



CHOICE

A Year in Review **2020**



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

THE STATE OF EDCHOICE



Milton Friedman would have celebrated his 109th birthday this year. It's been 25 years since he and his wife Rose set up the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice as the entity that would carry forward their vision of school choice for all families and students.

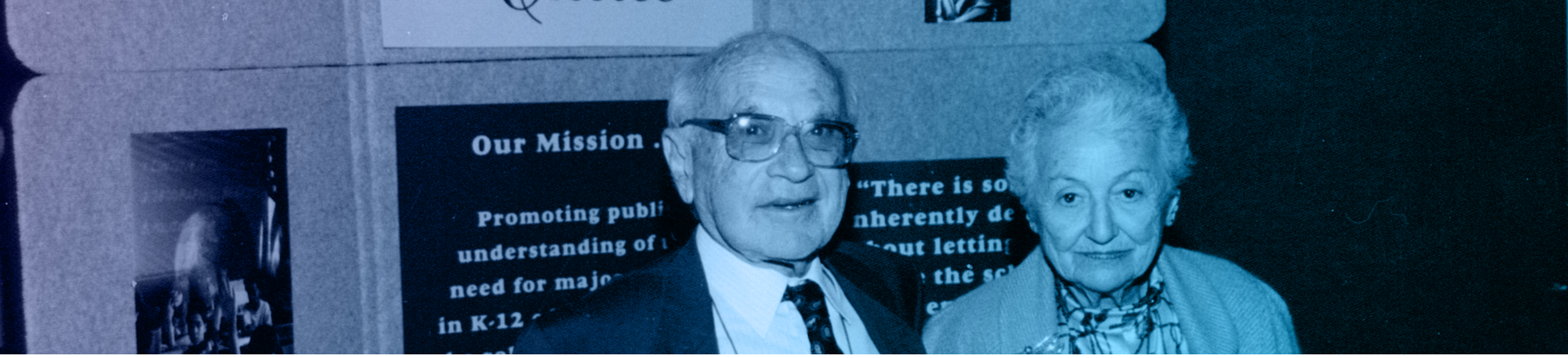
I wish he could see how amazingly far we've come.

Not only has our organization grown and strengthened the core services we provide to our state and national partners, but it feels like there's no stopping the evolution of school choice as more parents realize just how much possibility is out there for their children.

The global pandemic that began in 2020 shook K-12 education to its core, leaving many families scrambling for options while others simply disappeared from a system that was never designed to meet their needs in the first place.

From the ashes of terrible tragedy arose an army of parents fed up with the status quo, tired of being told they need to accept what's offered to them without question or comment. They formed their own learning pods, leaned on each other, dug deep and advocated for change.

As a result, we saw an unprecedented number of school choice bills introduced in 2020 and into this year, resulting in the enactment of new programs in seven states and 21 expansions of existing programs in 18 states. We've never seen anything like it, and there's no going back.



The pandemic also changed the way we had to do things, and those modifications are reflected throughout this report. We weren't able to travel to conferences or trainings to meet with our friends in the movement—and make new ones. We had to adapt policies we've long supported to fit into a quickly changing legislative landscape. We were personally affected by the loss of loved ones and the loss of being together.

But 2020 showed us the value of persistence and the strength of the American spirit. We came through difficult times stronger and better able to adapt to change—and we're going to continue to build on that in the years to come.

