

# Funding Education Opportunity

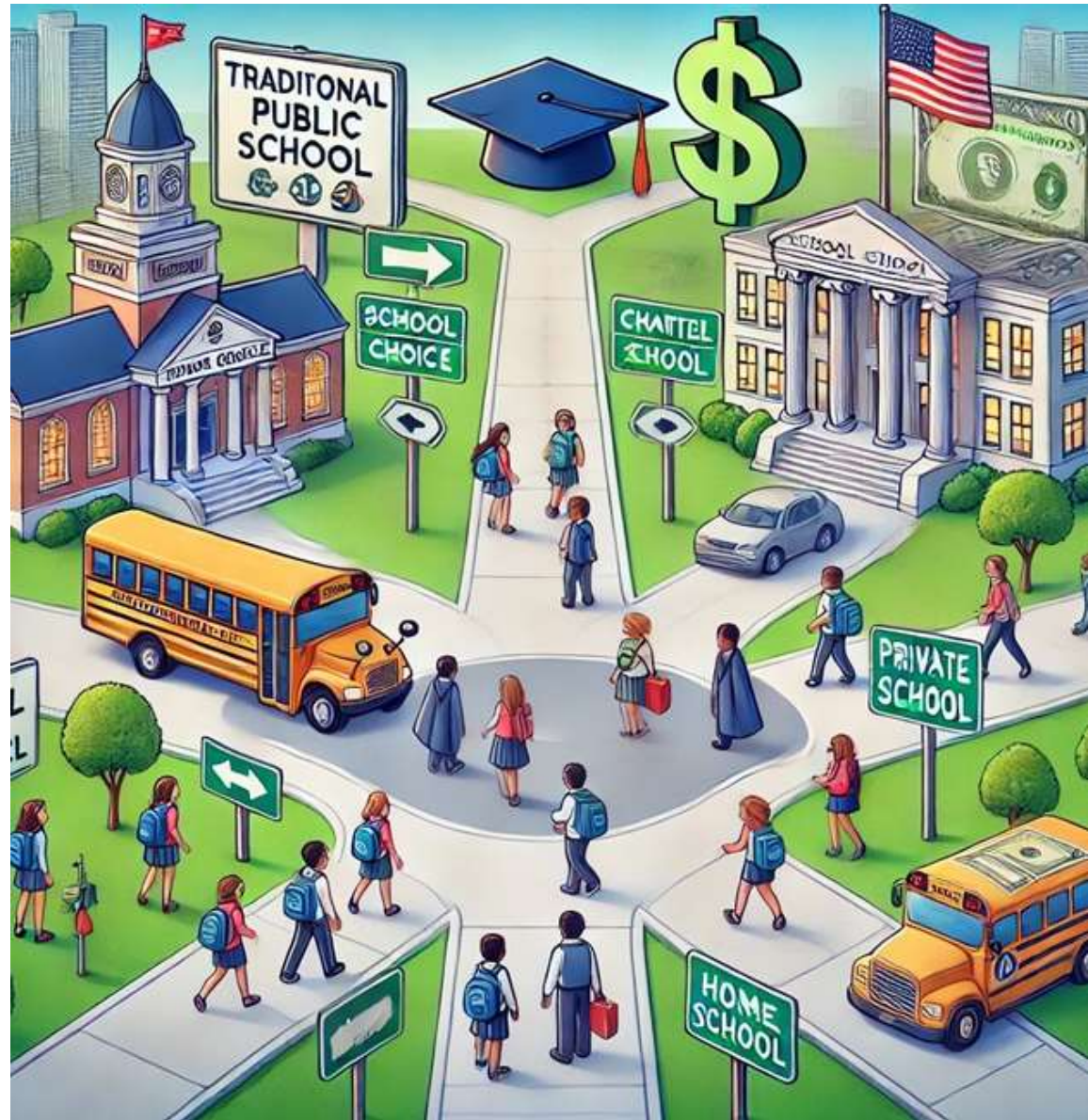
## Fiscal Effects on State and Local Taxpayers and Basic Facts


Martin F. Lueken, Ph.D.

