

# ALLOWING CHILDREN

CHARTER VIRTUAL PRIVATE HOME

# TO DREAM BIG



SCHOOL CHOICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TENNESSEE FAMILIES





Dear Tennessee Family,

Every child is unique, and all children have the potential to succeed. This means that some children will learn better in a traditional classroom, while others will thrive in an online environment where they can work at their own pace. Some do better in a public school environment, while others flourish in private institutions. No matter whether a child is excelling or struggling, all Tennessee children should be challenged and inspired.

The Beacon Center of Tennessee's guide to school choice explains the different options for Volunteer State families. This guide also provides stories from families that have made choices for their children and explains how they found educational options outside of their child's assigned school.

But there is still work to be done. Our neighbors in North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida have given families in their states greater access to quality educational opportunities. And states like Arizona are creating even more innovative ways to give families access to quality learning experiences.

I hope this guide helps you find a great educational experience for your child, and I hope you will join me in the effort to give every Tennessee child the chance at an excellent future.

Sincerely,

Justin Owen  
President & CEO  
Beacon Center of Tennessee

OPPORTUNITIES **CHARTER** VIRTUAL HOME PRIVATE

**DID YOU KNOW?  
EIGHTY CHARTER SCHOOLS  
SERVE TENNESSEE FAMILIES  
AND ENROLL MORE THAN  
15,000 STUDENTS.<sup>1</sup>**

# CHARTER SCHOOLS

*Charter schools are tuition-free public schools. Parents, teachers, and community leaders sign a “charter” or contract with a school district or state agency to create a charter school and give students more educational options than their assigned school. Charter schools have flexibility over classroom hours, curriculum, and employment policies, but are subject to periodic reviews based on student performance.*

Sometimes, finding the best place for your child to learn takes more than one attempt. Meet Damien and Christina Charley and their school-aged children, Jordan, Micah, and Jonathan. For Jordan—the oldest—homeschooling was a good fit for most of his young life.

But as he approached middle school, Jordan began asking his parents about attending a traditional school. “When they got to the age where they would want to go to a school, we told our children that we would follow through,” Damien explains. Meanwhile, homeschooling continues to be the best environment for Micah and Jonathan.

At age 11, Jordan attended a traditional public school, but then transferred to Intrepid College Preparatory, a new charter school located in Nashville. “It was a needed change for him as well as my wife,” Damien notes.

Damien says that Jordan now has new expectations for academic achievement and behavior. Jordan is adjusting to the new school, his father says, but the transition is forcing Jordan to manage his time better and be more responsible.

“I think the challenge is healthy for him,” Damien says. “The rigor that it takes to really get up and go after it on a day-to-day basis is good for him.”

<sup>1</sup>Tennessee Charter School Center. [tnchartercenter.org](http://tnchartercenter.org).

Intrepid enrolls grades 5-12 with a focus on “financial literacy” and “ethical development.” The school’s mission is to prepare students for selective colleges. “The structure of how the school is set up is a very supportive environment,” says Damien. Even though Jordan struggled in his first semester at Intrepid, his grades are improving as he meets his challenges head-on each day.

“Stress is a part of life,” Damien says. “Being able to partner with the teachers and to partner with Jordan to show him how you have success has been important.”

### If you think your child would thrive in a charter school environment like Jordan, here is how to apply to a charter school in Tennessee:

- Visit the Tennessee Charter School Center at [tnchartercenter.org](http://tnchartercenter.org) and select the “For Families” link at the top of the page.
- Choose between schools located in the Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville areas. For families outside these areas, check back often, as new charter schools open each year. In fact, 18 new charter schools have already been approved for the 2015-2016 school year.
- To compare schools in your area, use the report card information from the Tennessee Department of Education’s Report Card web site available at [tn.gov/education/data/report\\_card/index.shtml](http://tn.gov/education/data/report_card/index.shtml). You can also compare schools based on location, student achievement levels, and schools’ mission statements at [GreatSchools.net](http://GreatSchools.net).
- Contact your school of choice to find out when they accept applications and what forms are necessary in order to apply.



