

HOUSE BILL 675

F1, Q3
HB 569/23 – APP

4lr0640

By: **Delegates Grammer, Arikan, Chisholm, Fisher, Kipke, M. Morgan, Nawrocki,
and Szeliga**

Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2024

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Primary and Secondary Education – Education Savings Account Program –**
3 **Established**
4 **(Maryland Universal School Choice Act)**

5 FOR the purpose of establishing the Education Savings Account program in the State
6 administered by the State Department of Education; allowing a subtraction
7 modification under the Maryland income tax for deposits into an education savings
8 account; and generally relating to the Education Savings Account program.

9 BY adding to

10 Article – Education
11 Section 9.12–101 through 9.12–106 to be under the new title “Title 9.12. Education
12 Savings Account”
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

16 Article – Tax – General
17 Section 10–208(a)
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

20 BY adding to

21 Article – Tax – General
22 Section 10–208(cc)
23 Annotated Code of Maryland
24 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

25 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
26 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



Article – Education

TITLE 9.12. EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT.

9.12–101.

(A) IN THIS TITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) “ACCOUNT” MEANS AN EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT OPENED WITH A PRIVATE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FIRM OR SIMILAR ENTITY THAT IS QUALIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER THIS TITLE.

(C) “ELIGIBLE STUDENT” MEANS A STUDENT WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ENROLL IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE STATE.

(D) “PARENT” MEANS A LEGAL RESIDENT OF THE STATE WHO IS A PARENT, A GUARDIAN, A CUSTODIAN, OR ANY OTHER PERSON WITH AUTHORITY TO ACT ON BEHALF OF AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT.

(E) “PRIVATE TUTORING” MEANS TUTORING SERVICES PROVIDED BY A TUTOR WHO:

(1) IS A TEACHER LICENSED IN ANY STATE;

(2) IS A SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT; OR

(3) IS OTHERWISE APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(F) “PROGRAM” MEANS THE EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS TITLE.

(G) (1) “QUALIFYING SCHOOL” MEANS ANY NONPUBLIC SCHOOL THAT PROVIDES INSTRUCTION TO PRIMARY OR SECONDARY STUDENTS AND HAS NOTIFIED THE DEPARTMENT OF ITS INTENTION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM AND COMPLY WITH THE PROGRAM’S REQUIREMENTS.

(2) “QUALIFYING SCHOOL” DOES NOT INCLUDE A HOME SCHOOL PROGRAM.

(H) “RESIDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT” MEANS THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE STUDENT RESIDES.

1 **9.12-102.**

2 (A) (1) THERE IS AN EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT PROGRAM IN THE
3 STATE.

4 (2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM.

5 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE STATE GRANTS TO THE
6 ACCOUNT OF THE PARENT OF AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE
7 EDUCATION OF THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT.

8 (C) A PARENT OF AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT SHALL BE QUALIFIED FOR A STATE
9 GRANT UNDER THE PROGRAM IF THE PARENT SIGNS AN AGREEMENT WITH THE
10 DEPARTMENT AGREEING:

11 (1) TO PROVIDE AN EDUCATION FOR THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT IN, AT A
12 MINIMUM, READING, GRAMMAR, SOCIAL STUDIES, AND SCIENCE THAT CONFORMS
13 TO EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT'S GRADE LEVEL AS
14 ESTABLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT;

15 (2) TO ENROLL THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT IN A PROGRAM THAT MEETS
16 REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS;

17 (3) TO ENSURE THAT THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT WILL TAKE ALL
18 ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED UNDER STATE LAW;

19 (4) TO RELEASE THE RESIDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM ALL
20 OBLIGATIONS TO EDUCATE THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT;

21 (5) TO NOT ENROLL THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL OR
22 PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL EXCEPT FOR CONTRACTED SERVICES UNDER
23 SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION;

24 (6) TO USE ALL FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER THIS TITLE EXCLUSIVELY
25 FOR THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT'S EDUCATION EXPENSES UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF
26 THIS SECTION IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12;

27 (7) TO NOT TRANSFER ANY FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER THIS TITLE TO A
28 BENEFICIARY THAT IS NOT THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT OR THE PARENT OF THE
29 ELIGIBLE STUDENT, OR TO OTHERWISE TAKE POSSESSION OF FUNDS TO WHICH THE
30 ELIGIBLE STUDENT OR PARENT OF THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT IS NOT ENTITLED;