Director of the Fiscal Research and Education Center




*Fiscal Research  
& Education Center*  
By EdChoice






**Claim: Choice drains  
resources from public  
schools by leading to a  
mass exodus of students**





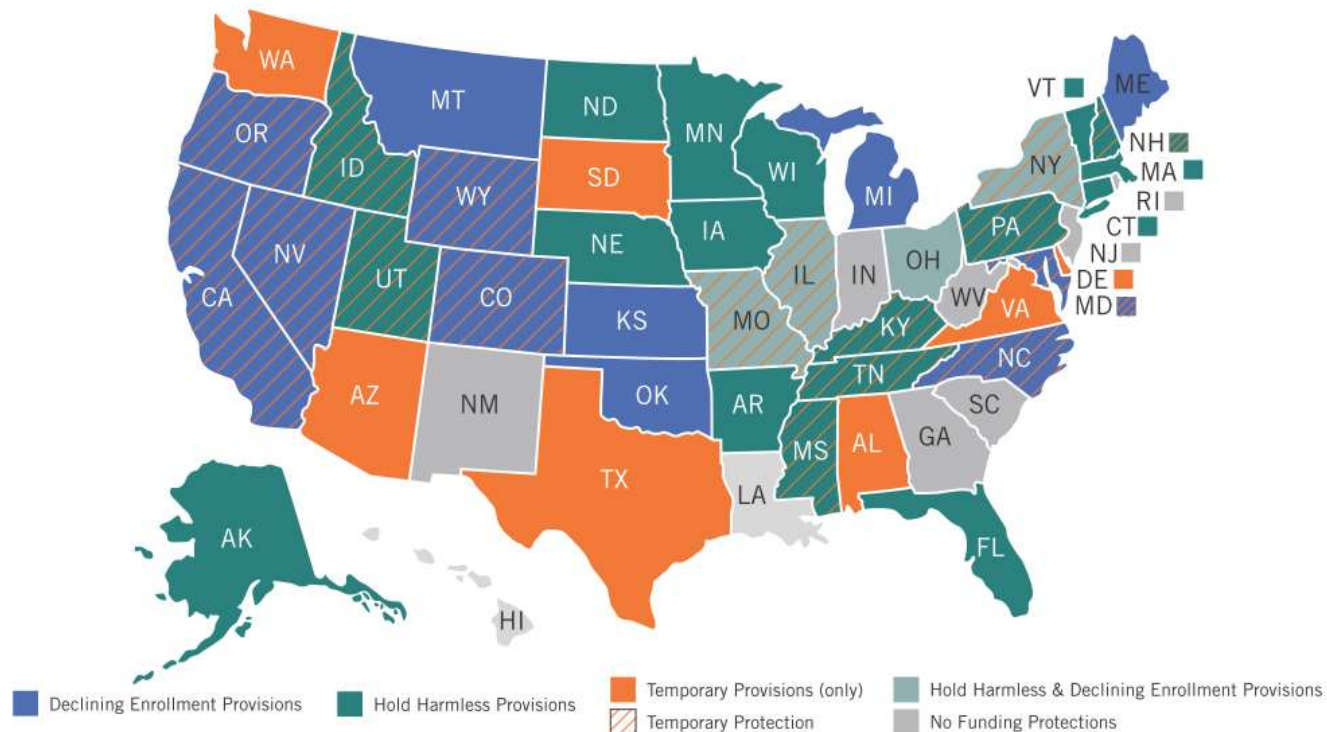
## Some states have funding protections, districts receive funding for “ghost” students:

- “Hold harmless” or “funding guarantees” provide districts same level of funding it received during some prior year
  - Funding based on average enrollment over multiple years
  - Phase in funding decreases over a period of years
  - Emergency or supplemental aid
- 

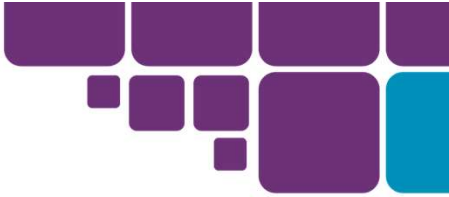
# 34 states have some form of funding protection, excluding states with temporary provisions.

**FIGURE 7**

States with Permanent and Temporary (Pandemic) Funding Protections



# Participation Rates: Pre-Universal Era

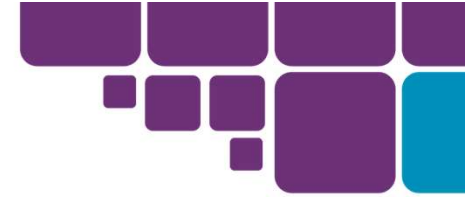


Overall Take-Up Rates By Program Type, 1990-2021 (47 programs in 25 states & D.C.)					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
All programs	0.46%	0.86%	1.12%	1.44%	1.68%
ESA	0.25%	0.66%	1.07%	1.72%	2.16%
Tax Credit	0.35%	0.59%	0.87%	1.10%	1.23%
Voucher	0.70%	1.36%	1.77%	2.12%	2.51%

Take-up rate = participants / eligible students

→ These rates reflect mostly targeted choice programs and programs with public school prior enrollment requirements.

