



**Legislator Education Survey 2010**

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**1 In an effort to balance our state budget, legislators have recently reduced Arizona's K-12 and university/community school budgets by more than \$2 billion during the past two years. During this next session, legislators still need to address the structural budget deficit that remains. Which of the following best describes your approach to balancing the budget?**

<b>Answer</b>
Enact further cuts to K-12 and higher education funding as they make up a large share of the overall budget.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stabilize funding to education at existing levels until our economy recovers.
Find ways to recover the \$2.2 billion that was cut. Examine how state revenues are spent and whether the state collects enough revenue to meet its needs.

**Comment:** None of the answers above are totally what we need to do. The number 2 answer which I highlighted can only happen if we can reform and downsize other state funding responsibilities. First we need to refrom the education budgeting process it is too complicated, and it can be manipultated. Our economy is not going to recover for years we have to face this. We can think outside the box and find ways to get the money to the classroom return true local control and stop federal and state mandates.

**2 Do you support efforts to readdress Arizona's tax structure to alleviate the reliance on a fluctuating sales tax?**

<b>Answer</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No

**Comment:** But maybe not in the way you would like. Taxes must be fair and equal. Once you reach 60% of the citizens earnings being taxed you have successfully destroyed the private sector and production falls and the economy will collapse. We are close to the 60%. What we need to help education dollars is for the economy to recover.

**3 Arizona's current budget was devised using a series of cuts, borrowing, financial deferrals and the voter-approved temporary sales tax increase. Which of the following**

**fiscal measures would you consider supporting this year? (Please check all that apply.)**

Answer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An effort to close existing tax loopholes
Increase personal income tax
Enact a flat tax on corporate/individual income
Increase property tax
Eliminate tax credits (please specify)
Expand the sales tax to services
End tax exempt status for mining, etc.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Simplify the state tax code
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporate tax cuts
Ensure corporate tax parity (large companies to pay same share as small businesses; tax exemption via out-of-state holding companies prohibited, etc.)
I think the only effective budget solution would be to introduce further tax cuts.
I think our current tax structure is adequate and we just need to wait until the economy rebounds.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: You have left out the most important thing we must do. Reform state government.

**Comment:** Where does the money we need come from? The private sector. If you keep putting pressure on the private sector you will collapse the economy. We can not do tax cuts to take pressure off the citizens and maintain state budget at \$9 billion. We must also reform state government. It grew 32% from 2004 until 2008. Put some services back into the private sector. Encourage personal and family responsibility. Reduce regulations and fees. Big government is not sustainable Europe has found this out.

**4 A number of national surveys rank Arizona among the last in K-12 per-pupil funding. Arizona invests \$61 less per student than it did more than 20 years ago, according to the American Legislative Exchange Council. What do you think of this level of investment?**

Answer
Arizona spends too much on K-12 education. We need to enact further cuts.
This is an adequate level of investment. I do not think we need to invest more in K-12 funding.
Although I do not think this funding is adequate, I do not think we can increase funding for K-12 education at this time.
It is embarrassing to be among the last in the nation in K-12 education funding. As a legislator, I will work this fiscal year (2010-2011) to increase funding for K-12 public schools.

**Comment:** None of the answers above reflect how I feel. First the national surveys do not take into account the money we spend on school construction which is millions of dollars over the last nine years. I think this ranking is an insult to teachers inferring that Arizona's children get the worse education in America is that what we are saying? It is what our economy can bare in our state which has less private property to tax for education than other states because of Federal control of our land.

**5 Each year, more than \$60 million in Arizona taxpayer dollars are directed to School Tuition Organizations (STOs) for private school tuition through the tax credit program. What do you think about the current private school tax credit program? (Please check all that apply.)**

Answer
More tax dollars should be allocated to expand the private school tuition program.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The private school tuition program should be maintained as-is.
The amount of tax dollars allocated to the private school tuition tax credit program should be reduced.
The private school tax credit program should be repealed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The 10% processing fee that STOs are allowed to keep from donations for expenses should be reduced to a lower percentage. (Processing fees in Florida are capped at 3%.)
There should be income limits on the families who benefit from the private school tax credit program. The original intent of the program was to provide access to private schools for poor children.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I think any Arizona family should be able to take advantage of the tax-funded tuition benefits.
I don't believe we should be using tax dollars for private school tuition assistance.

**Comment:** Parents have the right to choose where their children are educated. They also pay the taxes that fund that education. What are we afraid?  
 New Zealand found that their education improved when they attached the money to the child and allow the parents the choice of where they use it. If Arizona did this I believe that the majority would still enroll in public schools because our schools are doing a good job.

