School Choice: Why Parents Choose Charter, Private, and Homeschool Options

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SCHOOL CHOICE:

Why Parents Choose Charter, Private, and Homeschool Options

By: Andrena Brandy Mathis
WHY DO PARENTS CHOOSE CHARTER, PRIVATE, OR HOMESCHOOL OPTIONS?
Charter Schools

- **Educator**: Andrena Brandy Mathis
- **Target Audience**: At Risk Youth
- **Purpose**: To help students who struggled in the public schools have a pathway to graduate.
- **Why parents and Students choose this option**: Flexibility for students who have jobs, children, or health issues.
Average high school in Tucson (2004): 10% of students had an IEP.

Eastpointe High School (2004): 20% of students had an IEP.

According to the Center for Research on Educational Outcomes (CREDO) “The results reveal that the charter school sector is getting better on average and charter schools are benefiting low-income, disadvantaged, and special education students” (Foster, 2014).
Charter Schools

**Educator:** Ms. Rachel Ramos

**Target Audience:** Rural Families

**Purpose:** To help students who are below level catch up.

**Advantage:** Can create individual learning plans to help the students reach grade level benchmarks.

**Why parents choose this option:** Flexibility, Health Issues that Impede Education, and Lack of Options in Rural areas.
Private Schools

■ **School:** Bethlehem 1\textsuperscript{st} Preschool & Kindergarten

■ **Educator and Parent:** Andrena Brandy Mathis

■ **Purpose:** “offers local parents a convenient facility where their children can develop a love of learning in small classes with dedicated teachers” (bethlehemfirstumc.com, 2016).

■ **Advantages:** small classes size of 14/2 ratio and offers enrichment courses of Spanish, Music and P.E.

■ **Distinctions:** 2\textsuperscript{nd} place in the Reader’s Choice for Best Preschool in the County 2013 and Awarded “Program of Excellence” for 10 years by the UMC North GA Conference.

■ **Why parents choose this option:** Small class size, Christian environment, and fills the need for more Pre-K spots in the county.
Private School Stats

Private School Numbers at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PK-12 Enrollment (2011-12)</th>
<th># of Schools (2011-12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,268,000 (10% of all US students)</td>
<td>30,861 (24% of all US schools)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrollment Source: National Center for Education Statistics (see table)
School Source: National Center for Education Statistics (see table)

Graphic Courtesy of Council for American Private Education (CAPE)
Private Schools

Educator: Ms. Timi Higgins

Purpose: “HCA is a Christ-centered, college-preparatory school committed to excellence, partnering with parents to prepare their children spiritually, academically, physically and socially to become disciples of Jesus Christ.” (hebronlions.org, 2016).

Advantages: small classes sizes with ample opportunities for one-one instruction.


Why parents choose this option: Small class size, Christian environment, and emphasis on college preparation.

Photo Courtesy of hebronlions.org
Homeschool

- **Parent and Educator:** Amber Wigley
- **Purpose:** To help her sons who represent two sides of the learning spectrum be successful
- **Advantage:** Can create individual learning plans to address the different needs of each boy.
- **Why parents choose this option:** “religious convictions, desire for a positive social environment, academic excellence, flexibility, and specific needs of the child” (Allison, 2014).
Homeschool Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Tests</th>
<th>Homeschool Mean</th>
<th>Public School Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The composite scores from the CORE Test indicate that home school students’ are being academically prepared for the rigors of college. (Figure 1).

The Homeschool movement has grown from nearly non-existent in the 1970s to approximately two million students in 2009 for kindergarten through 12th grade (Ray, 2010).

*Figure 1. Home school versus public school means scores on the CORE Test. (Ray, 2010).*
Jaden Wigley

• **Academic Challenges:** Diagnosed with Autism, two grades behind in core subjects, the public school pace was too fast.

• **Academic Strengths:** love of learning

• **Why Homeschool:** After 7 IEP meetings in one year Jaden was still not able to keep up in public school.
Cody Wigley

- **Academic Challenges:** Perfectionist, needs time to craft his writing assignments.
- **Academic Strengths:** in the Gifted Program.
- **Why Homeschool:** Ms. Wigley decided to teach Cody with Jaden so both boys could benefit from the one-on-one instruction.
3 Years Later….

Benefits for the Wigleys:

- Jaden moved up two reading levels in the 1st year of homeschool.
- By the 3rd year he is at grade level for all subjects but math which he is working hard at mastering division.
- Jaden has gained confidence and by joining a homeschool group has found a learning community that he feels connected with.
- Cody now loves to write and has started his own art business.
- Amber enjoys being apart of the boys learning.
Conclusion

- Charter Schools are a free schooling option that can help students who face adversities like being young parents or health issues graduate.
- Private schools benefit families with deep religious convictions or students who need small class sizes to thrive.
- Homeschooling can benefit students who need one-on-one instruction.
- Parents make these choices in order to find what education environment will best suit their child.
References