*The Charley family appreciates the academic and behavioral expectations that Jordan’s charter school provides, while homeschooling remains the best fit for their other two children.*

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**IN TENNESSEE, 1,679 CHILDREN  
ATTEND VIRTUAL SCHOOLS  
FULL-TIME, AND THOUSANDS  
OF OTHERS TAKE AT LEAST ONE  
CLASS ONLINE.<sup>2</sup>**

# VIRTUAL SCHOOLS

*Virtual schools are online schools that enroll students from all walks of life. Some virtual programs offer individual courses, while other students attend online schools full-time.*

Two years ago, Arika Trevino rushed her son, Matthew, to the hospital in the middle of the night. His allergies had caused his eyes to swell shut. When the nurse weighed him prior to treatment, Arika noticed that his weight was off. He had started 1st grade at 54 pounds, but now he was down to 42 pounds. How could that be?

"I went to bring this up with his teacher, and she told me that he doesn't eat lunch at school," Arika says. "I asked when she was going to tell me this, and she told me that she didn't think I'd want to know."

Frustrated, Arika pulled Matthew and his older sister, Amber, out of school and enrolled them in Tennessee Virtual Academy, an online public school for students in grades K-8. Arika noticed a difference in her children right away.

"[Matthew's new] teacher was awesome," Arika says. Matthew, diagnosed as autistic, did not have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) at his former public school, but teachers and specialists at Tennessee Virtual worked with Arika to develop specific approaches for Matthew.

<sup>2</sup> iNACOL, "Fast Facts About Online Learning," October 2013, [inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/iNACOL-Fast-Facts-About-Online-Learning-October-2013.pdf](http://inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/iNACOL-Fast-Facts-About-Online-Learning-October-2013.pdf).



"Matthew's speech delay actually shrunk a little bit that first year," Arika says. "They let him work at his own pace with his studies, and both of my children are above grade level now."

"I do think that each child is different, and I don't think the option that I chose for my kids is for everybody," Arika says. "But if brick and mortar is not working for you, there are other environments for them to learn in."

### **If you think virtual learning might be right for your child, here's how to apply to a Tennessee virtual school:**

- Tennessee Virtual Academy is a tuition-free online public school. To apply, call 1-855-629-4773 or visit [k12.com/tnva](http://k12.com/tnva).
- For students in the Nashville area, the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Virtual School (MNPS) offers online classes for public school students. Students living outside the Nashville area are also eligible, though space is limited. For more information, call (615) 463-0188 or visit [mnps.org/Page72732.aspx](http://mnps.org/Page72732.aspx).
- The Tennessee Online Public School (TOPS) offers online courses for high school students. TOPS enrolls students from across the state. For more information, call (423) 652-9209 or visit [tn.gov/education/data/report\\_card/index.shtml](http://tn.gov/education/data/report_card/index.shtml).

*Not only did Matthew Trevino's performance suffer in his zoned school, his health deteriorated as well.*

*Now, attending a virtual school, Matthew is healthy and performing above grade level.*



OPPORTUNITIES CHARTER VIRTUAL HOME PRIVATE

# HOME SCHOOLS

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
HOMESCHOOL STUDENTS  
IN TENNESSEE ARE ELIGIBLE  
TO APPLY FOR HOPE COLLEGE  
SCHOLARSHIPS, WHICH  
PROVIDE STUDENTS UP TO  
\$6,000 PER YEAR TO ATTEND  
4-YEAR COLLEGES.

*Homeschooling allows families to educate their children at home rather than enroll them in a full-time traditional public, charter, or private school. Homeschool groups operate around the state to help families find great opportunities for their children.*

Raul and Julie Lopez homeschool their children because they want them to be challenged.

“When Joseph was three, he began reading,” Julie explains. “According to his birthdate, he would have started kindergarten when he was five. I thought that would be a waste of time.”

Julie, a public school teacher, had seen children like her son before and feared he would act out because he would get bored.

*The Lopez family has spent 14 years homeschooling their children, building their character and academic performance.*





Now in their 14th year homeschooling, the Lopez family has seen good results in their children's attitudes and behavior, as well as their academic achievement. "All of those expectations have been met, it yields great results in my kids' character. I get complimented all the time on my high school boys and their character."