Robert C. Enlow
President & CEO



SUCCESS STORY

EDCHOICE PUBLIC OPINION TRACKER

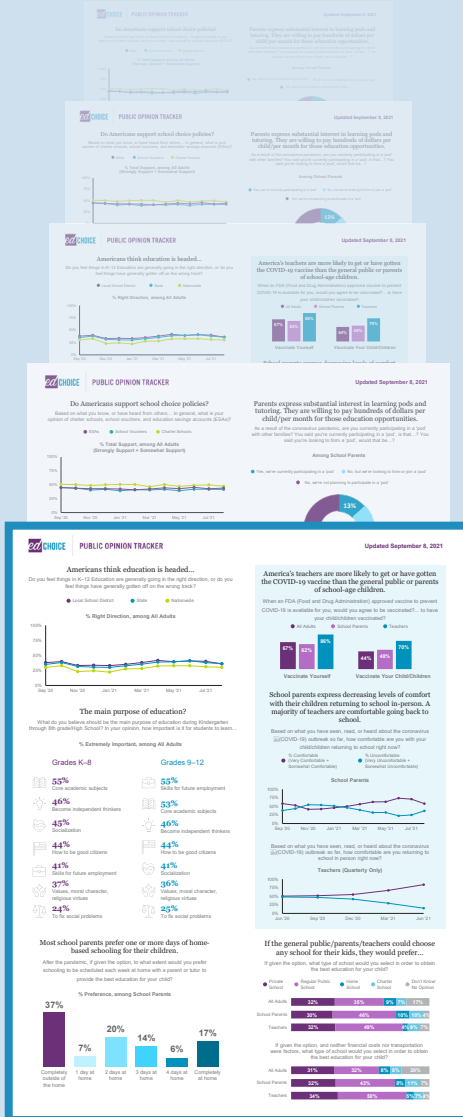
When we launched the EdChoice Public Opinion Tracker in January 2020, we had no idea what was going to be in store for K-12 education just a few months later. We started the project because we want to provide up-to-date monthly polling results for the general population and parents on a number of key topics in K-12 education.

No other national organization had embraced that challenge, and we wanted to expand our footprint as a trusted resource for research and thought leadership.

We gathered data for four months before we publicly launched the polling project. By the time we did, it was clear the pandemic was going to play a huge role in K-12 education in our nation.

The tracker project allowed us to be nimble. Instead of churning out delayed data once or twice per year, we were able to insert new questions into the survey each month so we could find out how people were feeling about their schools' responses to COVID and what kinds of learning environments they were seeking for their families.

We asked about microschooling and pandemic pods—and we were the only organization in the nation positioned to compare that data month after month. We also surveyed educators every quarter to find out how they were feeling about teaching, their schools and how their students were learning through the chaos.



Media outlets across the nation picked up our polling in their stories, and our state partners were able to use the state-based data from the national survey to advocate for new and expanded school choice policies in 2020 and into the 2021 legislative session.

EdChoice was able to do this work because we identified a gap in the marketplace—up-to-date, trustworthy polling data—and partnered with a reputable firm to fill that void. Part of our brand

promise is that we're not afraid to try new things. That's exactly what we did in this instance, and it paid huge dividends bolstering our reputation as a national leader in research and thought leadership.



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the EdChoice Public Opinion Tracker for Indiana. The page features a purple header with the EdChoice logo and navigation links for State Results, Resource Downloads, Methodology, and a Download State PDF button. A disclaimer states that the data reflects rolling 12-month results. The main content area is light blue and includes the state name 'Indiana', sample sizes (N=555 for the general population and N=338 for school parents), and a link to learn more about K-12 education topics. A dropdown menu for 'Select a state' is visible, and a 'Back to National' link is at the bottom left. The main heading is 'Do residents of Indiana support school choice policies?', with tabs for 'ESAs', 'School Vouchers', and 'Charter Schools'. The 'ESAs' tab is selected, and the text below defines an Education Savings Account (ESA) and asks for the user's opinion on them.

EdChoice PUBLIC OPINION TRACKER

State Results Resource Downloads Methodology [Download State PDF](#)

The following data reflect rolling 12-month results through the most recent monthly (General Population) survey. We advise caution on interpreting the polling results for any state or population sample size having less than 100 respondents.

Indiana

Sample Size (N) = 555
School Parents Sample Size (N) = 338

Learn more about your state's opinions on important K–12 education topics.

Select a state

[Back to National >](#)

Do residents of Indiana support school choice policies?

ESAs School Vouchers Charter Schools

An "education savings account" in K–12 education – often called an ESA – establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for educational purposes. Parents can then use these funds to pay for: school tuition; tutoring; online education programs; therapies for students with special needs; textbooks or other instructional materials; or save for future college expenses. In general, what is your opinion of education savings accounts (ESAs)?



WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

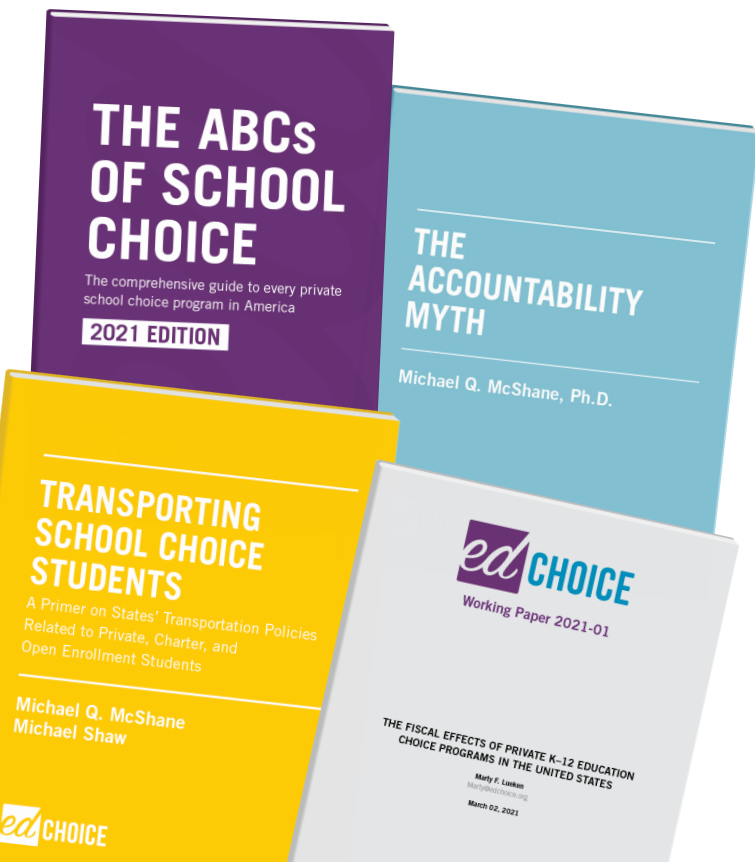
Our mission at EdChoice is to advance full and unencumbered educational choice as the best pathway to successful lives and a stronger society. We believe that families, not bureaucrats, are best equipped to make K-12 schooling decisions for their children, and we work at the state level to educate diverse audiences, train advocates and engage policymakers on the benefits of high-quality school choice programs.

RESEARCH AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

When it comes to researching educational choice programs, EdChoice is the premier organization in the movement. Our internal research team and network of Fellows work to ensure the public, media and policymakers have accurate information on the performance and effectiveness of educational choice programs across America.

Our work includes:

- Surveying voters' opinions and awareness on K-12 education and educational choice topics
- Identifying long-term trends in the private school sector and collecting data on current school capacities and growth potential
- Providing national and state-focused perspectives on other educational issues affecting matters of educational choice
- Analyzing fiscal effects of educational choice programs and new proposals
- Assessing the effects of choice on students and families as well as schools and taxpayers
- Incubating new ideas that will spark a dialogue online and in statehouses



TRAINING AND OUTREACH

At EdChoice, we believe that education is a local matter and that successful efforts to enact educational choice policies must have local leadership. We work with local partners to help identify stakeholders who will organize and build a constituency for educational choice, and we offer opportunities for them to receive training about the issue and how to advocate for it.

Our work includes:

- Sharing “how-to” expertise and promoting EdChoice’s ideas and research
- Grant-making to build new and non-traditional allies
- Building and supporting local infrastructure by investing in coalitions and leaders
- Hosting training conferences for advocate
- Hosting educational meetings, training seminars and town-hall forums

FOCUSED STATE SUPPORT

As educational choice advances in a state, we help partners identify how choice policies can be moved forward and implemented successfully. We are driving the education reform conversation toward full and unencumbered choice for all families.