**6 Do you believe reform is needed in our public education system? If so, which reforms do you support? (Please check all that apply.)**

Answer
No, reform is not needed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, reform is needed.
Yes, reform is needed but we need to establish adequate funding first.
I support the participation in a national standards program, i.e. NAEP.
I support increased charter school funding.
I support more teacher accountability.
I support the Common Core Standards created by the National Governors' Association and the state superintendents of education.
I support linking teacher pay to student test scores.
I support moving quickly to shut down failing schools.
I support creating more charter schools.
I support restructuring the "equalized funding" formula

**Comment:** Reform can be a positive thing that brings more dollars to the classroom.  
 The conversations that I have been having with teachers. Allow them more freedom to teach without so many mandates. Return to true basic traditional education. Improve reading by going

back to phonics.

Our scores have flat lined in Arizona, but I do not blame teachers I blame first society/brake down of families. I blame to much liberal/ national and state control. We need to replace the AIMS test.

**7 Some argue that we should move away from traditional public schools and transition to a system with more students attending state funded, privately-run charter schools and private schools with the aid of tax credits and/or vouchers. Do you support this plan?**

Answer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No

**Comment:** I think the more we allow freedom in our education choices and allow freedom in our schools to control their destiny the better education will become in Arizona. When anyone wants to keep the power then it hurts the over all objective.

**8 This year, legislators referred to voters a ballot measure to repeal First Things First, an early childhood education program with a dedicated funding source approved by voters in 2006. What do you support?**

Answer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> First Things First funding should be repealed.
<input type="checkbox"/> First Things First funding should be maintained in accordance with the original voter mandate.

**Comment:** If the voters approve re-directing this money to children healthcare programs I support this move. The sooner we all face the fact that we can no longer maintain the status quo then the sooner we will solve our budget deficit. Parents have the first responsibility to direct their children development.

**9 Arizona currently has some of the largest K-12 classroom sizes in the nation. Please check the statements you agree with below. (Please check all that apply.)**

Answer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom size isn't a crucial factor for student success--many other factors are much more important and we should focus our priorities elsewhere.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I think it would be more efficient if we increased classroom size along with teacher pay. This would attract better teachers and decrease the cost of running the school.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I think classroom size is an important factor for student success, but I don't think we can currently afford to increase funding to pay for the additional teachers and/or school facilities.
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom size is one of the most important factors for student success--we should be working to reduce class size as one of our top priorities.

If parents believe that classroom size is important for their child, they should consider enrolling their children in a private school with a classroom enrollment cap.

**Comment:** South Korea teachers must be in the top 5% of their college class. Their classroom size is 60 to 80 children but they are paid double the amount of American teachers. I would only approve of this for the higher grades not for K-5.

**10 Arizona has one of the highest high school drop-out rates in the country. In the last budget, all state aid for adult GED (General Education Diploma) funding was eliminated. Please check the statement you agree with below.**

**Answer**

- GEDs should be funded by individuals.
- The state should provide funding for GED programs.
- I will work to restore funding for adult GED services.

**Comment:** I saw a leaning center at Bylas and it is for their young people who dropped out. They can enroll and finish school on computer courses. There are many ideas that local communities could do to address this issue. Right now with the crisis we face as a state K-12 must come first.

**11 The Arizona Constitution has many sections impacting the state budget and education. If elected, which of the following articles do you most identify with? (Please check all that apply.)**

**Answer**

- The legislature shall provide by law for an annual tax sufficient, with other sources of revenue, to defray the necessary ordinary expenses of the state for each fiscal year. (Article IX, Section 3)
- No tax shall be laid or appropriation of public money made in aid of any church, or private or sectarian school, or any public service corporation. (Article IX, Section 10)
- The university and all other state educational institutions shall be open to students of both sexes, and the instruction shall be nearly as free as possible. (Article XI, Section 6: paragraph one)
- The legislature shall make appropriations, to be met by taxation, as shall insure the proper maintenance of all state educational institutions & shall make such special appropriations as shall provide for their development & improvement. (Article XI, Sec10)

**Comment:** 100 years ago our state government was very small and it did not take a large amount of taxes from the people. The goal is to keep government within the bounds of what the citizens can afford and what is truly the responsibility of state government and not families, individuals or the private sector. If parents pay taxes for the education of their children they have the right to direct where that education is to happen.

12 **If you have children, what type of school(s) did they/do they attend? (Please check all that apply.)**

Answer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional Public School
<input type="checkbox"/> Charter School
<input type="checkbox"/> Private School
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home School
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University/Community College/Higher Education
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A I have no children.

**Comment:** My children are all adults now and they are successful and good citizens. I feel that their education was the foundation of that success. I have 18 grandchildren and I want to improve, support and reform education in Arizona in a way that empowers teachers and educates our children.