

EDUCATION
EDUCATION
Education



2017 National Summit On Education Reform

O. Robin Sweet
Executive Director & CEO
Gateway Academy - Phoenix, AZ



Gateway Academy

- Established in 2005 out of personal necessity.
- Serving Twice-Exceptional Students (Academically Bright and diagnosed with High Functioning Autism)
- Started with 6 students; Now 95 students on 8.5 acres.
- Our Students are complicated; bullied; and fragile.
- At Gateway, students are safe, heard & supported.
- 2011 - ESA Opened Special Educational Options for all Families of all Socio-Economic Backgrounds.
- ESA funds 90-100% of Tuition

Why Attacks on School Choice?

- #1 Reason – Misinformation:
 - Opponents Suggest Only The Wealthy Benefit.
 - ESA is taking Money from Public Schools.
- FACTS:
 - Any parent of a child with Special Needs; who has an IEP; and 100 days in a Public School - Qualify.
 - ESA funding is allocated to educate each *individual* child...not a particular school.
 - Public school funding of \$20,000 + for sped students goes into general fund NOT towards special education.
 - ESA's allow parents to that their child's allocated education dollars and enroll in a school that best serves their child's particular needs.