
PARENTS FOR
EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM
IN NORTH CAROLINA



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Est. 2005

Parents for Educational Freedom in North Carolina (PEFNC) is a statewide organization that supports greater educational options through parental school choice.

Simply put, parental school choice means allowing parents to send their children to their school of choice – traditional public or nontraditional—regardless of zip code or income.



“When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more,”

according to Southwest Educational Development Laboratory



Impact of COVID-19 on Education

- ✓ **Interrupted learning**
- ✓ **Poor nutrition**
- ✓ **Confusion and stress for teachers**
- ✓ **Parents unprepared for distance and home schooling**
- ✓ **Challenges creating, maintaining, and improving distance learning**
- ✓ **Social isolation**
- ✓ **Rise in dropout rates**
- ✓ **Challenges measuring and validating learning**
- ✓ **Gaps in childcare**
- ✓ **High economic costs**
- ✓ **Unintended strain on health-care systems**

Benefits of School Choice

School choice is something that can help students, families, communities, and the education system as a whole. Competition in any system can lead to innovation, and new educational ideas can come from all K-12 avenues, whether this is a public charter school, traditional public school, private or a home school.

1. Tailor-Made Education for Students

Not all children are the same and lumping everyone into the same learning path at a public school might not be optimal for some unique learners. Students with minor learning disabilities might need specialized learning tools or more one-on-one time than they would receive at a public school. As an alternative to public schools, charter schools can help those who excel in specialized topics and hone in on subject expertise that might not even be an option at a public school.

2. Strengthening Communities

Having families and parents that are actively involved in the education system and community around them can strengthen learning environments across the board. Having a choice when it comes to education can help bring complex issues to the table and all learning environments can work together for solutions.

3. Families can Make Choices that Work for Them

While there are programs that are designed to serve what is best for the public, sometimes schooling and educational choices are best served if families can be a part of this process. This can be a powerful way for families to have the resources they need to make the right choices for their families and children. Having only one option because of finances or not enough resources in the community can be too limiting for all.

4. Changes in Educational Needs and Situations

No two children are the same, and the same can go for families and communities as well. There are always personal changes that can come up for students and their loved ones that need to be taken into consideration when it comes to the best educational environment for one to flourish in. The important factor to keep in mind is that families should be given the option to weigh their personal needs and make the best-informed decisions when it comes to their child's educational goals.

5. Overall Innovation Bolsters all Educational Avenues

When it comes to education, innovations can come from any type of learning environment, but by having a diverse group of educators can lead to more improvement overall.

6. School Safety Concerns for Kids

Getting a good education shouldn't include children coming to school in fear, possibly facing bullying or worse. With lowered funding and overcrowding in public schools, safety measures can suffer because there just isn't enough manpower or supervision to keep kids on the right path.

State Funded Scholarships for Private School

Opportunity Scholarship Program

A lifeline for low-income families

Provides annual scholarships of up to **\$4,200** so low-income and working class children have access to schools that best meet their educational need

Children with Disabilities Grant

An exceptional education for exceptional children.

Provides tuition and required fees up to **\$8,000** per student per school year. An eligible student is a child with a disability who has an public school IEP (Individualized Education Program).

Education Savings Account

An exceptional education for exceptional children.

Provides tuition and required fees up to **\$9,000** per student per school year. An eligible student is a child with a disability who has an public school IEP (Individualized Education Program).

State-Funded Scholarship Programs

- ✓ [Opportunity Scholarship Program](#)
- ✓ [Education Savings Account](#)
- ✓ [Children with Disabilities Grant](#)

Contact information for the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA):

NCSEAA Website:

www.ncseaa.edu

Select “K-12 Grants”

Select appropriate program link

State Funded Programs email addresses:

Opportunity Scholarship Program: OpportunityScholarships@ncseaa.edu

Education Savings Account: ESA@ncseaa.edu

Children with Disabilities Grant: dgrants@ncseaa.edu

Phone: 919-549-8614

K12 Programs: Eligibility Requirements

Opportunity Scholarship

\$4,200

Part 1 - All Required

- Household must meet the [Household Income Eligibility Guidelines](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*

