

Dear State Representatives,

I'm writing this letter to share our family's story of how the Ed Choice Scholarship has greatly impacted us. I wish we could tell our story in person, because writing this letter really doesn't allow the opportunity to show case how much emotion that is really tied into all of this. I hope that what is written will do justice of telling how extremely valuable the Ed Choice Scholarship has been to my kids and my family.

We moved to Ohio back in December of 2017. Our oldest was in the middle of her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, our son was in the middle of his 6<sup>th</sup> grade year, and our youngest was in the middle of her second grade year. We were previously living in Colorado and they were all doing incredibly well in their schools there. When we made the move to Ohio, due to work, we intentionally picked an area where the public school district was rated very high. We did a lot of research, asked around, and we ultimately ended up moving to a place where the school district had very high ratings and great remarks from others. So, in the beginning of 2018, our 3 kids started at their new public schools.

Switching schools is never easy on kids, but this transition was nothing short of a nightmare for us. Our children were struggling, the two older ones especially. They attended the public schools for about two and a half years, and through that time our kids completely changed. They became more reserved, less confident, and really lost any sense of identity that they once had. Our oldest became depressed and alone. Her personality completely changed from a sweet and happy young lady, that loved life and others, to a depressed, sad, alone, and lost girl. They were small fish in a very large pond and we felt they had been left by the way side.

Although the public school system has been great for many, we knew this was not working for us. But, we didn't think we had any other option, we were stuck! It was around the end of the school year of 2020 that someone had told us about the Ed Choice Scholarship. We quickly looked into it to see what it offered, and who could qualify. There was a great Christian school just down the road from us that my wife and I always dreamed about sending our children to, but never thought there was any way that would ever happen. But, when we looked into Ed Choice, I can't even begin to describe the amount of joy and relief that filled our spirits when we realized, we qualified for this, this dream could be a reality.

Fast forward a year or so, and I could tell you that my oldest daughter was herself again. She had found her identity that she had once lost. She was beaming with confidence, more than ever. She was playing sports, winning awards, made homecoming court and prom queen. My son was thriving, my youngest daughter was doing great, and our new son that we adopted was now involved. His involvement at this school was more needed than I could ever tell you. They were excelling academically, socially, and spiritually like we had never seen before. All of this was made possible because of Ed Choice. It gave us an opportunity to choose what was best for our kids, and it has made all the difference in the world.

I hope that our story can shed some light on what kind of impact this amazing scholarship can have on individuals and families. I know there are so many families that share our same story when we moved from Colorado to Ohio and found our kids struggling. There is hope for them! There is a future for them! There is a healthy environment that they can find that is the right fit for them! Ed Choice provides that, and our hope is that there will be many, many more stories like ours for years to come.

Thank you for allowing me to share our story and taking the time to listen.

Sincerely,

Nick Olson and the entire Olson family