



IOWA ALLIANCE  
FOR CHOICE IN EDUCATION

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is Iowa ACE?***

Founded in 2005, Iowa Alliance for Choice in Education (Iowa ACE) is a nonprofit organization formed by advocates of nonpublic education to promote the expansion of school choice for the benefit of Iowa's children. Iowa ACE represents more than 20,000 nonpublic school parents and advocates of nonpublic education throughout the state.

### ***What is school choice?***

School choice is the opportunity for parents to choose the educational environment that they believe will most benefit their child, regardless of family income or address. Low-income families who do not have the option of choosing to live in the neighborhood with the best local schools can utilize a School Tuition Organization (STO) to exercise school choice.

### ***What are the benefits of school choice?***

Studies regarding school choice demonstrate that:

- It leads to better test scores for all students and higher graduation rates.
- Parents are more satisfied and involved with their children's school.
- It saves taxpayers millions of dollars.
- Public schools respond positively to competition.

### ***How can Iowa ACE help my family?***

Iowa ACE is an advocate for parental choice in education. The organization serves as a resource for parents about the benefits of nonpublic schools to local communities and public policy decisions affecting accredited nonpublic school students, parents and schools. In addition, Iowa ACE seeks to secure appropriate financial support for all parents of accredited nonpublic school children through programs such as School Tuition Organization (STO) tuition grants.

### ***How can Iowa ACE help my school?***

Through events like Nonpublic Schools Day at the State Capitol, Iowa ACE strives to mobilize the nonpublic school community to encourage advocacy and cooperation.

### ***What is Education Celebration Day?***

Iowa ACE sponsors this annual event at the Capitol as an opportunity for students, parents and educators from nonpublic schools across the state to communicate with legislators about the benefits of school choice in Iowa.

More than 35,000 Iowa children receive their education in a nonpublic school each year. Education Celebration Day serves also as an opportunity for nonpublic school students and educators across the state to interact and collaborate.

The event has historically included informational displays from participating schools to provide information about nonpublic schools and the benefits of nonpublic education. Student instrumental and vocal groups also perform in the rotunda throughout the day.

***What is a School Tuition Organization (STO)?***

A School Tuition Organization (STO) is a tax-exempt organization that allocates at least 90 percent of its annual revenue to scholarships or grants and makes its scholarships/grants available to students of more than one qualified school.

***What are tax credits?***

A tax credit allows individuals or corporations to make donations to a School Tuition Organization (STO), which in turn uses those funds to award scholarships for students to attend a nonpublic school. The donor receives a 65 percent tax credit against their Iowa income tax liability.

***How do I apply for STO funding?***

Contact the STO serving your school of choice to apply for funding. For a comprehensive list of STOs in Iowa, visit the STO Directory page of this Web site.

*\*Sources include the Alliance for Choice in Education, Alliance for School Choice, The Heritage Foundation and the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation.*