



ESA Facts

- Education Savings Accounts (ESAs): Allow funds to flow from the state government to a student's education savings account, which can be used by the parent or guardian to pay for approved education expenses at the families' discretion. ESA funds may be used for a wide range of education expenditures and allow students to have their education customized to meet their unique needs.

FAQ:

- **Q: Are ESAs an entitlement program?**
 - Under the state constitution, every student is guaranteed a publicly funded education in West Virginia, and education savings accounts allow families the freedom to use those funds to customize their child's education to meet his or her specific needs.
- **Q: What about the risk of Fraud?**
 - Fraud in education equates to stealing money from students. As Arizona demonstrated, the first state to enact an ESA program, ESA programs are very safe, the funding is tracked extremely well, accounts are audited regularly, and as a result Arizona's program had less than a half percent of fraud
- **Q: But doesn't this take money away from public schools?**
 - No. Currently, when a student moves away from a school district that funding simply goes away. However, if ESAs are established, when a student leaves a school for another educational opportunity, and remains living in the zoned school district, a portion of the funding is allowed to follow the student in his or her ESA and other funds continue to support to traditional public school, even though the student is no longer enrolled. This results in a public school having more funds with less students, effectively increasing their per pupil spending, while giving children and families the opportunity to find the educational opportunity that best suits their unique needs.



- **Q: What can families spend ESAs on?**
 - Families with a child who enrolls in the ESA program, could use state funds deposited into an education savings account to customize a child's education. Families can spend funds on private school tuition, online learning, textbooks, curricula, individual public school courses, educational therapies, and a host of other education-related services and products.

- **Q: Won't educational freedom harm traditional public schools?**
 - No. First, we need to move beyond the us vs. them debate surrounding education and focus on the needs of every child. Second, there is overwhelming research that supports educational freedom, including a Florida study that found traditional schools improved as choice expanded. Educational freedom will allow every child access to the education that works best for them and give teachers freedom to innovate and meet the needs of students.