31 (8) TO NOT RECEIVE ANY OTHER PUBLIC SUBSIDY FOR THE

1 EDUCATION OF THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT, UNLESS ANY FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER THE
2 PROGRAM ARE REDUCED BY THE AMOUNT OF THE SUBSIDY;

3 (9) TO NOT BILL AN INSURANCE COMPANY, MEDICAID, OR ANY
4 OTHER AGENCY FOR THE SAME SERVICES FOR WHICH FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER THIS
5 TITLE ARE USED; AND

6 (10) TO RETURN ANY UNUSED FUNDS TO THE STATE:

7 (I) WHEN THE STUDENT ACHIEVES A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
8 OR ITS EQUIVALENT; OR

9 (II) ON THE STUDENT'S REMOVAL FROM A QUALIFYING SCHOOL
10 IN THE STATE.

11 (D) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS SUBSECTION, ON A
12 QUARTERLY BASIS THE STATE SHALL DEPOSIT INTO AN ACCOUNT OF AN ELIGIBLE
13 STUDENT AN AMOUNT EQUIVALENT TO 100% OF THE PER PUPIL AMOUNT OF STATE
14 AND LOCAL FUNDS FOR EACH EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE RESIDENT SCHOOL
15 DISTRICT FOR WHICH THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT WOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE
16 ENROLLMENT COUNT FOR THE CALCULATIONS UNDER TITLE 5, SUBTITLE 2 OF THIS
17 ARTICLE.

18 (2) (I) THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT SHALL BE COUNTED IN THE
19 ENROLLMENT COUNT USED FOR PURPOSES OF CALCULATING THE STATE AND
20 LOCAL FUNDING FOR THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS UNDER TITLE 5, SUBTITLE 2 OF
21 THIS ARTICLE.

22 (II) THE COUNTY SHALL REIMBURSE THE STATE FOR THE
23 LOCAL FUNDING REQUIRED UNDER TITLE 5, SUBTITLE 2 OF THIS ARTICLE THAT IS
24 PROVIDED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

25 (3) THE AMOUNT DEPOSITED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS
26 SUBSECTION SHALL BE DEDUCTED FROM THE AMOUNT OF STATE AND LOCAL FUNDS
27 PROVIDED TO THE RESIDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT UNDER TITLE 5, SUBTITLE 2 OF
28 THIS ARTICLE.

29 (4) A PARENT OF AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT MAY DEPOSIT ADDITIONAL
30 FUNDS TO AN ACCOUNT ON A PRE-TAX BASIS AS PROVIDED UNDER § 10-208(CC) OF
31 THE TAX - GENERAL ARTICLE.

32 (5) THE FUNDS IN AN ACCOUNT MAY BE USED ONLY FOR EDUCATION
33 EXPENSES UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION AND AS APPROVED BY THE

1 **DEPARTMENT.**

2 **(E) PARENTS OF AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT MAY USE THE FUNDS IN THE**
3 **ACCOUNT ONLY FOR THE FOLLOWING EXPENSES:**

4 **(1) TUITION AND FEES AT A QUALIFYING SCHOOL;**

5 **(2) TEXTBOOKS OR UNIFORMS REQUIRED BY A QUALIFYING SCHOOL;**

6 **(3) PAYMENT FOR PRIVATE TUTORING;**

7 **(4) PAYMENT FOR PURCHASE OF CURRICULAR MATERIALS, ANY**
8 **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR THE CURRICULUM, AND**
9 **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS;**

10 **(5) TUITION OR FEES FOR A NONPUBLIC ONLINE LEARNING**
11 **PROGRAM;**

12 **(6) FEES FOR NATIONAL NORM-REFERENCED EXAMINATIONS,**
13 **ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS OR SIMILAR COURSES, ANY EXAMINATIONS**
14 **RELATED TO POSTSECONDARY ADMISSION, AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION COURSES;**

15 **(7) EDUCATION SERVICES FROM A LICENSED OR ACCREDITED**
16 **PROVIDER FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR WITH SPECIAL NEEDS;**

17 **(8) CONTRACTED EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDED AT A PUBLIC**
18 **SCHOOL OR WITHIN A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM;**

19 **(9) IF APPLICABLE:**

20 **(I) INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER FEES; OR**

21 **(II) ONLINE LEARNING FEES; AND**

22 **(10) ANY OTHER EDUCATION EXPENSES APPROVED BY THE**
23 **DEPARTMENT.**

24 **(F) A QUALIFYING SCHOOL, A PRIVATE TUTORING PROVIDER, OR ANY**
25 **OTHER EDUCATION PROVIDER MAY NOT REFUND, REBATE, OR SHARE THE GRANT**
26 **PROVIDED UNDER THIS TITLE WITH A PARENT OR AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT.**

