



To: American Federation for Children
From: David Kanevsky
Re: Idaho Republican Primary Survey
Date: February 20, 2024

Overview

Idaho Republican primary voters not only strongly support Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), but will be voting on that issue by backing pro-school choice candidates. Moreover, arguments in opposition to ESAs are likely to fail as Idaho Republicans do NOT find those messages convincing.

Key Findings

- ESAs are popular with Republican primary voters with 46% favoring them compared to just 29% opposed. More voters strongly favor ESAs than are opposed in total. Parents are very supportive of ESAs, with 53% of them favoring ESAs.***

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose a proposal for an Educational Savings Account tax credit, which would expand school choice by providing an Idaho state tax credit of up to \$5,000 dollars per student that parents could use to pay for education expenses, such as education supplies, tutoring or private school tuition, or do you not know enough about this issue to have an opinion one way or another?

46% TOTAL FAVOR
25% TOTAL OPPOSE

31% Strongly Favor
15% Somewhat Favor
7% Strongly Oppose
17% Strongly Oppose

29% Don't Know
* **[DO NOT READ]** Prefer Not to Answer

- Republican primary voters prefer a pro-school choice candidate by two-to-one (40% to 20%). Support for pro-ESA candidates is higher among key parts of the GOP coalition, like very conservatives (52%) and Trump Republicans (49%). Support remains high in rural areas as voters prefer a pro-ESA candidate over an anti-ESA candidate by a 41% to 18% margin.***

If the Republican primary for state legislature were held today, would you be more likely to vote **[RANDOMIZE 1-2]**

40% For a candidate who SUPPORTS expanding school choice through the Education Savings Account tax credit
20% For a candidate who OPPOSES expanding school choice through the Education Savings Account tax credit
29% Or does the issue not make a difference in your vote for state legislature?

9% **[DO NOT READ]** Don't Know
2% **[DO NOT READ]** Prefer Not to Answer

3. *The opposing messages against ESAs do NOT resonate with Republican primary voters. Only one opposing message received a bare majority of Republicans to be seen as convincing. In contrast, even the weakest message in support of ESAs was found to be convincing by 57% of GOP primary voters.*

Total Convincing	Supporter Messages Ranked by %Total Convincing
76%	Parents should be allowed to choose the best school for their child, regardless of where they live, in order to make sure school districts are held accountable with their tax dollars.
70%	The Education Savings Accounts would allow parents to pay for their children to attend career training programs offered by local businesses which are designed to help students gain the skills needed to successfully enter the workforce.
68%	Education Savings Accounts would give parents more control over what their children are being exposed to in school and put their children in schools that align to their values and beliefs.
67%	The Educational Savings Account program doubles the size of the grant from \$5,000 to \$10,000 dollars for families with special needs children or those struggling in traditional schools in order to create learning options that help those families meet the specific needs of their children.
63%	The Education Savings Accounts program would empower parents with more control over what their children are learning.
63%	Education Savings Accounts includes a grant process that makes it easier for lower income families to pick a school that best meets their child's education needs.
63%	In states with robust school choice options, some parents have created "micro schools," that is schools with anywhere from 10 to 50 students, to help children with exceptional needs, meet the needs of their community, and increase access to education options in rural communities.
62%	The Education Savings Accounts could be used not only for tuition at private schools, but to help families in public schools pay for textbooks, computers, and other essential education equipment.
60%	Education Savings Accounts give parents accountability over education rather than the government and state mandated tests.
57%	Educational Savings Accounts would benefit all Idaho families, regardless of their income.

Total Convincing	Opposing Messages Ranked by %Total Convincing
50%	Idaho families already have a sufficient number of education options like public charter schools and open enrollment within public school districts.
47%	School choice would hurt rural communities where schools are often the area's largest employer and are hubs for community engagement.
46%	School choice only benefits a small number of students and wealthy families, while taking away money from already under-funded public schools.
42%	This program would cut money from local schools, causing your property taxes to rise to make up for the shortfall.
37%	This program would expand government by requiring more state government employees and administrative costs and cost \$50 million dollars in the first year alone, but only benefitting 3% of Idaho's students.
37%	There is no accountability with money that goes to school choice programs, resulting in school choice funds being used for non-education items like televisions or paddleboard lessons.
31%	Private schools are not accountable or held to the same standards as public schools, which can lead to lower quality education for students.

Methodology

The American Federation for Children commissioned 3D Strategic Research to conduct a survey of Republican primary voters in Idaho. The survey was conducted December 5-7, 2023 among n=500 Republican primary voters and has a margin of error of $\pm 4.38\%$. The survey was conducted with a mix of live calls to landlines (30%) and cell phones (40%) and text messages inviting voters to take the survey via a secure web link (30%). Respondents were randomly selected based on their probability of voting in the May 2024 Republican primary and the data was weighted to reflect a likely primary electorate based on geography, gender, age, and turnout propensity.