



TO: GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENTS AND SUPERINTENDENTS

FROM: Chris Kotterman, Director of Governmental Relations

DATE: July 20, 2023

SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2024 POLITICAL AGENDA AND DELEGATE ASSEMBLY PROCESS

Thank you for lending your voice to every public-school student in Arizona. Enclosed you will find ASBA's Vision, Mission, and Core Beliefs; and the proposed 2024 Political Agenda.

The Legislative Committee reviewed and discussed every submitted proposal at its meeting in June. Most boards indicated support for items included in the 2023 Political Agenda, and the committee appreciates your overwhelming support of ASBA's agenda to advance public education statewide.

This year as was the case last year, we have presented the proposed Political Agenda as a marked-up version of the prior year's agenda. During the Delegate Assembly, rather than discussing every item, Delegates will be able to focus on just the changes, additions, and deletions to streamline the process. Amendments and new items can still be proposed during the Delegate Assembly using the same process as years past.

The Delegate Assembly determines the positions of the Arizona School Boards Association. Registration for Delegate Assembly is now open. You may register via the [registration page](#). **We look forward to seeing you at the Delegate Assembly on September 9th.**

The Delegate Assembly will be held in person, at the JW Marriot Scottsdale Camelback Inn immediately following the ASBA Law Conference.

**Please copy and distribute this ENTIRE packet to all board members and place the proposed 2024 Political Agenda on your next board agenda** for discussion and to provide any instruction to your district delegate as to your board's position on proposed agenda items. A sample board agenda item has been included for your reference. While all board members and superintendents are welcome to attend the Delegate Assembly, each member district has only one official delegate.

Delegate registration can be completed [online at this link](#).



**Core Purpose (Mission):**

We cultivate excellence in locally-governed school districts.

**Core Beliefs:**

- The basic life needs of children must be met for them to succeed.
- Meeting the unique educational needs of all students must be the foundation of our school systems.
- The governance of publicly-funded schools must lie with locally-elected and publicly-accountable governing boards.
- The responsibility for student success is shared by students, parents, governing board, district staff and the community.
- Public education funding must be broad-based, stable and at a level that assures all students are successful.
- Knowledgeable and professionally trained governing board members are fundamental for ensuring student success.
- Closing the opportunity and achievement gap is a moral and economic imperative that must be addressed to ensure all Arizona's students are successful.

# Report of the ASBA Legislative Committee

## Draft 2024 Political Agenda

### I) Adequately and Equitably Fund District Schools to at least the National Median per Pupil Funding

1. Maximize state funding for competitive salaries to attract, recruit, and retain talented teachers and staff, ~~including support for the AZ teacher's academy and efforts to~~ **INCREASING THE PIPELINE OF CERTIFIED TEACHERS**, increase the diversity of the teaching workforce, and for difficult to fill positions.

~~• Revise the School Finance formula to:~~

- ~~○ Provide a stable, dedicated revenue source less reliant on the general fund or annual legislative appropriation.~~
- ~~○ Provide dedicated school capital funding consistent with the constitutional requirement of a general and uniform public school system.~~

2. **PROVIDE CONSISTENT, DEDICATED SOURCES OF BASE FUNDING THAT EQUIPS ALL ARIZONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH ADEQUATE SUPPORT TO ADDRESS THE ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF ITS STUDENTS, INCLUDING:**

- (i)
- (ii) **(II) UP TO DATE CURRICULUM, TECHNOLOGY, AND CLASSROOM SUPPORT TO ENRICH ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND ENGAGEMENT;**
- (iii) **(III) STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF DEDICATED TO ENHANCE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS;**
- (iv) **EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES, GIFTED STUDENTS, AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS;**
- (v) **(IV) BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS;**
- (vi) **(V) ARTS EDUCATION; AND**
- (vii) **(VI) TRANSPORTATION.**
- (viii) **ENSURE THE FORMULA ADDRESSES THE UNIQUE FINANCIAL NEEDS OF SCHOOLS SERVING STUDENTS IN POVERTY AND IN RURAL & REMOTE SCHOOLS.**
- (ix) **FUND DISTANCE LEARNING AT 100%**

3. Amend the Constitutional aggregate expenditure limit to reflect current education funding levels and priorities via legislative referral to the voters.

4. Fully fund full-day kindergarten and include kindergarten students in the override calculations.
5. Advocate to preserve and protect the voters' original intent of Prop 301. Protect voters' intent in funding K-12 education and oppose legislation that attempts to supplant or divert additional voter-approved funding streams.
6. Index district additional assistance (DAA) funding for inflation.
7. Provide funding for new space before existing schools exceed their maximum capacity and become overcrowded and provide dedicated and flexible ongoing maintenance funding, ~~including~~ **ADVOCATE FOR THE SFOB TO SET A STANDARD FOR** replacement of buildings that have exceeded their useful life. Advocate for capacity standards that reflect the design of instructional space.
8. Eliminate unfunded mandates and administrative burdens.
9. Protect desegregation funding and return it to a primary tax levy.
10. ~~Conduct an~~ **FORMALIZE THE** exceptional student services cost study ~~to ensure students, receive adequate funding for the actual cost of their services, including~~ **TO DETERMINE ADEQUATE FUNDING LEVELS, INCLUDING FOR RURAL OR REMOTE AREAS, GIFTED STUDENTS, AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS.**
11. Adequately fund the cost of student transportation including adequate maintenance of school bus routes for **CTEDS AND** rural schools.
12. Provide full-time funding for preschool programs in the K-12 funding formula.
13. ~~Reform~~ **REPLACE** current year funding ~~to~~ **WITH** a system that provides districts ~~with~~ appropriate stable annual budgeting ability and technical reliability.

