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*2<sup>nd</sup> Place*

School is very important to me and my family. Without a choice in my education, I don't think I could ever achieve my academic dreams. My dad went to the University of Utah for a short amount of time before he dropped out, because of that he will do anything to help me get into college. Since I was three years old I have dreamed of going to Brigham Young University. At BYU they have very high standards; I've formed my school career around these standards, so I would have a better chance of getting a scholarship. Having a choice in my education would help me achieve my dreams.

My family and I have lived in Idaho for eight years. While living here I've attended four schools; the first two being public schools. I was at East Canyon for second grade, and I was a very advanced student. My principal did not believe in putting second graders in a "GT" program, so she gave me a fellow classmate to tutor.

My parents didn't believe this was fair, and I also wasn't learning anything new. So for third grade, they sent me to Birch Elementary, my second public school. While I was there I was given more advanced work, but still not enough to reach my full potential. So once again I changed schools.

During my third grade year my parents had heard about a different choice in education: Charter Schools. They loved the idea of smaller classes, advanced curriculum, and the focus of the individual needs of each student. My parents began to search for a charter school for my sister and I to attend.

My fourth grade year, Thomas Jefferson Charter School opened their doors. This is the school I attended for fourth through sixth grade. I absolutely loved it! I was being challenged, I was learning, and I loved my teachers. I could finally see that a BYU scholarship may be within my reach.

In seventh grade I came to Vision Charter School. I've loved it since the day I walked through the door. At VCS, I am challenged and given more once-in-a-lifetime opportunities than I would ever have at any of the other schools I attended.

Having this experience makes a choice in education even more important to me. Every student should have a choice in their education. Without a choice, I would still be in a public school, bored, and wanting challenged. I took an opportunity for a better education, and a higher chance to reach my dreams. Now I truly feel like I can reach my full potential and get my BYU scholarship.

In America we have the freedom to choose; so it only seems fitting to have a choice in your education. If you don't enjoy something, you're not going to succeed at it. Therefore a choice in education would give you an opportunity to pick an environment you can thrive in. Having a choice would make you more dedicated to your education.

Charter schools are the perfect example of choice in education. Charter schools are founded upon people that wanted a choice for their children's education. They are about each individual child's future. Coming to a charter school is a choice, which makes the environment a choice in environment.

I think having a choice is something everyone should have. Having students more dedicated to their education, can be a result from having a choice in education. A choice in education has helped me succeed, and I wouldn't want anyone to be deprived of that opportunity.