



**Legislator Education Survey 2010**

**Response for:** friendsforcatherinemiranda@yahoo.com

**Completed:** 7/11/2010 - 4:57 PM EDT

- 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.   |
| <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:** As we stabilize funding we need to make sure the funding that is for Education is put in the effective areas for student achievement.

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

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

**Comment:** In 2010 we have relied on sales tax by 54%. This hurts the working families and focus needs to be on structural balance of all 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   |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> An effort to close existing tax loopholes       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase personal income tax                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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.   |
| Simplify the state tax code  |
| 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: Structural balance of revenues  |

**Comment:** If the goal is not to structure all 3 revenue sources with a balanced outcome, then the efforts weaken towards a stable economy. Structural balance is key.

**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:** Not only will I work to increase funding for K-12 public schools, I will make sure I voice the importance of putting those funds towards areas that will create gains in student achievement; such as full day kindergarten, smaller classrooms, smaller schools (schools within schools), after school tutoring for struggling students and support for teachers performance.

**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.  |
| The private school tax credit program should be repealed.  |
| 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 there 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.
- I don't believe we should be using tax dollars for private school tuition assistance.

**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 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 checked="" 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:** Arizona needs an educational reform. It is important to have national standards that focus on preparing our students for our global economy. It is most important to have prepared teachers to teach these standards. Our teacher preparation programs at our universities need to be included when designing or reforming our educational system in Arizona.

**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:** Local control in districts is important.

**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?**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Answer</b>  |
| 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. |

**Comment:** Early childhood education is the foundation to every students success.

**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.)**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Answer</b>   |
| 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.                       |

**Comment:** Smaller classrooms are proven to be effective towards students acheivement especially in the the population of English Language Learners.

**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 Eduction 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>  |
| 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)

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