14. Prorate funding over the entire school year among all public schools that a student has attended during the year.
15. Give all districts the authority to provide affordable housing options to faculty and staff.

## II) Preserve and Strengthen Local Control

1. Ensure local control and flexibility in managing funds and programs, ~~when possible,~~ given the Arizona constitutional requirements of a general and uniform public school system.
2. Change “override/budget increase” language to better reflect what voters are being asked to support. Update requirements associated with school district voter-approved bonds and overrides to improve efficiency and permit more accurate presentations of estimated property tax rates.
3. Allow school districts ~~greater~~ FULL flexibility in the divestiture or use of taxpayer-funded assets.
4. Oppose legislative intrusion on school site budgeting decisions.
5. Maintain exclusive local authority over any measure that would propose to consolidate and/or unify any number of school districts into a larger district.
6. Support local board authority for student suspensions and to adopt open enrollment policies based on capacity.
7. Amend current statute to allow school board members to use the E-Equal system in addition to in-person signatures to appear on the ballot.
8. Oppose any legislation that intends to lessen or curtail the legal authority of locally elected school boards including their authority to approve curriculum.

9. **OPPOSE LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS TO BAN EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS THAT PROVIDE AN INCLUSIVE AND HISTORICALLY ACCURATE WELL ROUNDED EDUCATION.**

10. Modify the number of signatures required for CTED board to align with similar school board candidates.

### III) Improve Outcomes for All Students

1. Increase the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18 years or the attainment of a high school diploma or GED before the age of 18.

2. Continue reforming English Language Learner models of instruction to increase integration of English Learners and give schools flexibility and resources to administer them. Advocate for the repeal of Prop. 203 and replace it with research-based bilingual education.

3. Fully restore 9th and 13th grade CTE/CTED eligibility and funding to increase access to work-based learning and expand the window of opportunity students have to complete industry-recognized CTE programs.

4. Allow CTEDs to serve students through age 21 regardless of graduation status.

5. Support policy that recognizes, respects, and promotes teaching as a profession.

6. Defend against efforts to limit the free speech rights of school employees.

7. **OPPOSE REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND RESTRICTIONS THAT OVERBURDEN OR UNREASONABLY PENALIZE EDUCATORS AND SUPPORT STAFF AS THEY EDUCATE AND CARE FOR STUDENTS.**

8. ~~State standardized testing shall not be used for any purpose other than a year-over-year measurement of student growth in the tested subject.~~ Rethink and redefine the role and purpose of standardized testing and develop meaningful assessments and other measurable outcomes.

9. Support policy that protects school district employees and students from discrimination including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

11. SUPPORT LEGISLATION AND ACCESS TO FUNDING THAT WOULD ALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO OFFER SCHOOL MEALS TO ALL STUDENTS FREE OF CHARGE.

## IV) Require Public Accountability for Taxpayer Dollars Spent on Education

1. Establish financial and academic transparency for all institutions and individuals that accept public funds. **SEEK RECOVERY OF IMPROPERLY RECEIVED AND/OR EXPENDED PUBLIC FUNDS BY CHARTER AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS.**
2. Repeal any program that gives public funds for private schools, vouchers (Empowerment Scholarship Accounts) and private school subsidies (School Tuition Organizations) and prevent any future expansion.
3. Require comparative classroom spending audits for school districts and all other institutions that accept public funds and define “classroom spending” as both instructional spending and student support spending.
4. Enforce financial requirements and seek recovery of improperly received and/or expended public funds by charter and private schools and organizations.
5. Support policy that encourages all eligible voters to exercise their right to participate in elections.

## V) Arizona's Rural and Remote Schools

1. Ensure that students in Arizona's small, rural and remote schools are considered by policymakers alongside students in large metropolitan schools.
2. Equitably invest in technology ~~and~~ MODERNIZATION, reliable internet BROADBAND access ~~for all students~~, TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT CAPABILITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.
3. Protect rural and remote school districts from inequitable impact due to formula adjustments, INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION

## VI) School Safety and Security

1. Provide funding to individual districts to implement locally directed RESEARCH BASED school safety programs ~~AND as well as student~~ mental health and wellbeing initiatives.
2. Support policy that promotes social-emotional wellness as a critical component of improving social climate, safety and learning for all students and staff ~~AND PROVIDE FUNDING TO INDIVIDUAL DISTRICTS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY DIRECTED RESEARCH BASED SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAMS AS WELL AS MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES.~~
3. Arizona's school boards call upon all state, federal, tribal and local officials to address the causes ~~AND IMPACT~~ of increased self-harm and violence at K-12 schools.
4. Arizona's school boards call upon all state, federal, tribal and local officials to address the causes ~~AND IMPACT~~ of increased gun violence directed at K-12 schools.
5. Advocate for funding and programming to engage and support families and caregivers in culturally relevant and appropriate ways



## VII) FEDERAL ADVOCACY

1. ADVOCATE FOR FEDERAL AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE FOR BUS ROUTES ON TRIBAL LAND
2. ADVOCATE FOR FULL FUNDING OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)
3. OPPOSE EFFORTS THAT WOULD REDUCE OR INTERRUPT IMPACT AID FUNDING TO ARIZONA SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT RECEIVE IT.

# Model Governing Board Agenda Items

Model agenda item for selection of district delegate (may be consent if no discussion required)

1. Consideration and possible action to appoint [NAME] to represent [DISTRICT NAME] as the district delegate to the Arizona School Boards Association delegate assembly to be held on September 9, 2023.

Model agenda item for board consideration of the draft political agenda in general session

1. Governing Board to discuss and may consider action to approve the Arizona School Boards Association's (ASBA) draft 2024 Political Agenda, and, direct the District's delegate to the ASBA delegate assembly to represent the Board's determined position.