



[Print Report](#)

Legislator Education Survey 2010

Response for: nyw1@earthlink.net

Completed: 7/05/2010 - 11:05 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	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enact further cuts to K-12 and higher education funding as they make up a large share of the overall budget.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stabilize funding to education at existing levels until our economy recovers.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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: There are millions of dollars that are lost to the state through loopholes and our antiquated tax system. A budget is a set of priorities. We can and must do better for our public schools. Our future prosperity depends on it.

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

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

Comment: I support a bi-partisan effort to re-examine the entire state tax code. We should review the existing studies that have been done and create a system that is fair, stable, and realistic. We can start by eliminating some of the many loopholes in the tax code and reviewing tax credits that may be outdated or that have been abused. We must also work to eliminate any waste and become more efficient wherever possible.

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)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Expand the sales tax to services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	End tax exempt status for mining, etc.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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: There have been large cuts to utilites and mines that should be examined.

Comment: We need to be especially careful to enact measures that don't harm our economic recovery but that bring equity to our antiquated tax system. We should not, for example, punish homeowners by raising their taxes in an effort to assist businesses. We should look at ways to help high tech and small businesses without harming our schools. We should not promote tax breaks for out of state shareholders at the expense of our students. Ultimately, it is not in their best interest either.

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.
<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: Improving funding to our public schools is vital and it is my top priority. During the past 20 years, I've watched the state legislature enact continual cuts to our public schools while at the same time adding more unfunded mandates and red tape. We need a strong public school system to attract the businesses and workforce that will stabilize our economy. We must be able to offer a bright future to our young people.

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.
The private school tuition program should be maintained as-is.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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%.)
<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.
I don't believe we should be using tax dollars for private school tuition assistance.

Comment: I support a return to the original intent of the drafters of this legislation, which was to assist low income students. The system has morphed into something that was never contemplated by the creators of the bill.

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.
Yes, reform is needed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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: I think we can benefit from reforms and should participate in the ones that are right for Arizona, but we should not simply adopt other states' ideas without first inviting all parties to the table to discuss them and we must couple reforms with the funding needed to make them work. Enacting reforms without the paired funding is meaningless and frustrating.

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

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

Comment: Strong public schools are the foundation of our democracy and they are fundamental to the improvement of our economy.

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
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: If the program is in need of improved accountability, we should provide that, but I don't believe it should be dismantled.

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
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: I definitely support reducing class sizes but it will be very difficult to do this during the next fiscal year.

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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I will work to restore funding for adult GED services.

Comment: This was one of the most shameful and short-sighted cuts that were made.

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)
<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: We must not fail our children in the area of public education. We will be left behind as a state if we do not make the funding of our K-12 and university systems our number one priority.

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

Comment: Both of our daughters attended Amphitheater Public Schools grades K-12. They graduated in 2002 and 2005 and then attended both public and private universities. I'm proud to say that they both graduated with four year degrees and that I am very grateful to the Amphitheater district for the dedication to quality they have established.