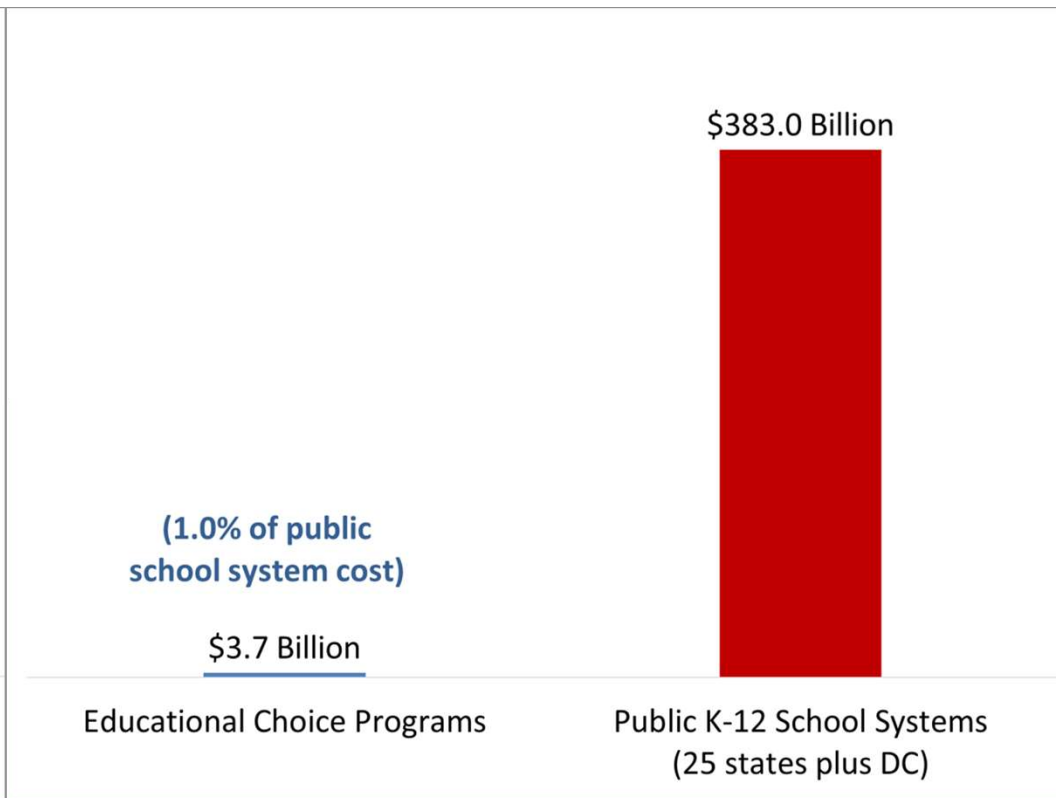
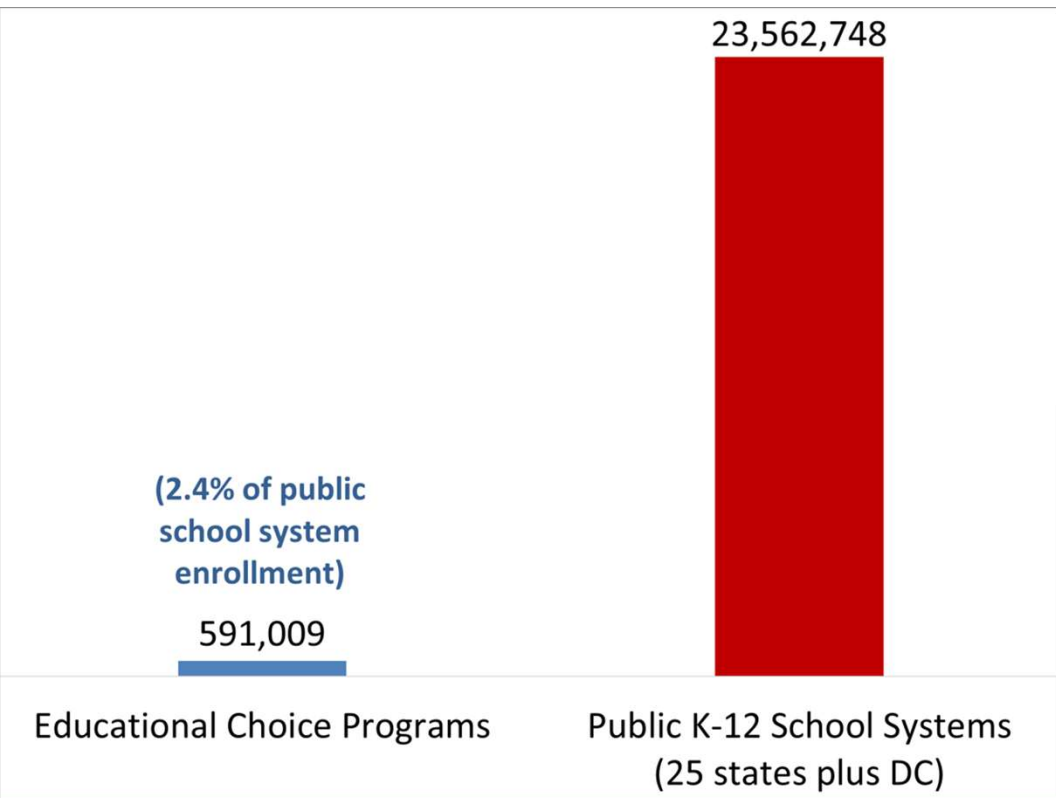
# Participation Rates: Universal Programs



