

The Impact of the Ed Choice Scholarship on My Children

As the mother of three children who have been blessed with the opportunity to benefit from the Ed Choice Scholarship, I must first and foremost thank the members of our state legislature who have believed in the opportunity this scholarship gives to the many children in our communities. As a mother working two jobs, raising a family and going through nursing school, giving my children a private education would not have been possible without this opportunity. By having the opportunity to choose the education that best fits my children and our family is something I have reflected on over the years and could not be more thankful.

As I have on numerous occasions sat down with my children and asked them why they are thankful for the opportunity they have to attend a private, Christian school. A common response I've heard from all three, is that we can study the teachings of God, reflect on his life and sacrifices, pray and attend mass weekly with my classmates. The accountability of the children for their actions and words is stressed on a daily basis in the classroom. My children have excelled well in small class sizes and low teacher to student ratios.

I have often compare "school choice" to a question often asked of me through nursing and graduate school, "is healthcare a right or a privilege?" I have always believed healthcare is a human right that we all are deserving of, no matter race, religion, ethnicity or socioeconomic status. The same for school choice, every child deserves the opportunity to excel in the environment that best conforms to their way of learning. Not every healthcare provider fits the needs of every patient, just as not every school fits the needs for every child. My children have been pushed academically and have been well prepared as they enter the next phase of their lives/careers.

It's not a comparison of the district I live in and the school in which my children attend, it merely comes down to what is the best learning environment for my child, and as a mother, I have no doubt I have made the right decision. This has been a controversial topic in my family, as my siblings are both educators in the public school systems; one disagrees with my choice and the other is non-biased. This is not a decision I take lightly, but as a mother who knows my children best and has their best interest at heart, I am blessed with the opportunity to give them a learning environment that will challenge them, engage them and promote academic excellence as they continue along their paths in becoming productive citizens of the next generation.

Best Regards,

Kelly Friesner-Gephart