27 **(G) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE WRITTEN NOTICE TO PARENTS ON:**

- 1 **(1) THE ELIGIBLE USES OF ACCOUNT FUNDS;**
2 **(2) THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENT; AND**
3 **(3) THE DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

4 **9.12-103.**

5 **(A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL QUALIFY PRIVATE FINANCIAL**
6 **MANAGEMENT FIRMS OR SIMILAR ENTITIES TO MANAGE ACCOUNTS.**

7 **(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH REASONABLE FEES BASED**
8 **ON MARKET RATES.**

9 **(B) (1) (I) THE DEPARTMENT MAY CONDUCT OR CONTRACT FOR THE**
10 **AUDITING OF ACCOUNTS.**

11 **(II) AT A MINIMUM, A RANDOM SAMPLING OF ACCOUNTS SHALL**
12 **BE AUDITED ANNUALLY.**

13 **(2) THE DEPARTMENT MAY DETERMINE A PARENT INELIGIBLE FOR**
14 **THE PROGRAM IF SUBSTANTIAL MISUSE OF ACCOUNT FUNDS OCCURS.**

15 **(3) THE DEPARTMENT MAY REFER ANY SUBSTANTIAL MISUSE OF**
16 **ACCOUNT FUNDS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION.**

17 **9.12-104.**

18 **(A) A QUALIFYING SCHOOL SHALL:**

19 **(1) COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE HEALTH AND SAFETY LAWS OR**
20 **CODES;**

21 **(2) HOLD A VALID OCCUPANCY PERMIT IF REQUIRED;**

22 **(3) CERTIFY COMPLIANCE WITH NONDISCRIMINATION POLICIES**
23 **UNDER TITLE 42 OF THE UNITED STATES CODE;**

24 **(4) CONDUCT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS ON EMPLOYEES;**

25 **(5) REFUSE TO EMPLOY INDIVIDUALS WHO:**

26 **(I) ARE INELIGIBLE FOR EMPLOYMENT UNDER STATE LAW; OR**

- 1 **(II) POSE A THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF STUDENTS;**
- 2 **(6) OFFER ALL APPROPRIATE STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS;**
- 3 **(7) HAVE NO RECORD OF FRAUD OR ABUSE;**
- 4 **(8) ON REQUEST, PROVIDE PARENTS OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**
5 **WITH DETAILS ABOUT THE SCHOOL’S PROGRAMS, QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE,**
6 **AND CAPACITY TO SERVE STUDENTS; AND**
- 7 **(9) BE EITHER:**
 - 8 **(I) AN APPROVED NONPUBLIC SCHOOL; OR**
 - 9 **(II) A NONPUBLIC SCHOOL WITH PROVISIONAL APPROVAL.**
- 10 **(B) TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS, A QUALIFYING**
11 **SCHOOL SHALL PROVIDE PARENTS WITH A RECEIPT FOR ALL QUALIFYING**
12 **EXPENDITURES.**

13 **9.12-105.**

14 **THE RESIDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL PROVIDE A QUALIFIED SCHOOL OR**
15 **PROVIDER THAT HAS ADMITTED AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT WITH A COMPLETE COPY OF**
16 **THE STUDENT’S SCHOOL RECORD IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FEDERAL FAMILY**
17 **EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT.**

18 **9.12-106.**

19 **THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT**
20 **THIS TITLE.**

21 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
22 as follows:

23 **Article – Tax – General**

24 10-208.

25 (a) In addition to the modification under § 10-207 of this subtitle, the amounts
26 under this section are subtracted from the federal adjusted gross income of a resident to
27 determine Maryland adjusted gross income.

1 **(CC) (1) (i) IN THIS SUBSECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE**
2 **MEANINGS INDICATED.**

3 **(ii) “ACCOUNT” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 9.12–101 OF**
4 **THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.**

5 **(iii) “PARENT” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 9.12–101 OF THE**
6 **EDUCATION ARTICLE.**

7 **(iv) “PROGRAM” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 9.12–101 OF**
8 **THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.**

9 **(2) THE SUBTRACTION UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION**
10 **INCLUDES THE AMOUNT DEPOSITED INTO AN ACCOUNT ESTABLISHED UNDER THE**
11 **PROGRAM BY A PARENT DURING THE TAXABLE YEAR.**

12 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
13 1, 2024. Section 2 of this Act shall be applicable to all taxable years beginning after
14 December 31, 2023.