Overall Take-Up Rates for Universal and Near-Universal Education Choice Programs, By Year in Operation as a Universal Program			
State	Program	Year 1	Year 2
AZ	Empowerment Scholarships	5.2%	6.1%
FL	Family Empowerment Scholarships	7.8%	
IN	Choice Scholarship Program	6.1%	
NC	Opportunity Scholarships	1.8%	
OH	EdChoice Expansion Scholarships	4.5%	
WV	Hope Scholarship	1.0%	2.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>4.5%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>







### Basic Fact #1:

Students in choice programs comprise 2.4% of publicly funded K-12 students nationally.

### Basic Fact #2:

Public spending on choice programs represents 1% of total public spending on public K-12.



# Choice Share of Students and Funding in Your States

**Table: Total Cost and Participation of Currently Operating Private School Choice Programs as Shares of Total Public School Revenue and Enrollment, FY 2022 By State**

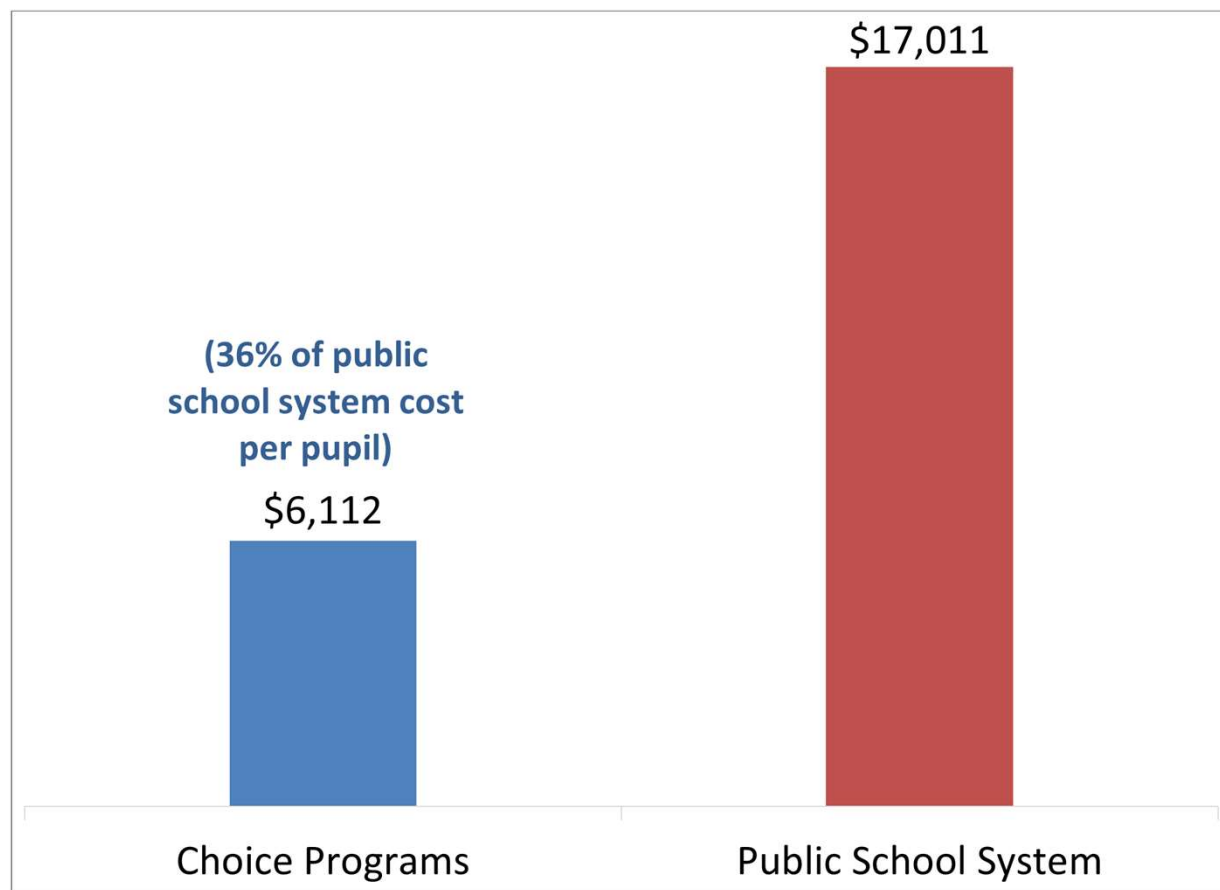
State / Jurisdiction	Participation			Cost		
	Students in choice programs	Students in K-12 public schools	Choice Student Share (% of Students in Public Schools and Choice Programs)	Total public funding for choice programs	Total public funding for K-12 public schools, all sources	Choice Cost Share (% of Total Costs for Public Schools and Choice Programs)
Alabama	2,611	748,274	0.3%	\$20.2 Million	\$10.8 Billion	0.2%
Arizona	86,713	1,116,643	7.2%	\$450.4 Million	\$14.7 Billion	3.0%
Arkansas	623	489,565	0.1%	\$3.9 Million	\$6.7 Billion	0.06%
Georgia	25,304	1,740,875	1.4%	\$127.9 Million	\$28.4 Billion	0.4%
Iowa	12,673	510,661	2.4%	\$15.0 Million	\$8.3 Billion	0.2%
Louisiana	8,421	683,216	1.2%	\$48.8 Million	\$11.6 Billion	0.4%
Mississippi	563	442,000	0.1%	\$3.6 Million	\$5.8 Billion	0.1%
Ohio	77,946	1,683,612	4.4%	\$547.5 Million	\$30.0 Billion	1.8%
Oklahoma	3,913	698,696	0.6%	\$16.4 Million	\$8.9 Billion	0.2%
Pennsylvania	77,671	1,695,092	4.4%	\$225.6 Million	\$38.2 Billion	0.6%
South Carolina	1,365	780,878	0.2%	\$2.5 Million	\$13.5 Billion	0.02%
Tennessee	292	996,709	0.03%	\$2.2 Million	\$13.3 Billion	0.02%
Utah	1,139	690,934	0.2%	\$6.5 Million	\$8.0 Billion	0.1%
Virginia	4,843	1,249,815	0.4%	\$11.4 Million	\$21.0 Billion	0.05%
<b>Total</b>	<b>591,009</b>	<b>23,562,748</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>\$3.7 Billion</b>	<b>\$383.0 Billion</b>	<b>1.0%</b>

