educational Tax Credits provide companies with a tax credit for donations made to non-profit scholarship or educational improvement organizations. These donations are converted into scholarships or educational improvement programs to help children in Pennsylvania obtain a quality education that will fit their needs.

Opportunity Scholarships are issued by the government so that parents can apply them towards tuition at a private school, rather than at the public school to which their child is assigned. This allows parents to have a greater choice in providing the education that will fit their child's needs.

Charter Schools are independent, tuition-free, public schools that are granted their authority to operate either by a school district or a state department of education. Charter schools provide unique and varied curriculums and programs. They often emphasize particular fields of study, such as science, creative arts,

technology, or languages. Some charters serve students with special needs, such as special education, gifted students, at-risk students or students pursuing a particular trade. They are uniquely able to respond to the specific needs of a community and a population of students.

Cyber Charter Schools Cyber charter schools are charter schools with an interesting twist. They exist in cyberspace. Cyber charters are similar to regular charter schools in many ways: they are independent, public schools sponsored by public school districts or the state department of education. The charter's issuing authority monitors the performance and the integrity of the school, but they are otherwise free of traditional bureaucratic control. And like all schools of choice, they are accountable to the most important people: those who utilize the services provided.

Homeschooling is the education of children at home, by parents or by tutors rather than in public or private schools.



THE BENEFITS

Currently in Pennsylvania, there are 144 failing schools where children are exposed to violence, constant class disruptions and a lack of learning materials. Many parents have already chosen to remove their children from such schools and place them in private schools, thanks to educational tax credit scholarships, charter schools, cyber charter schools or even home school. As a result, these same children have become engaged and attentive students who are doing their homework on time and achieving high scores on tests while in a positive and violence-free environment.

The REACH Foundation encourages parents to take advantage of the current school choice options, as well as to remain informed about the possible expansion of school choice to include opportunity scholarships. Numerous opportunity scholarship bills are currently being discussed and it's up to organizations like ours and Pennsylvania parents to express their need and support of such a program. Parents should feel empowered to choose which schools are suitable for their children's needs and should have access to as many resources as possible to ensure a safe and bright future for their children.

Need more information? Call or email us today. And don't forget to visit our website for the latest news and for additional resources.

