

School Choice*:

A Parent Decision Checklist

If you are considering a public or private school placement for your child with intellectual or developmental disabilities including autism, below are some questions to help with making a decision.

1. Are you prepared to give up some/all of your IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) rights?
2. Do you have schools to choose from in a reasonable proximity to your home?
3. Can you afford to pay the difference between the voucher amount and the full cost of tuition, or does the school offer scholarships for which your child would qualify?
4. Does your child not need, or can you independently afford to pay for, special education and related services?
5. Can your child meet admissions requirements to the private schools?
6. Are you comfortable with the school's accountability requirements?
7. Will your child's disability increase his/her chances of being disciplined or expelled?
8. Are your only options segregated settings?

Checklist prepared by The Arc of the United States, June 2017

*President Trump's budget expands school choice (or portability of education funds) with a \$250 million school voucher program. Over time 1/3 of existing federal aid for education will transfer to such a fund. The questionnaire is to assist families to make a thoughtful decision. Over time, portability means the movement from federal funds to private schools from public schools and it could impact special education resources.