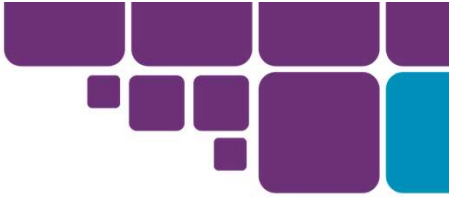


# Basic Fact


## #3:

Choice programs receive 64% less per student than what public schools receive.





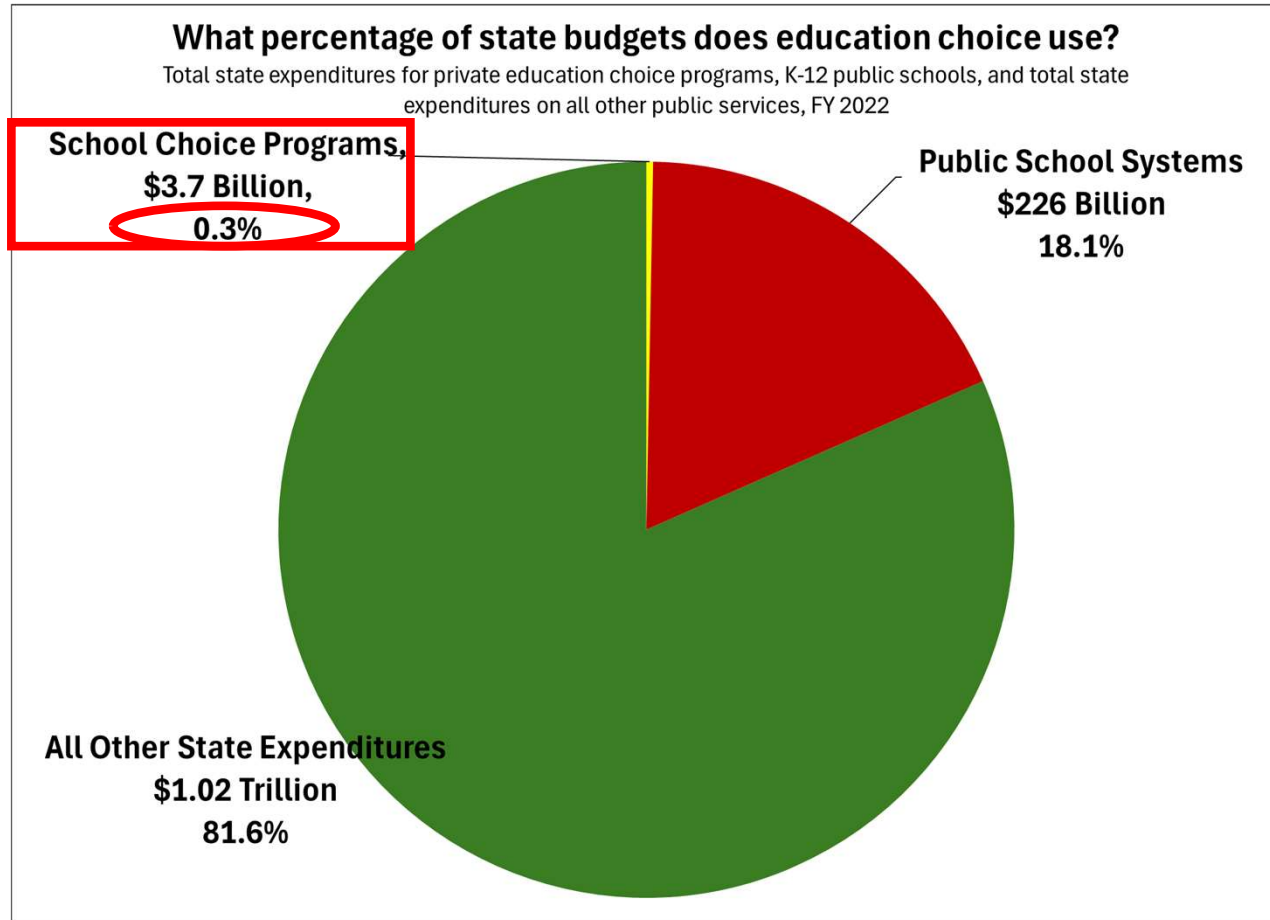
**Claim: Education choice programs will “blow a hole” in state budgets**