Part 2 – One Required

- Received and used Opportunity Scholarship funds in previous year
- Attended a NC public school or Department of Defense school in NC as a full-time student during the spring semester before the Opportunity Scholarship will be used
- Entering kindergarten or 1st grade
- In foster care, or adopted within the last year
- Has a parent on full-time active military duty

Children with Disability Grant \$8,000

Part 1 – All Required

- Is a child with a disability who requires special education, [as documented by a NC public school IEP](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full- time*

• Part 2 – One Required

- [Priority 1]
 - Received and used Disabilities Grant funds in previous year
- [Priority 2]
 - Enrolled in a NC public school or a Department of Defense school in NC during the spring semester before the Disabilities Grant will be used
 - Entering kindergarten or 1st grade
 - In foster care, or adopted within the last year
 - Has a parent on full-time active military duty [Priority 3]
 - Has lived in NC at least 6 months, but does not meet requirements above

Education Savings Account

\$9,000

All Required:

- Is a child with a disability who requires special education, [as documented by a NC public school IEP](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*
- Eligible to attend public school in NC

K12 Programs: Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible for each program. Families can apply for multiple programs.

Opportunity Scholarship

Part 1 – All Required

- Household must meet the [Household Income Eligibility Guidelines](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*

Part 2 – One Required

- Received and used Opportunity Scholarship funds in previous year
- Attended a NC public school or Department of Defense school in NC as a full-time student during the spring semester before the Opportunity Scholarship will be used
- Entering kindergarten or 1st grade
- In foster care, or adopted within the last year
- Has a parent on full-time active military duty

Disabilities Grant

Part 1 – All Required

- Is a child with a disability who requires special education, [as documented by a NC public school IEP](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*

Part 2 – One Required

[Priority 1]

- Received and used Disabilities Grant funds in previous year

[Priority 2]

- Enrolled in a NC public school or a Department of Defense school in NC during the spring semester before the Disabilities Grant will be used
- Entering kindergarten or 1st grade
- In foster care, or adopted within the last year
- Has a parent on full-time active military duty

[Priority 3]

- Has lived in NC at least 6 months, but does not meet requirements above

➤ See [Program Overview](#) for Priority Levels explanation.

Education Savings Account (ESA)

All Required:

- Is a child with a disability who requires special education, [as documented by a NC public school IEP](#)
- At least 5 years old by August 31
- Lives in NC
- Has not graduated from high school
- Has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution full-time*
- Eligible to attend public school in NC

To participate in Disabilities Grant and ESA Programs simultaneously, students must:

Meet the criteria of each program

+

Have one of the following designated as the primary or secondary disability on their Eligibility Determination form:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Deaf/Blindness
- Developmental Delay
- Deafness or Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability (moderate or severe)
- Multiple Disabilities
- Visual Impairment

*Full-time: 12 or more credit hours in a given semester.

Nothing in this document should be construed to supersede the Program Statute, Program Rules or other Program policies. In addition, these policies do not represent an exhaustive list of all Program rules; rather these policies are set forth to provide a broad overview of the Program. See the Program Rules and Statutes on each Program's [website](#) for more details.

☎ (855) 330-3935

🌐 www.ncseaa.edu/K-12Grants.html

✉ OpportunityScholarships@ncseaa.edu

✉ DGGrants@ncseaa.edu

✉ ESA@ncseaa.edu

How and when do I apply?

ncseaa.edu

Click “K-12 Grants”



February 1 – March 1:
Lottery

After March 1:
Waitlist

Stay Informed!

- ✓ Additional information about the Opportunity Scholarship Program.
- ✓ A team member to assist you through the application process
- ✓ A link to see if you may be eligible for this scholarship program.

Text **INFO2021** to **52886**



How can we help you?

Kwan Graham

Director of Community Engagement

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kwan@pefnc.org