Our work includes:

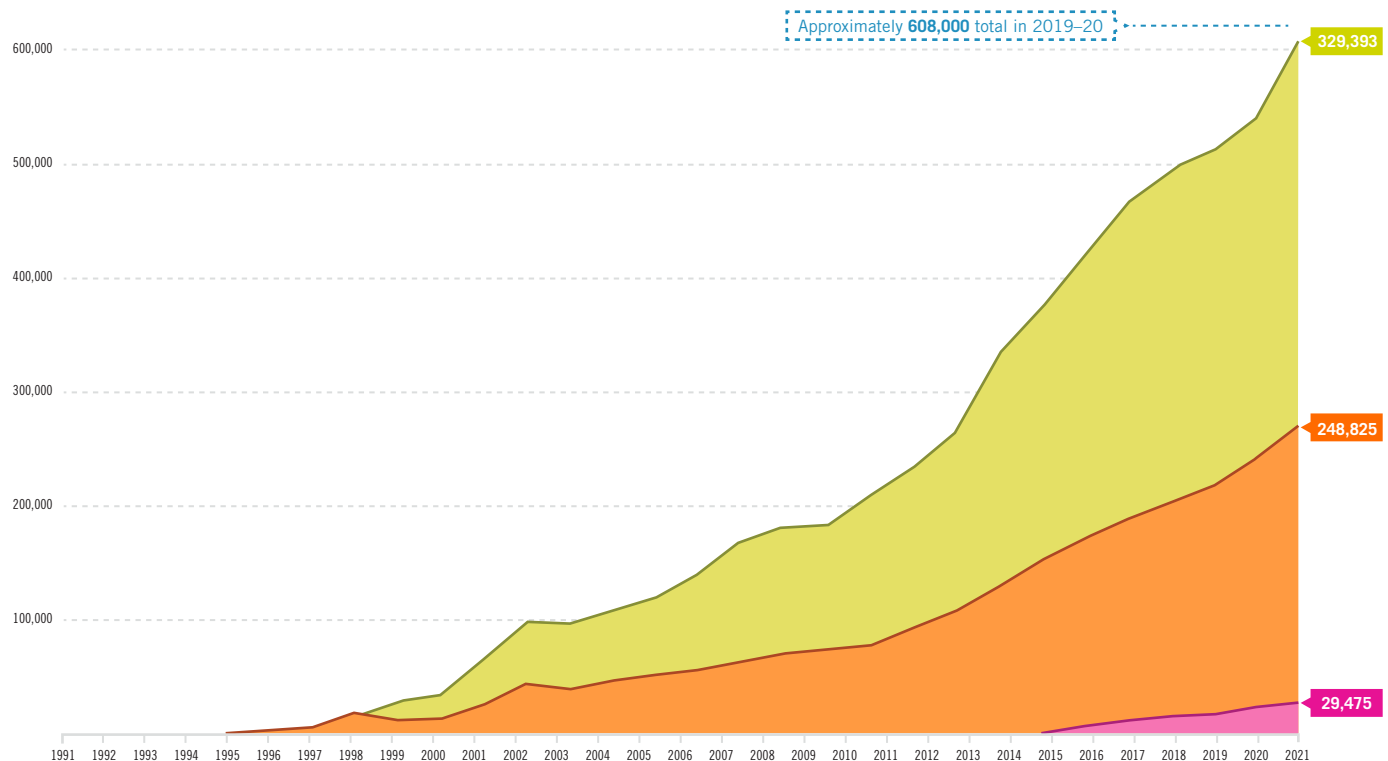
- Building and working with local coalitions
- Providing ground support for policy and legislation efforts
- Analyzing and offering advice on legislative proposals
- Testifying before state legislatures and provide direct advocacy and legal advice if needed
- Providing grants to support the work of our state partners

BULLETED LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

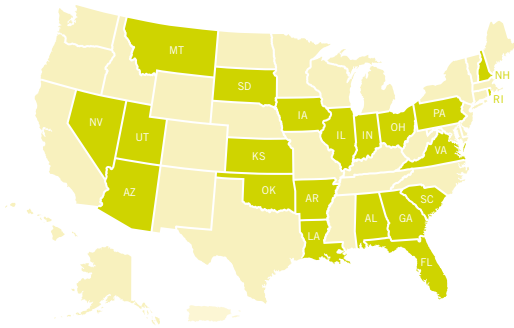
Our work at the state level has broken down barriers for more than 600,000 students who are now able to access private schools using vouchers, tax-credit scholarships and education savings accounts (ESAs). As of April 2021,

1 percent of students across America are utilizing an educational choice program and 7.5 percent attend private school by other means. Nearly 3 percent of students are homeschooled, and 5.5 percent attend a charter school.