# Basic Fact

## #4:

The cost of choice programs represents 0.3% of states' budgets for all public services.



# Choice Cost as Percent of State's Total Expenditures on Public Services

Table: Comparing state's cost for private education choice programs with state total expenditures for all public services (FY 2022)

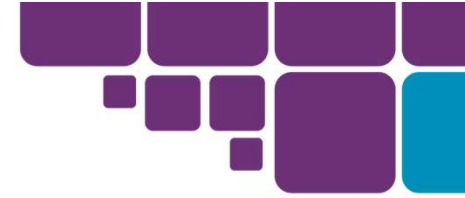
State / Jurisdiction	Total Cost of All Choice Programs within State	State Total Spending on Public Services	Choice cost as % of total expenditures on all public services
Alabama	\$20.2 Million	\$37.9 Billion	0.1%
Arizona	\$450.4 Million	\$80.5 Billion	0.6%
Arkansas	\$3.9 Million	\$32.0 Billion	0.01%
Georgia	\$127.9 Million	\$67.5 Billion	0.2%
Iowa	\$15.0 Million	\$28.5 Billion	0.1%
Louisiana	\$48.8 Million	\$39.7 Billion	0.1%
Mississippi	\$3.6 Million	\$23.1 Billion	0.02%
Ohio	\$547.5 Million	\$90.0 Billion	0.6%
Oklahoma	\$16.4 Million	\$27.1 Billion	0.1%
Pennsylvania	\$225.6 Million	\$121.3 Billion	0.2%
South Carolina	\$2.5 Million	\$32.3 Billion	0.01%
Tennessee	\$2.2 Million	\$43.4 Billion	0.01%
Utah	\$6.5 Million	\$20.9 Billion	0.03%
Virginia	\$11.4 Million	\$74.9 Billion	0.02%
All States w/ Choice Programs	\$3.7 Billion	\$1.25 Trillion	0.3%



**Claims: 70% to 90% of ESA  
students in universal  
programs “were already  
in private schools”**



# Arizona Universal ESA Program



**Claim: 80% of ESA students came from private schools, per AZ DOE data**

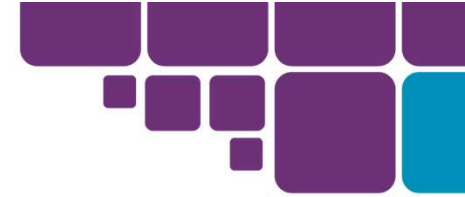
**Table 2: Number and percent of students who attended a public school immediately prior to enrolling in ESA program<sup>1</sup>**  
Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024

ESA program enrollment year	Number of students in public school immediately before ESA enrollment	Total students entering ESA program	Percent of students in public school immediately before ESA enrollment
FY 2023	6,157	29,176	21%





