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Look closely at GOP education plan

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Editor, Casa Grande Dispatch:

There's no doubt we've all seen election year posturing by incumbents more times than we can count. Certainly 2018 is proving to be a doozy! Arizona's public education crisis has been caused by Doug Ducey and the GOP-controlled state Legislature, yet now they claim to be the saviors. Let's take a closer look at their plan:

Public education funding has been cut by over \$1 billion per year since 2008. While teachers' pay is making headlines, facility and maintenance budgets have been cut by 90 percent — classrooms are being closed due to safety concerns and school buses are failing safety inspections at alarming rates. Support staff has been reduced to dangerous levels. Students are being stuffed into overcrowded and inefficient classrooms. Computer classes are being taught using 12-year-old technology and many schools use textbooks completely out of date. Ducey's plan does not fix any of this.

Ducey's plan, as proposed, is reliant upon a projected spurt in economic growth that is absolute pie in the sky. The plan does not identify any permanent funding sources at all. Additionally, his plan will cut funding for environmental and health services across Arizona. The lie of the GOP's commitment to properly fund public education is found in their unwavering corporate tax cuts and increased siphoning of public money to private schools.

Voters must take a close look at this obvious election year pandering. The GOP is pitting underpaid teachers against the full underfunding of Arizona's public education system. Their plan is flawed in substance and direction. There is no guarantee of implementation beyond election year smoke and mirrors. We were duped with Proposition 123, let's not fall for another gimmick.

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The writer is a Democratic candidate for state Senate in Legislative District 11.