

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN ARIZONA

THE MOST IMPORTANT DRIVER OF GROWING MIDDLE CLASS PROSPERITY

Where we stand after more than 10 consecutive years of funding cuts:

K-12:

- The nation’s lowest paid teachers with a shortage of 4000 teachers
- 48th in the nation for per pupil spending in books and technology
- Facility funding cut by 90% - buildings & busses
- Overall funding reduced by over \$4.5 Billion

Higher Education:

- Among the nation’s largest budget cuts to state Universities
- Elimination of virtually all funding for Community Colleges and JTED (trade schools)
- Among the highest in-state tuition increases in the nation

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Our state legislature must affirm its commitment to follow the clear directives regarding Public Education found in the Arizona Constitution: Education must be properly funded by the state and made as free as possible. It is painfully obvious that Arizona’s state government has been abdicating its constitutional duty.

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The Atchue for Senate Campaign is committed to changing these unacceptable trends! Here’s what I propose:

Make Public Education a true state priority:

Our current state government considers Public Education to be an expense that must be minimized and privatized - rather than an investment for the good of all Arizonans. Public Education must be recognized as the single most important driving force for social, economic, technological and democratic opportunity. Education is the vehicle for low income and working families to nurture the hope for their children to have a better life. When quality education is available and affordable, everyone benefits.

Make Public Education a state budget priority:

Proper funding of Public Education is not a matter of “throwing money at a problem”. It is about making an investment in the future prosperity of our state - an investment in the future of our children!

My funding plan would immediately add up to \$1.5 Billion per year to K-12 funding without raising taxes (for revenue details please refer to the Arizona Economy Priority tab). We would be able to restore crucial facility and per pupil classroom funding.

My plan would allow the base pay for teachers to rise to \$50,000 per year - allowing recruitment and retention of needed professional educators. We need our classrooms to be staffed by quality, competent and motivated professionals! I firmly oppose use of less than fully qualified certified teachers as a means to fill vacant classroom positions. I fully support the right of teachers and all Arizona workers to organize and bargain collectively.

I oppose any expansion of the voucher (ESA) program beyond its original intent - assistance for special needs students. I also oppose extension of tuition tax credits for private schools - I firmly believe that public funding must go to public schools.

I will sponsor and support legislation that compels complete fiscal accountability for all Charter Schools - whether they are for profit or not, whether they are privately or publicly owned and operated.

I propose restoring higher education funding to pre-2008 levels. This money must be used to mitigate in-state tuition costs. Additionally, I propose a serious look at converting current Community Colleges to accredited 4-year degree schools - a means of offering students more affordable options.

If we, the voters of Arizona make our voices clear and loud - if we want our state government to do its job - we must elect representatives who support our priorities!

Let us know what you think!