# Arizona Universal ESA Program



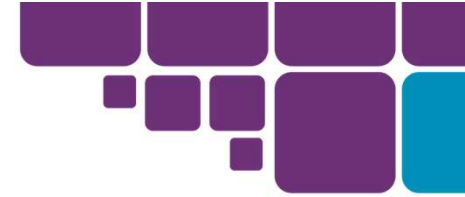
One major problem with this claim: AZ also has operated four tax-credit scholarship programs for decades

Table 2: Number and percent of students who attended a public school **immediately prior to enrolling in ESA program**  
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FY 2023	6,157	29,176	21%



# Arizona Universal ESA Program



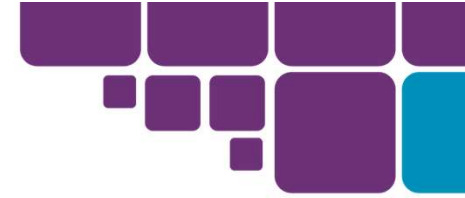
Opponents still claim 80% of ESA students came from private schools, even though we have Year 2 (2024) data

**Table 2: Number and percent of students who attended a public school immediately prior to enrolling in ESA program<sup>1</sup>**  
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ESA program enrollment year	Number of students in public school immediately before ESA enrollment	Total students entering ESA program	Percent of students in public school immediately before ESA enrollment
FY 2023	6,157	29,176	21%
FY 2024 <sup>2</sup>	11,845	19,252	61.5%



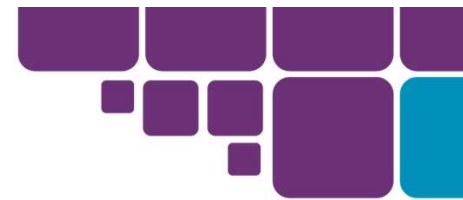
# Take-up rates: New Universal Choice Programs



Participation by year in operation for Iowa and New Hampshire ESA programs				
	Iowa ESA	New Hampshire EFA		
	Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 1 (2021-22)	Year 2 (2022-23)	Year 3 (2023-24)
% of eligible public school students who use ESAs	2.5%	1.7%	3.0%	2.8%
% of eligible non-public school students who use ESAs	22.7%	19.1%	32.3%	29.6%
Program participation rate (% of all eligible students who participate in program)	3.3%	3.3%	5.8%	5.4%
Est. switcher rate claimed by critics	33%	10%	10%	10%
Est. switcher rate based on more complete data	70%	45%	45%	45%



# Net Fiscal Effects of Education Choice Programs





## Fiscal Effects Studies

These studies examine the fiscal effect that private school choice programs have on taxpayers, state budgets and public school districts.

There have been **75 fiscal studies** of choice programs that account for both costs and savings from these programs.

**69\***

**Net fiscal benefits**

\*This includes 4 studies which reported net costs in the short run and net benefits in the long run.

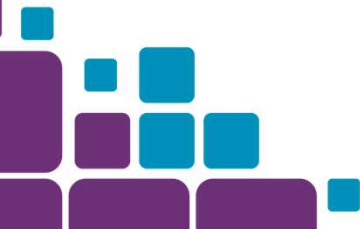
**5**

**Cost-neutral**

**5\***

**Net costs**

\*This includes 4 studies which reported net costs in the short run and net benefits in the long run.



