ARIZONA EDUCATION OPTIONS

ARIZONA ON EDUCATION

Arizona Revised Statutes §15-802(a) states: “Every child between the age of six and sixteen shall attend a school and be provided instruction in at least the subjects of reading, grammar, mathematics, social studies, and science. The person who has custody of the child shall choose a public, private, or charter school, or a homeschool as defined in this section to provide instruction, or shall sign a contract to participate in an Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account pursuant to §15-2402.”

TAXPAYER-FUNDED OPTIONS
- Public School
- Charter School
- Virtual Charter
- Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA)

PRIVATELY FUNDED OPTIONS
- Private School
- Homeschooling

Homeschooling is the only option that is parent-directed and does not involve taxpayer funds for education.

CLEAR DEFINITIONS

AFHE fully supports parents in choosing the education option that is best for each of their children. It is critical, however, to maintain a clear distinction between homeschooling and other education options in our state in order to preserve the freedom parents currently enjoy to direct the education of their children. One sure way to diminish this freedom is to mix private homeschooling with taxpayer funds because taxpayer funds are subject to state regulation. All education options are not created equal. Only one option is defined by the state of Arizona as homeschooling, although other home-based education options exist.

1 ➤ PUBLIC SCHOOL
Tuition-free schools funded by the state and managed through school districts. Enrolled students are public school students and attend school outside of the home.

2 ➤ CHARTER SCHOOL
Tuition-free schools funded by the state and operated independent of school districts by either non-profit or for-profit entities. Enrolled students are public school students.

3 ➤ VIRTUAL CHARTER
Tuition-free online schools funded by the state that takes place in the home. This option is public school at home. Enrolled students are public school students. Instruction is provided and directed by the virtual charter school.

4 ➤ PRIVATE SCHOOL
A non-public school other than the child’s home. Tuition is paid by the family. Private schools meet the same number of days as the public school. Students enrolled file a private school affidavit. *Some private schools receive taxpayer funds.

5 ➤ EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT (ESA)
The Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) is a taxpayer-funded program which was created by the Arizona State Legislature to broaden educational opportunities for children with special needs and other special populations. ESA contract students may enroll in a private school or instruction may be provided by parents or tutors. This legal classification is separate from the statutory definition of a homeschool. ESA contract students do not file an Affidavit of Intent to Homeschool as specified in ARS §15-2402 and do not fall under the protection and provisions of the homeschool statutes in state law.

6 ➤ HOMESCHOOLING
Arizona Revised Statutes 15-802(G)(2) defines a homeschool as “a nonpublic school conducted primarily by the parent, guardian, or other person who has custody of the child, or nonpublic instruction provided in the child’s home.” The parent is required to file an Affidavit of Intent to Homeschool for children ages 6 to 16. A homeschooling parent takes full responsibility for their child’s education, including the financial responsibility. A homeschooled student is exempt from standardized testing requirements. There are no reporting requirements for homeschooled students and the parent does not need to be a certified teacher. The parent creates the high school transcript and issues a diploma to their child.

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ARIZONA FAMILIES FOR HOME EDUCATION

Inspiring, promoting, and preserving homeschooling in Arizona since 1983

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