Raul and Julie have raised six children and successfully balanced all of their needs. "The key to juggling more than one schedule is to be organized and well-planned," Julie says.

"When I have four to five students at a time, if there is a way to combine grades, I do. History is a great subject to do that. You can teach one concept to K-12 and they all get different amounts and they all can have different responses according to grade levels," Julie says.

Despite not being exposed to a traditional school environment, the Lopez family is active in their church and community (Joseph plays football, for example), and social activities are not a challenge.

Julie recommends every family evaluate their options and give careful consideration to whether homeschool is right for them.

"Even though our commitment is to do this, every kid does not need to be homeschooled," Julie says. "You have to assess what is best [for your family]."

### **Here's how to homeschool in Tennessee:**

- Homeschool families can register with their local school district or with an "umbrella" school. Families that register with an umbrella school must notify their local school district that a child is being homeschooled through an umbrella school.
- A list of umbrella schools is available from the Tennessee Home Education Association at [tnhea.org/resources](http://tnhea.org/resources).
- Parents should review the list of eligible umbrella schools and contact the schools to learn more about their services and how to apply.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
**IN THE 2013-14 SCHOOL**  
**YEAR, MEMPHIS**  
**OPPORTUNITY**  
**SCHOLARSHIP TRUST**  
**PROVIDED K-12 PRIVATE**  
**SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS**  
**TO 507 STUDENTS.<sup>3</sup>**

# PRIVATE SCHOOLS

*Private schools operate separate from the traditional public school system. Most charge tuition, and some have a religious mission. Some private schools offer families assistance to make tuition payments.*

Never underestimate the power of a devoted mother. Despite losing her husband when their son was just 13 months old and living in a difficult neighborhood, Marilyn Johnson was determined to find a quality education for her son, Marshall Shanks.

“We knew he was going to a private school,” Marilyn says, explaining that she made this decision with Marshall’s father before he passed away. When she learned about the Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust (MOST), she knew it was the right decision for Marshall.

“MOST has been so nice,” Marilyn says. “They have continued the funding as long as he maintains a certain GPA and all the community service that goes with it.” Marshall, now a 10th grader, has earned more than 80 hours of community service.

“The child has to put forth the effort and want the education, too,” Marilyn explains. MOST shares her high expectations for Marshall, and Marilyn appreciates the commitment to success in school and beyond.

<sup>3</sup> Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust, “Prospective Parents,” [memphisopportunities.org/prospective-parents/](http://memphisopportunities.org/prospective-parents/).

"Their vision matches my vision," Marilyn says. "He has to watch his attitude, and when people meet him for the first time, they ask what school he goes to because they know there is something different about him."

Marshall's hard work is already paying dividends. This summer, Marshall will spend time at a Harvard University leadership program, followed by a science program at the University of Tennessee.

"You cannot afford not to invest in your child," Marilyn says. "You have no choice. It's an investment. You pay for it now, or you'll pay for it later."

**For families who currently want to consider private school options in Memphis, here is how to apply for a private school scholarship through the Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust:**

- Visit the scholarship application page at [memphis scholarships.org/prospective-parents](http://memphis scholarships.org/prospective-parents). Applicants must be residents of Shelby County, and students must be entering PreK-3, PreK-4, Kindergarten, or 1st grade.
- The application process happens near the beginning of each calendar year (in 2014, applications were accepted through February).
- A guide for evaluating schools in the area is available here: [memphis scholarships.org/resources/choosing-a-school](http://memphis scholarships.org/resources/choosing-a-school).
- For more information, contact MOST at (901) 842-5327 or at [memphis scholarships.org/contact](http://memphis scholarships.org/contact).
- For those outside of Memphis, stay tuned to the ongoing discussion about a statewide opportunity scholarship program by signing up at [SchoolChoiceNowTN.com](http://SchoolChoiceNowTN.com).

*Marilyn Johnson understands how important it is to invest in her child's education. That commitment is already paying off for her son Marshall.*





# ACROSS THE NATION

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE COUNTRY TO PROVIDE MORE EDUCATION CHOICES FOR FAMILIES?