# Short-Run Fiscal Effects

*Overall net fiscal effect (NFE) on state and local taxpayers*

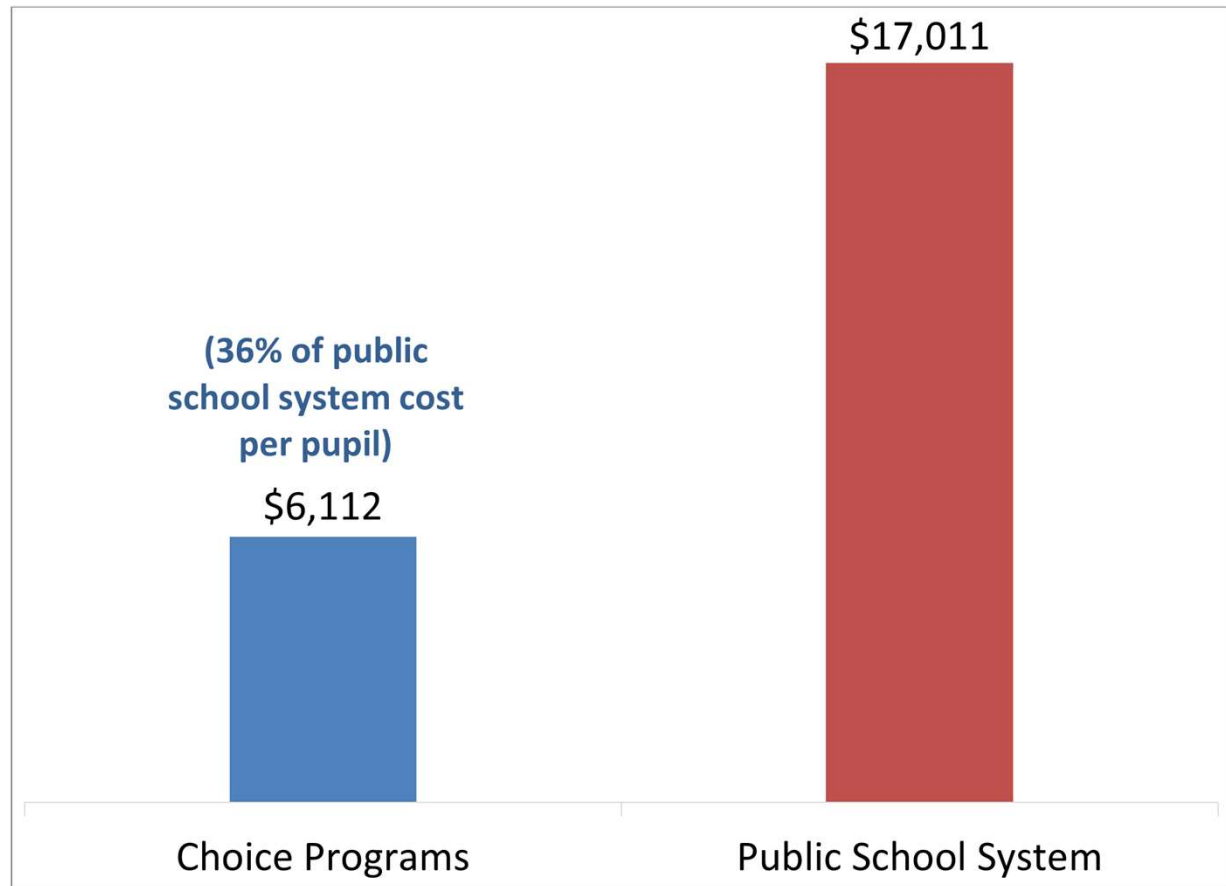
**NFE = [Short-run variable savings from switchers] – [Cost of ESA Program]**



# Fiscal alignment for a school choice program to result in savings:



**This funding gap suggests significant savings in the long run when students switch out of the public school system**



# Long-Run Fiscal Effects

Fundamental economic principal: in the long run, all costs are variable.

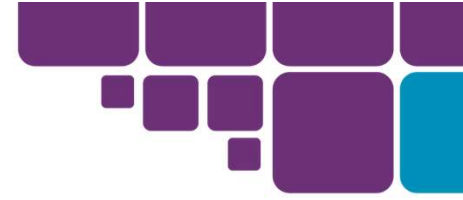
Long run NFE is measured by comparing cost of the choice program with the total cost to educate participants in the public school system.

# Fiscal study of 48 education choice programs in the U.S. through FY 2022



- Estimated cumulative net fiscal savings for state and local taxpayers were \$19.4 billion to \$45.6 billion, or up to \$7,800 per student participant
- Put another way, for each dollar spent on choice programs, taxpayers experienced between \$1.70 and \$2.64 in fiscal benefits

\*\*\* All programs in the study have been in operation for at least 5 years, suggesting that fiscal effects are closer to the long-run estimates



# Claims: Choice programs harm public school students



## Effects on Public School Students

These studies examine whether a private school choice program affects the academic outcomes of students who remain in public schools

There have been **29 competitive effects studies** of educational choice programs.

**26**

Positive Effects

**1**

No Detected  
Effect

**2**

Negative Effects





# Do Educational Choice Programs Harm Public School Students? (1)

A 2019 meta-analysis (statistical analysis for a “study of studies”) concluded:

*“In general, competition resulting from school-choice policies does have a small positive effect on student achievement. The lack of an overall negative impact on student outcomes might ease critics’ concerns that competition will hurt those students ‘left behind’ due to school-choice policies.”*

- Jabbar et al. (2019), The Competitive Effects of School Choice on Student Achievement: A Systematic Review, *Education Policy*

## Do Educational Choice Programs Harm Public School Students? (2)

When choice programs expand funding and eligibility, students who remain in public schools:

- Improve student learning
- Lower absenteeism
- Lower suspension rates

- David N. Figlio, Cassandra M. D. Hart, and Krzysztof Karbownik (2023), Effects of Maturing Private School Choice Programs on Public School Students, *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 15(4), pp. 255-294, <https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20210710>

**Thank you!**

**EDCHOICE.ORG**

**Marty Lueken**

*EdChoice*

*Director, Fiscal Research and Education Center*

email [marty@edchoice.org](mailto:marty@edchoice.org)

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