



**EdChoice Question & Answer Reference Document  
for Parish and School Leaders/Offices  
June 25, 2025**

**Q. How does this decision impact my choice to send my child to Catholic school in the fall 2025-26 school year?**

A. The decision by the Franklin County Common Pleas Court was immediately “stayed” pending an appeal by the State of Ohio. This order by the court acknowledges that the case is in the first steps of a legal journey that will take time. Payments to parents for nonpublic schools will continue, and the scholarship program will be operated as usual by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. Eventually, a final court decision will bring resolution to the case, which we expect to uphold the constitutionality of EdChoice. The stay allows time for the appeals process to unfold, first to the Ohio 10th District Court of Appeals and potentially later, to the Ohio Supreme Court.

**Q. What about the future? Will EdChoice still exist for the 2026-2027 school year?**

A. The Catholic school community in Ohio remains confident that the EdChoice program will prevail in the appeals process. The Catholic Church will continue to advocate for and defend programs that support parents as the primary educators of their children and enable them to select a school that best suits their child’s needs. We cannot say with absolute certainty that there will be no changes to EdChoice, but the appeals process alone is likely to take months or even years.

**Q. Will the coalition behind the effort to end EdChoice appeal the Ohio Supreme Court’s decision? Then what? Will this go to the US Supreme Court?**

A. We expect those who oppose EdChoice to continue to appeal the case if appellate courts reverse the decision made by the Franklin County Common Pleas Court. It is quite possible that this case could eventually go before the US Supreme Court, as other states are also involved in similar litigation. The EdChoice Scholarship law, first enacted in 2005, was based on the existing Cleveland Scholarship Program, which was enacted in 1995 as a pilot program. The US Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that the Cleveland Scholarship was constitutional in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639 (2002).

**Q. You say you are confident that the Ohio Supreme Court will overturn this decision; how can I be sure of that, and why would I bet my child's future education on your "guess"?**

A. Many state leaders have been supportive of EdChoice, and the legislature went so far as to expand the program two years ago, offering scholarships on a sliding scale based on income, to all parents who wish to send their children to a non-public school. We have every reason to believe that EdChoice will continue to be available for the foreseeable future. The increasing numbers of participants in Ohio's parental school choice programs demonstrate their value to the people of Ohio and its legislature, which writes the laws that are interpreted by the courts.

**Q. I want to secure my child's future, but I can't afford to pay the full tuition for a Catholic school. What other options do I have if EdChoice were to go away?**

A. There are many funding options available for parents who cannot afford to pay full tuition at a Catholic school. These include diocesan tuition assistance, Fund A Dream tuition awards, Angel Scholarship funds that are designated to individual schools, and parish support.

**Q. I would like my children to be educated in a Catholic school, but I'm afraid this financial assistance is in jeopardy. What are my options?**

A. As noted above, the recent court decision does not result in any changes to the scholarship program. The district court ruling is an initial step in a legal process that remains ongoing. Catholic schools, as they have throughout their long history, continue to offer a range of pathways to make a Catholic education accessible to families. We encourage you to contact your local Catholic school directly to learn more about available options. Our goal continues to be working to ensure Catholic education remains broadly accessible and universally affordable for all families who desire it for their children.

**Q. What about Cleveland scholarships, Jon Peterson scholarships, and Autism scholarships – how does this impact them, if at all?**

A. These scholarships are separate and not impacted by potential changes to EdChoice. The fact that this lawsuit targets only the EdChoice program, without reference to Ohio's three other scholarship programs, which are more politically popular and historically entrenched — may reveal something about the plaintiffs' underlying motivations. Ohio's two special needs scholarships — the Autism Scholarship (established in 2003) and the Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship (established in 2011) — have experienced exponential annual growth among students with qualifying Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Ohio's first state-funded scholarship, the Cleveland Scholarship Program, was enacted in 1995, promptly challenged in court, and ultimately upheld as constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002). Notably, the current lawsuit does not address these long-standing programs, yet it advances arguments that, if accepted, could undermine all state funding for parental school choice.