

# Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Growing in Importance as Resource for Arizona Families

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New Funds Available for Parents Wishing to Enroll Children in Private Schools;  
Resources Available for Parents to Learn How to Access ESA Program

PHOENIX--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The thought of a private-school education may seem unattainable for many Arizona families. However, thanks to the state's new Empowerment Scholarship Account program, or ESA, a private-school education is more accessible than ever before.

Today, more than 30,000 Arizona students are now enrolled in private schools through Arizona's ESA program, which is designed to reduce financial barriers to private-school education — regardless of family income. This number represents only a fraction of the state's more than 1 million children in kindergarten to 12th grade, and a minority of students currently enrolled in private schools.

"ESAs are rapidly becoming an important tool for families to find the right education for their children. As a parent and an educator, I encourage all Arizona families to take advantage of this incredible opportunity," said Janice Gruneberg, Senior Vice President & Superintendent of Schools for Grand Canyon Private Academy, a new online school for Arizona students. "It may seem like it's too good to be true, but it isn't."

One barrier that prevents some parents from taking advantage of the program may be that they simply don't know about it — with elections dominating the headlines for much of the past year, there's been little coverage of how ESAs actually work for families.

The goal of ESAs is to provide scholarship dollars to Arizona families to help them find the academic option that works best for them. They also allow families to expand their educational choices beyond their local public school

system and customize their educational experiences.

ESA scholarship dollars can contribute to or even fully cover the cost of tutoring services, learning materials, and private school tuition. As an example, the ESA fully covers full-time tuition, including all materials, at Grand Canyon Private Academy. This means Arizona students can earn a private school education 100% tuition-free. Arizona's ESA provides approximately \$7,000 per student for most families, regardless of household income.

"It's actually a fairly simple and straightforward process, and most private schools — including ours — can help walk parents through it," Gruneberg said. "I've been through the process with my own children and found it to be very efficient. There's no reason for parents who wish to send their children to private schools to not take advantage of this opportunity."

The ESA also provides additional scholarship dollars for students with special needs starting as early as their pre-K years, so that families can work to customize their child's education based on their specific needs and challenges — funds for children with special needs can be as much as \$37,000.

ESA applications are accepted year-round, so parents can start taking advantage of these funds in a timely manner and make changes to their children's educational environment whenever they see fit. Funds are distributed each quarter, with funding beginning the quarter that the ESA contract is signed by parents.

Families seeking more information on the ESA program can visit **AZ Empowerment Scholarship** for a full breakdown of how they can take advantage of this opportunity for their children.

"There's great information out there for Arizona parents on how to make the most of this opportunity," Gruneberg said. "Private schools may not be the answer for every family, but now they are more accessible as an option than ever before."

## About Grand Canyon Private Academy

Grand Canyon Private Academy (GCPA) is an online private school serving grades K-10. The school is dedicated to inspiring and empowering students through an education experience tailored to their needs and focused on their futures. GCPA combines engaging, interactive Stride K12 curriculum with an integrated support team of school leaders, teachers, academic coaches, and counselors. For more information visit [gcpa.k12.com](https://www.gcpa.k12.com).

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