Unpacking Tennessee's Education Savings Account/Voucher Program

In 2019, the Tennessee Legislature approved a pilot program in Memphis and Nashville to launch the Education Savings Account Program, also known as vouchers, which provide tuition vouchers to families to withdraw from public school and attend private school. Since then, the law has expanded to provide vouchers to more students, and the General Assembly is currently considering legislation to expand the program statewide. Read on to learn more about ESAs/vouchers and their impact on MNPS.

Who is currently eligible for ESAs/vouchers?

- K-12 students in **Davidson**, **Shelby**, or **Hamilton** County who have attended public school for a full year since the 2019-2020 school year
- First-time public school students
- Students zoned to an Achievement School District school
- Students identified as "at-risk" by state law
- Family income cannot exceed twice the eligibility for free lunch

What would pending legislation change?

- K-12 students in all counties **statewide** would be eligible
- Up to 20,000 vouchers would be provided
- Expansion of **eligibility requirements** to include students from higher income families
- Accountability and testing requirements for participating students would be reduced or eliminated



Legislature passes ESA pilot program for 5,000 students in Nashville and Memphis

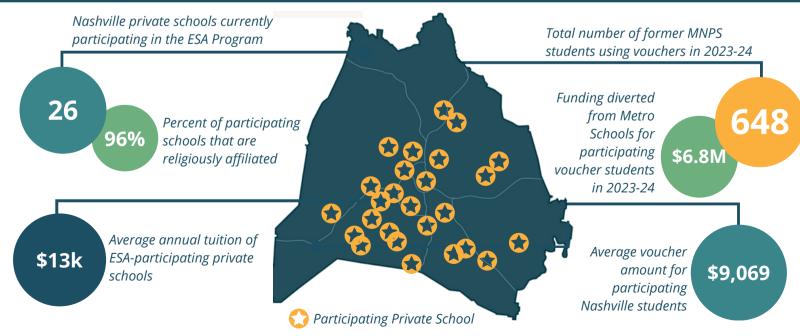
State appeals decision and Tennessee Supreme Court agrees to hear case ESA student eligibility is expanded to include first-time public school students and Hamilton County added to participating districts

2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

Nashville and Memphis file lawsuit against state for violating 'home rule' by singling out individual counties; Nashville Chancellor declares law unconstitutional Tennessee Supreme Court overturns ruling, stating that law did not violate 'home rule' provision; the first ESAs are awarded; 452 students enroll in Memphis and Nashville

Legislation pending to expand ESA/voucher program

By the Numbers: Vouchers in Nashville



TDOE ESA Family Handbook 2024-25, ESA 2024, ESA Approved Schools 2023-24, ESA Annual Report, 2022-23, Chalkbeat Tennessee, TOG, 2023, TDOE, 2024, The Sycamore Institute, 2023