*States consistently expand educational options for their families. While Tennessee policymakers debate additional school choice measures such as opportunity scholarships, other states across the country are providing robust choices for their students. Below is a snapshot of what's taking place to give families educational freedom.*

## **South Carolina**

In 2014, South Carolina students with special needs gained access to better educational options.<sup>4</sup> Individuals and married couples can receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for contributions to Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFOs), up to 60 percent of their tax liability. SFOs use the contributions to award scholarships to qualifying students. The scholarship awards can be worth up to \$10,000 or the cost of tuition, whichever is less.

The program is capped at \$8 million in total credits to contributors. Students must take a national norm-referenced test or the state test. South Carolina is one of 13 states with scholarship opportunities provided by donations from individuals or corporations.

<sup>4</sup>South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, "Proviso 1.80. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act as Ratified," [eoc.sc.gov/educredit4exceptionalneeds/Pages/Proviso185.aspx](http://eoc.sc.gov/educredit4exceptionalneeds/Pages/Proviso185.aspx).

# SOUTH CAROLINA **GEORGIA** FLORIDA ARIZONA



## Georgia

Georgia lawmakers have enacted two programs that provide additional educational options for students.

Since 2007, Georgia students with special needs have been able to use a school voucher to attend a K-12 private school.<sup>5</sup> The average voucher award is approximately \$5,700.<sup>6</sup> More than 3,000 children used vouchers in the 2013-14 school year.<sup>7</sup>

Georgia students also have access to scholarships funded by individual and corporate donations to scholarship organizations.<sup>8</sup> Similar to the scholarship laws in Arizona, South Carolina, and Florida, Georgia awards tax credits to donors for their contributions. All Georgia students are eligible for a scholarship under this law, as long as the student is switching from a public school to a private school. In 2012, scholarship organizations awarded more than 13,000 scholarships to students.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>5</sup> Georgia Department of Education, "Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program," available at [gadoe.org/external-affairs-and-policy/policy/pages/special-needs-scholarship-program.aspx](http://gadoe.org/external-affairs-and-policy/policy/pages/special-needs-scholarship-program.aspx).

<sup>6</sup> See Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program, "Understanding the Program: 2014-15 School Year," p. 7, [gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx](http://gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx).

<sup>7</sup> Alliance for School Choice, "School Choice Yearbook 2013-14," p. 62 and The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *The ABCs of School Choice*, 2014 ed., p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> Georgia State Code, O.C.G.A. § 20-2A-1.

<sup>9</sup> James Salzer, "Parents sue state over private school scholarship program," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, April 3, 2014, [ajc.com/news/news/breaking-news/parents-sue-state-over-private-school-scholarship-/nfRTG/](http://ajc.com/news/news/breaking-news/parents-sue-state-over-private-school-scholarship-/nfRTG/).





**Florida parents have multiple options for their children:**

- **Education savings accounts:** In 2014, Florida became the second state in the U.S. to allow families to use an education savings account to choose a variety of educational products and services for their children.<sup>10</sup> The state deposits public funds in a private bank account for families of children with special needs. Families can pay for online schools, personal tutors, college tuition, and private school tuition, to name a few eligible expenses. Also called “Personal Learning Scholarship Accounts,” these accounts allow parents to meet the unique needs of their children.
- **School vouchers:** Under the nation’s largest school voucher program, Florida children with special needs can use a scholarship to attend a private school of their choice. John M. McKay Scholarships cover the cost of tuition or the amount the state would have set aside for a child in the public school system, whichever is less (the average voucher is worth \$7,019). Today, more than 27,000 children are using a voucher.<sup>11</sup>

Jay P. Greene, Ph.D., and Marcus Winters, Ph.D., studied the McKay program in 2008.<sup>12</sup> The researchers found that public school students with special needs saw test score gains as more private schools enrolled scholarship students—which means public school students also benefited from the voucher program, along with the additional choices for voucher students.

