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Landmark education bill goes into effect, today
Open Enrollment law empowers parents

Salt Lake City – May 5th, 2008 – [House Bill 349](#), a landmark education bill that empowers parents to choose their child’s public school, went into effect today. Previous open enrollment laws gave parents public school choice but at the discretion of school administrators.

In one situation, a family gave legal custody of their daughter to her grandparents so that she could attend a neighboring high school that her doctors deemed would be a better environment for her delicate health situation. School administrators had denied the parents transfer request despite notes from doctors and the fact that she would be switching from an overcrowded school to one better suited to meet the child’s needs.

The passage of HB 349 is a culmination of a two year effort led by the Davis Parents Association and Parents for Choice in Education to improve Utah’s existing open enrollment policies.

“As a small grassroots parents organization, coordinating efforts with Parents for Choice in Education was invaluable to us,” said Randy Smith, head of the Davis Parents Association. “Their expertise helped make it possible for parents to meet with legislators face to face and make the case for improving open enrollment.”

HB 349 makes all public schools open to any Utah student so long as they have capacity as defined by each school district’s average class size. The bill also increases transparency by requiring districts to publish school capacity online and to grant requests without discrimination.

The bill [passed with overwhelming bi-partisan support](#). Only one legislator voted against it in the House. It passed the Senate 25 to 2.

“This legislation was sorely needed. Parents now have another option to find a school environment that works for them,” said Robyn Bagley, chairman of Parents for Choice in Education. “PCE is filling a critical gap in the education dialogue. This is just one of many education reforms that PCE will continue to advocate for.”

To learn more about stories from parents who will be positively affected by this bill, please contact Leah Barker.

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Parents for Choice in Education is a grassroots organization that advocates quality education for every child. As the leading voice for education innovation in Utah, we promote proven market solutions both within and outside the public school system.

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