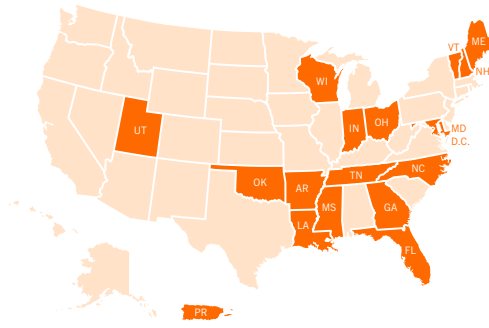
Number of ESAs, Vouchers and Tax-Credit Scholarships



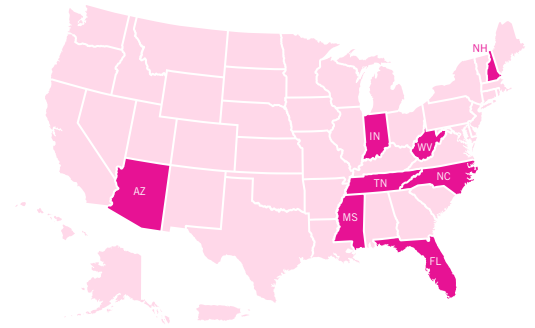
21 STATES WITH TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS



18 STATES WITH SCHOOL VOUCHERS



9 STATES WITH EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS



There are **76** educational choice programs on the books in **32** states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Some of our most recent accomplishments include:

- Launched our **monthly polling tracker with Morning Consult**; our survey results have been picked up in major national media outlets including the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Forbes, The Hill and CNBC.
- Total public expenditures on private educational choice are **more than \$2.9 billion**.
- More than **95,000 people** attended events sponsored by EdChoice in 2020.
- Lawmakers in four **states** requested our **fiscal expertise** on school choice legislation.
- Launched the **Legal Defense and Education Center** to provide support for the many legal challenges we engage in each year to protect school choice programs.
- Launched the **Fiscal Research and Education Center** to expand support to state policymakers and advocates who need to understand how school choice affects K-12 budgeting, pensions and funding.

LDEC

*Legal Defense
& Education Center*

FREC

*Fiscal Research
& Education Center*

FINANCIAL YEAR IN REVIEW

Without support from our donors, we couldn't do the important work we do to advance educational freedom across our country. Last year, we:

25%

increase in
new donors

84%

donor retention
rate

3%

increase in our
number of donors

Since 1996, we've raised more than **\$115 million** since 1996 from almost **75,000 donations** through more than **20,000 donors.**

WHY YOU SHOULD INVEST IN EDCHOICE

Our founders, Milton and Rose Friedman, made a generous initial gift to support the work of their legacy foundation. They also made it clear at the time that if this idea and organization were to be successful, it would need the financial and intellectual support of many people.

Per their request, we removed their name from the foundation in 2016, rebranding as EdChoice. Since then, we've seen educational choice grow to be even more popular and spread to states we never imagined would embrace the concept.

We need to keep up the momentum and continue to support the Friedmans' big, bold idea that students should be able to find the school or schooling environment that works best for them regardless of where they live or how much money their family makes.

Our work and the investments we make in state-based efforts to promote school choice depend on your support. We are good stewards of our investors' money and feel that there is no better way to support the increase in broad-based education options than supporting EdChoice. While there is great momentum for school choice, we must remain vigorous in our pursuit of educational freedom. Our opponents will never cease to defend the status quo, and therefore we must never stop pushing for freedom for all families to control their children's education destiny.

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