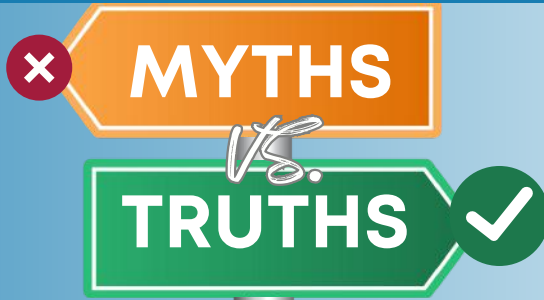


ARIZONA



ESAs

✘ *"Public" tax dollars cannot go to private schools!"*

✔ Per the Arizona Republic, currently half of all Arizona public school districts today are sending public school students to private schools because the public school could not provide adequate service. Education dollars belong to the student so the money should follow the child. They should be able to use it towards the education model that best fits their needs. We should fund students NOT school systems!

✘ *"There is no accountability for private schools like there are in district public schools!"*

✔ Parents are the ultimate accountability measure as they will hold the school accountable because they have their child's best interest in mind. Private schools in Arizona have significant accountability measures which is why they are so popular amongst parents.

✘ *"You're going to decimate our public schools by letting hundreds of thousands of new kids qualify, tripling or quadrupling the number of students who are eligible!"*

✔ A child should not be forced to attend a government public school that is not working for them just to keep the status quo in place. Children only get one shot at their future so they should be able to receive the best education that fits their individual needs. Currently, approximately 63,000 students are in the ESA program which is a small fraction of the 1.1 million K-12 students Arizona.

✘ *"Voters overwhelmingly voted down a large-scale ESA expansion once already, we should respect the will of the voters and not allow any ESA expansions!"*

✔ The previous initiative was voted down because it limited the ESA program and it did not go far enough to support education freedom. This is validated by the fact that 75% of Arizona voters support school choice programs including 78% of minorities.

✘ *"My schools are fine, and so are the majority of district public schools, so school choice isn't really needed".*

✔ Just because something works for one family, does not mean it works for all families. Education is not a 'one-size-fits-all'. Children learn differently and their needs may change so they need all education options available. Over 20 years ago, the same opponents to school choice opposed open enrollment and charter schools but now today they embrace them.

✘ *"Funding is the problem. If only district public schools had more money, they could be fixed and families would not have to leave."*

✔ Currently K-12 funding is at record high in Arizona. Per pupil funding for government district schools is at approximately \$14,500. ESA funded students receive half of that amount at only about \$7,000 per year.

✘ *"The cost of private school is too high for many families, so even if they had an ESA they could not afford to pay the balance or afford transportation to the new school!"*

✔ About half of all private schools' tuition is at or below the current ESA amount of \$7,000 and families can also use ESA funds to pay for transportation costs. Additionally, this is not a public vs. private school debate since parents use ESA's for other educational options including home-based learning, online curriculum, tutoring programs, and more!

ARIZONA

MYTHS

vs.

TRUTHS

ESAs



"If a child leaves a public school district the school will lose all of that child's education funding!"



If a student chooses to use an ESA and leaves their public school district, a significant portion of their education dollars still remain in that district. This means the school district would have received more funding but now would have one less student to educate which will help lower class sizes. Remember, ESA students receive half the funding of what district students receive. This is an overall savings to the education system.



"With so many students enrolling in Universal ESAs, it will cost hundreds of millions of dollars and bankrupt the state of Arizona."



The average total per-pupil funding for a K-12 district public student in AZ is about \$14,000 per year (this includes state, federal & local tax dollars). Compare that to the traditional Universal ESA student who receives approximately \$7,000 per year (which is derived from 90% of the state funding). This means that a typical Universal ESA student literally receives half of the education funding they would have received if they attended their district public school.



"Universal ESA Vouchers are wide open for fraud and abuse with little accountability and big loopholes."



A recent review of the Universal ESA program by the Arizona auditor general found that less than 1% of the overall reimbursement expenses were considered "improper," and in many of those cases it was due to parents simply not understanding the Universal ESA guidelines. This audit proves that "widespread fraud" is not being committed by parents.



"75% of Universal ESA voucher users are from wealthy zip codes. Wealthier parents are getting unneeded subsidies from the state, leaving behind low-income and Latino children."



This could not be further from the truth. A recent analysis of Arizona Department of Education data by the nonprofit San Juan Diego Institute shows that most of the students using Universal ESAs live in ZIP codes that are below the average state median income. In other words, the majority of Universal ESA students come from the poorer half of our state.



"Most of these vouchers will go to rich white families and not to the disadvantaged groups who need them most."



A recent statewide poll commissioned in part by American Federation for Children shows the highest support for Universal ESAs comes from Arizona's Hispanic population with a whopping 76% in support.



"Public schools are held accountable by state tests and curriculum mandates, while unregulated private schools are completely unaccountable."



An in-depth survey of private schools, along with data extrapolated from Private School Review, shows that more than 96% of the most populous private schools in Arizona offer norm-referenced testing, such as the SAT, so that students in private schools can be compared to their peers. (The remaining 4% use alternative metrics). Furthermore, while some private schools choose to post testing results publicly, many others (according to surveys shared with the American Federation for Children) provide testing & academic information directly to parents via daily or weekly progress reports, so that they know exactly where their child stands academically.