Private School Choice Students More Likely to Graduate College

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Private school may be the most appealing education option for some families, but also the most unfeasible. In Florida, low-income students can access a private education through Florida's tax-credit scholarship program, bridging the financial gap for families. A recent study from the Urban Institute found that students who enrolled in Florida's Tax Credit Scholarship program were more likely to enroll in and graduate from college, a notable accomplishment.

The Florida Tax-Credit (FTC) Scholarship program allows corporations to make donations to a scholarship funding organization, and then receive a credit toward their state taxes. Students must apply for the scholarship, and the organizations only distribute scholarships to applicants whose household incomes are no more than 185 percent above the federal poverty line. Students then use the scholarship to help pay for private school expenses. The FTC serves more than 100,000 students each year.

The Urban Institute study used data from the National Student Clearinghouse to track FTC students' progress into college, comparing them to non-FTC public school students who share a similar background and test performance history. The study found that of the students who began FTC in elementary or middle school, 57 percent of FTC students enrolled in college compared to 51 percent of non-FTC students. Of the students who began FTC in high school, 64 percent of students enrolled in college compared to 54 percent of non-FTC students. FTC students were also 10 to 20 percent more likely to complete college and graduate with a
bachelor's degree. More impressive is that the longer students were enrolled in FTC, the larger the positive effects. This private school choice program is helping thousands of Florida students receive a quality education and has lasting benefits.

A private school tax-credit scholarship program is one aspect of a larger school choice agenda that is bringing about exciting results for Florida students. This success should encourage Missouri to implement a private-school choice option, and give our students a greater opportunity for success.

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Abigail Burrola graduated from Azusa Pacific University with a bachelor's degree in political science in 2018.

Links

[1] https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/school-choice/private-school-choice-students-more-likely-graduate-college

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