

The PRICE Act - *Parental Rights In Children's Education*

By Eagle Forum of Alabama

PRICE Empowers Parents. PRICE allows parents to choose the best education options that align with their family's values and are tailor-made to fit their educational needs. They can choose private, online schools, home-schooling, private tutors, or a combination.

PRICE money follows the student. PRICE is a universal Education Savings Account (ESA) program. The ESA amount is based on the average state tax dollar amount per pupil—\$ 6,900 (SY 2024-2025). When a public school student enrolls in the PRICE program, the federal and local dollars stay with the school.

PRICE does not discriminate. Unlike other school choices, PRICE does not discriminate by zip code, income, or ability level! After the three-year phase, all students (public, private, home-schooled) can apply.

PRICE funds can be used for more than tuition and fees. Examples of qualifying expenses are tuition, textbooks and fees, individual classes, tutoring services, therapies like occupational, behavioral, physical, speech-language, audiology, etc., extracurricular activities, including athletics, art, music, and literature, computer hardware and other technological devices, software and applications, school uniforms, college tuition, textbooks, and fees if there are any remaining ESA funds after high school graduation.

PRICE Funds Roll Over. ESA funds not fully used in one school year will roll over into the following year. No more funds are added to the ESA after graduation. But any remaining funds can be used until the age of 21. Students can use funds for college/trade school etc.

PRICE is administered by the Department of Revenue. A volunteer 13-member advisory board will assist the DOR. Ten members are parents using the program who can provide valuable input to the DOR. This ground-level input can help ensure that vendors, educational service providers, and expenses are legitimate and vetted by the program's users.

PRICE ensures solid financial accountability and transparency. Every expense and vendor must be approved. The program utilizes an online app rather than funds going into a personal account. Money moves directly from an online account to the vendor or education service provider. Tracking every penny with auditing reports is made easy. This feature ensures that funds are used for their intended purpose while eliminating the risk of fraud, waste, or abuse.

PRICE ensures bottom-up accountability. PRICE ensures accountability, unlike our public system. Every private school participating in PRICE must provide detailed information about its curriculum and education program to parents and students. This accountability ensures that parents know precisely what to expect from the school when they commit their ESA dollars. Parent satisfaction is the best measure of program success. Parents are empowered to take the ESA funds elsewhere if they are unsatisfied. When private schools perform poorly, they shut down.

PRICE protects private and home-school autonomy. The PRICE Act was carefully written to ensure that nothing changes the current laws regulating non-public education entities (private, church, parochial, religious, and home-based schools), including accreditation and assessments.

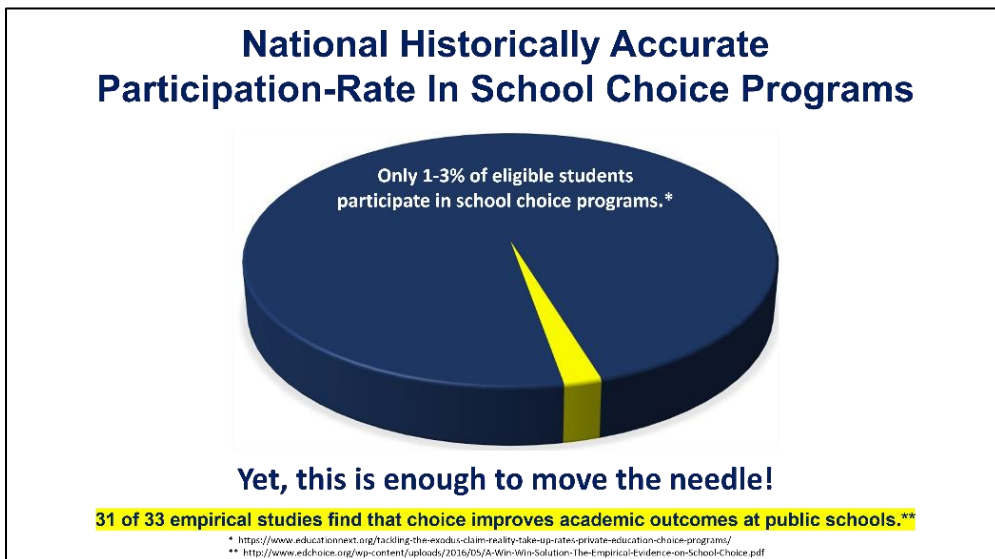
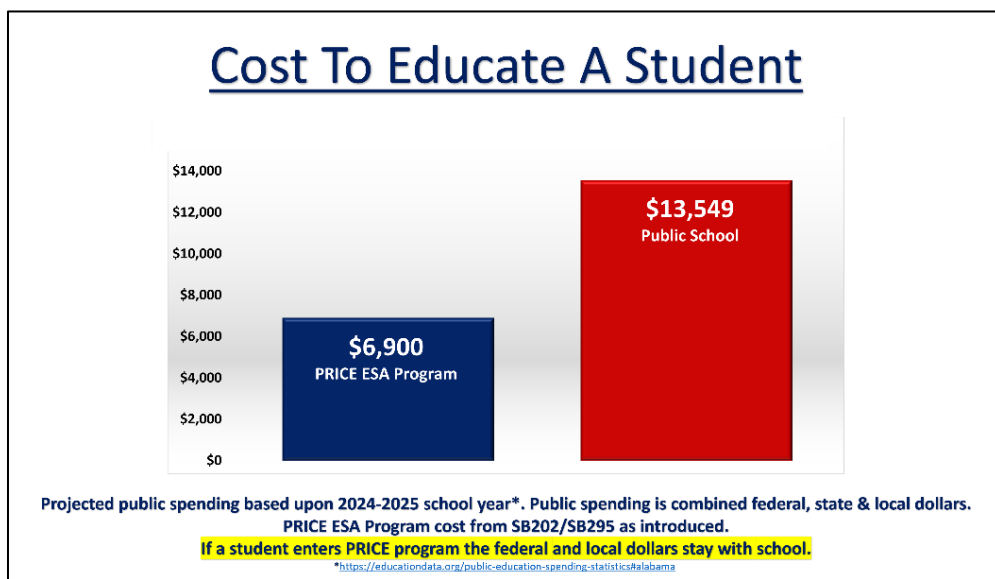
PRICE will improve public school academic achievement. We have been trying to improve Alabama's education from the inside for decades, and it has yet to work as hoped. Private competition through PRICE will induce the proper incentives for public schools to improve. 31 of 33 empirical studies find that choice improves academic outcomes at public schools.¹

¹ <http://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/A-Win-Win-Solution-The-Empirical-Evidence-on-School-Choice.pdf>

More so, other studies reflect that school choice increases graduation rates.² Without question, **PRICE** is the best school choice option! Unlike waiting 3-5 years for a new charter school to be approved and built or increasing caps on the *Accountability Act*, which only serve a specific population and can only be used for tuition and fees at a brick-and-mortar school, **PRICE** will be available to students from every corner of the state by the fall of 2024. Of all the school choice options in this legislative session, **PRICE** will impact the most students the fastest.

PRICE will not cause a mass exodus from the public school system. Most families are satisfied with their public schools. Accurate national data from decades of tracking school choice programs show that only 1-3% of eligible students participate in school choice options. Yet, as the empirical data shows, the threat of private school competition is enough to impact public school academic achievement positively. **PRICE** is the vehicle to put families in control and improve public school outcomes.

The PRICE Act's time is now! If the Alabama legislature passes the PRICE Act during the 2023 legislative session the phase will begin in the fall of 2024!



² <https://www.federationforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/AFC-School-Choice-Research-Summary.pdf>