



### 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?

#### Answer

Enact further cuts to K-12 and higher education funding as they make up a large share of the overall budget.

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:** Arizona's legislature must do the other half of its job, i.e. levy taxes to pay for the services that support societal health.

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

#### Answer

Yes

No

**Comment:** A reliance on sales tax also relies on population growth and home construction. Arizona's water limits will limit home construction and, by extension, limit Arizona's economic health if we do not reform our revenue sources.

- 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

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)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Expand the sales tax to services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	End tax exempt status for mining, etc.
	Simplify the state tax code
	Corporate tax cuts
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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: Return to the funding formulas from the late '80s.

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?**

<b>Answer</b>	
	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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:** A well funded public education system is basic to a healthy economy. Arizona will have to convert from a relatively low wage construction based economy to an economy that depends on educated and trained workers. We will not be ready with our existing education funding philosophy.

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.)**

<b>Answer</b>	
	More tax dollars should be allocated to expand the private school tuition program.
	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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%.)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
	I think any Arizona family should be able to take advantage of the tax-funded tuition benefits.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I don't believe we should be using tax dollars for private school tuition assistance.

**Comment:** Private schools are called private because they are just that; non-accountable to the public sector. They are undeserving of public money.

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

**Comment:** We must challenge ourselves to make public education relevant to each student. Most of my high school students long ago lost the connection between school and their lives. A reformed school system will have students coming to school because it's on a path that is important to them.

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

**Comment:** Education is too fundamental to the health of our society and to our democracy to be relegated to a "whatever you can afford" basis. Our most basic educational offering should be sufficient to prepare students for active participation in our society and to provide access to post secondary opportunities.

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

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
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Classroom size isn't a crucial factor for student success--many other factors are much more important and we should focus our priorities elsewhere.
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.
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 checked="" 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.

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.**

<b>Answer</b>
GEDs should be funded by individuals.
The state should provide funding for GED programs.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I will work to restore funding for adult GED services.

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.)**

<b>Answer</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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:** Public education is the basis for America's greatness. It's the basis for a healthy democracy. It's absolutely vital to the future of our society, to our grandchildren and to our grandchildren's grandchildren.

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

<b>Answer</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional Public School
Charter School

Private School
Home School
University/Community College/Higher Education
N/A I have no children.

**Comment:** When my son was in school in Arizona in the '80s, he attended a public school.