- **Tax credit scholarships:** Florida lawmakers have also enacted the nation’s largest tax credit scholarship program.<sup>13</sup> Businesses receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for contributions to organizations that award private school scholarships to students. Nearly 60,000 students used scholarships in the 2013-14 school year.<sup>14</sup>
- **Charter schools:** Last year, 570 charter schools served Florida students, enrolling 200,000 children.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Florida Statutes, Chapter 2014-184, available at --

<sup>11</sup> Florida Department of Education, “McKay Scholarship Program,” September 2013, [floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/McKay/files/Fast\\_Facts\\_McKay.pdf](http://floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/McKay/files/Fast_Facts_McKay.pdf). See also Alliance for School Choice, “School Choice Yearbook 2013-14,” and The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, The ABCs of School Choice.

<sup>12</sup> Jay P. Greene, Ph.D., and Marcus A. Winters, Ph.D., “The Effect of Special Education Vouchers on Public School Achievement: Evidence from Florida’s McKay Scholarship Program,” Manhattan Institute Civic Report No. 52, April 2008, [manhattan-institute.org/html/cr\\_52.htm](http://manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_52.htm).

<sup>13</sup> Florida Statutes, Title XLVIII, Chapter 1002, Section 395, available at [flsenate.gov/laws/statutes/2012/1002.395](http://flsenate.gov/laws/statutes/2012/1002.395).

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Ujifusa, “Florida Tax-Credit Scholarships Set to Reach Bigger Demographic,” Education Week, May 5, 2014, [blogs.edweek.org/edweek/charteschoice/2014/05/florida\\_tax-credit\\_scholarships.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/charteschoice/2014/05/florida_tax-credit_scholarships.html).

<sup>15</sup> Florida Department of Education, “Charter Schools,” [floridaschoolchoice.org/information/charter\\_schools/](http://floridaschoolchoice.org/information/charter_schools/).



**Like Florida families, parents and children in the Grand Canyon State have more choices than their child's assigned school:**

- **Education savings accounts:** In 2011, Arizona enacted the nation's first education savings accounts. As in Florida, the state deposits public money in a private bank account that parents can use to pay for individual tutors, education therapy, textbooks, online classes, and private school tuition. Parents can even roll the money over from year to year, pay for college classes, or save for their child's college tuition. Children with special needs are eligible, along with students in failing schools, children in active-duty military families, adopted children, and incoming kindergarten students that meet any of these criteria. More than 220,000 Arizona children are eligible for an account, nearly one in five public school students.

Research conducted in 2013 found that all parents using education savings accounts reported some level of satisfaction with the program, even parents who were "very satisfied" with their child's previous public school.

- **Open enrollment:** Arizona parents and their students can choose to attend any public school in the state, subject to space.
- **Charter schools:** More than 600 charter schools operate across Arizona and enroll some 184,400 students. Two of the top five highest-performing high schools in the country according to *U.S. News & World Report* are Arizona charter schools.
- **Tax credit scholarships:** Arizona has the nation's oldest tax credit scholarship program. Similar to programs in Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina, individuals and corporations receive a dollar-for-dollar credit on their taxes for contributions to scholarship organizations. In 2013-14, scholarship organizations awarded 37,555 scholarships.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Arizona Department of Revenue, "Private School Tuition Organization Income Tax Credits in Arizona: A Summary of Activity FY 2013," [azdor.gov/Portals/0/Reports/FY2013%20Private%20School%20Tuition%20Org%20Credit%20Report.pdf](http://azdor.gov/Portals/0/Reports/FY2013%20Private%20School%20Tuition%20Org%20Credit%20Report.pdf).



# TENNESSEE

**Tennessee** has a chance to rise to the top when it comes to providing quality educational options to families. Whether it is through the adoption of an opportunity scholarship program or education savings accounts, the expansion of charter schools, and the strengthening of online learning options, these reforms could lead to more quality choices for families. Empowering families to choose the best education for their child is critical to the long-term success of each Tennessee student and our state's prosperity.

To stay informed about these and other education reforms that might benefit your family, sign up to receive updates from us at [SchoolChoiceNowTN.com](http://SchoolChoiceNowTN.com), like "School Choice NOW" on Facebook or follow @SchoolChoice4TN on Twitter.



## Around the country, parents can use these resources to find more information about choices for their child's education:

- **Alliance for School Choice**  
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 1000  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 280-1990  
allianceforschoolchoice.org
- **Black Alliance for Educational Options**  
888 16th Street NW, Suite 800  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 429-2236  
baeo.org
- **The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice**  
One American Square, Suite 2420  
Indianapolis, IN 46282  
(317) 681-0745  
edchoice.org
- **Goldwater Institute**  
500 E. Coronado Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(602) 462-5000  
goldwaterinstitute.org
- **Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Options**  
8461 Lake Worth Road  
Suite 204  
Lake Worth, Florida 33467  
(561) 340-1408  
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## A Special Thanks to Our Co-Sponsors

**Agudath Israel**—*Agudath Israel of America is a national, grassroots, advocacy and social service organization representing Orthodox Jews, including 250,000 children in nonpublic schools. In addition to representing the educational interests of its constituents, Agudath Israel protects and advances religious and civil rights, takes a stand on social and moral issues, and promotes the security and well-being of Jews in Israel and around the globe.*

**Black Alliance for Educational Options**—*The mission of the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) is to increase access to high quality educational options for Black children by actively supporting transformational education reform initiatives and parental choice policies that empower low-income and working-class Black families. The Tennessee BAEO organization—established in January 2014—has its headquarters in Memphis, and serves parents and children in the great state of Tennessee. For more information and a free BAEO membership, visit <http://www.tennessee.baeo.org>.*

**Education Freedom Alliance**—*Education Freedom Alliance's (EFA) goals and purposes are to improve public education by expanding school choice, and enhancing charter school opportunities for all children through advocacy and legislative actions at the federal, state, and local levels.*

**PublicSchoolOptions.org**—*An alliance of parents that supports and defends parents' rights to access the best public school options for their children. The Coalition supports the creation of public school options, including charter schools, online schools, magnet schools, open enrollment policies and other innovative education programs. Additionally, we advocate for free and equal access without restrictions to these public schools for all children.*

**Tennessee Charter School Center**—*The Tennessee Charter School Center is the first charter school support organization in the country that simultaneously creates and advocates on behalf of high quality charter schools and the students and families they serve. Our vision is for all students in Tennessee to have access to a high quality public education.*

**Tennessee Federation for Children**—*The Tennessee Federation for Children (TFC) is the state affiliate of the American Federation for Children, the nation's voice for educational choice. TFC has been formed to educate parents and families about the importance of educational choice and advocate for passage of a high-quality, statewide educational choice bill.*



## Who We Are

*The Beacon Center of Tennessee empowers Tennesseans to reclaim control of their lives, so that they can freely pursue their version of the American Dream. The Center is an independent, nonprofit and nonpartisan research organization dedicated to providing concerned citizens and public leaders with expert empirical research and timely free market solutions to public policy issues in Tennessee.*

## About the Author

*Jonathan Butcher serves as Education Director for the Goldwater Institute and is also a Senior Fellow with the Beacon Center of Tennessee. He has researched education policy and school choice programs around the U.S. His work has appeared in journals such as Education Next and the Georgetown Journal of Law and Public Policy, and he has appeared on local and national TV outlets, including interviews on Fox News. He has also been a guest on many radio programs, and his commentary has appeared nationally in places such as <http://www.RealClearPolitics.com>, National Journal, and <http://www.Townhall.com>, along with newspapers around the country.*

*Jonathan is a member of the Arizona Department of Education's Steering Committee for Empowerment Scholarship Accounts, the nation's first education savings account program. Prior to joining Goldwater, Jonathan was the Director of Accountability for the South Carolina Public Charter School District, South Carolina's only statewide charter school authorizer. Jonathan previously studied education policy at the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas and worked with the School Choice Demonstration Project, the research team that evaluated voucher programs in Washington, D.C. and Milwaukee, Wisc.*

*Jonathan studied education and family policy at The Heritage Foundation, a research institute in Washington, D.C. He holds a B.A. in English from Furman University and an M.A. in economics from the University of Arkansas.*







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