

PAGE 1: Five Brief Questions on Conditions for Kids

Q1: Address

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Q2: Arizona depends on elected leaders to make smart policy decisions that will create the conditions for individuals, families, and businesses to succeed. During the Great Recession Arizona suffered a high rate of people losing their homes, job losses around the state, and huge drops in state revenue. The major ongoing statewide policy directions have been shrinking state government, cutting spending in public K-12 and higher education, eliminating safety net strategies for struggling families, and phasing in additional permanent tax cuts. What direction do you support going forward to promote economic health for families and the state? (Check all that apply)

Invest in roads, water supply, and other infrastructure.

Strive for Arizona to build a strong and educated workforce with revenue sources and investments in education and family support.

Comments

My top legislative priority is to develop a dedicated funding source for public education. Education is the key to advancing Arizona's economy. Investing in infrastructure, roads and safe sources of water throughout Arizona provides jobs, which in turn strengthens the safety net that struggling families rely upon.

Q3: Arizona stands out among the states in skyrocketing growth in the number of children living away from their families in temporary foster care due to abuse or neglect. The consequences include huge expense to taxpayers, an overwhelmed and unsustainable child protective services system, a shortage of foster families with children left sleeping in offices and living in shelters, and life-changing trauma for thousands of children. Do you support more focus on strategies like parent mentoring, child care assistance, family counseling and monitoring, and substance abuse treatment to prevent family crisis and help more children stay safely with their families?

Yes,

Comment

Despite reforms in the last few years, the child welfare system in Arizona is still unable to address the desperate needs of families throughout the state. The Department needs more case workers to adequately investigate the backlog of cases and the thousands of new reports that come into the agency every month. We have a chronic shortage of foster homes and the state has failed to provide needed services for at risk parents. I will support all efforts to improve accountability and effectiveness in the new agency. It is unconscionable that Arizona would continue to ignore those problems facing the most vulnerable in our communities.

2016 Candidate Questionnaire

Q4: Business CEOs, parents, and teachers across the state are calling for increased investments in public education. The Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) data show a 25% drop in total state funding for K-12 education per student – a drop of \$1,200 per student from 2008 to 2016. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), just over 1 in 3 eighth grade students in Arizona score proficient in math and fewer than 1 in 3 fourth grade students score proficient in reading. The new withdrawals from the State Land Trust approved by voters for ten years in Proposition 123 settle inflationary funding, but restore less than \$1 for every \$5 of what's been cut from the state budget for schools. Will you support increased investments in the state budget every year for: a) a workforce of qualified teachers with competitive compensation and quality professional development; b) classroom curriculum and supplies with updated textbooks and technology; and c) school building maintenance and repair to give students safe, clean, and functional places to learn.

Yes,

Comments

Every child in Arizona deserves a high quality, free education in our public schools. Education is not only a matter of personal growth and advancement; it is the No. 1 thing we can do to improve our state's economy. When elected I will fight to institute permanent sources of funding to attract qualified teachers, to ensure our students the materials they need to succeed, and to properly maintain and improve our neglected schools. If proposition 123 was supposed to be the first step, once elected I will demand steps two and three.

Q5: Reading proficiency by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success. In 2016, 6 in 10 Arizona third graders failed the AzMerit reading test. Reading success begins long before third grade. Many children start Kindergarten already behind their peers; poor children have heard 30 million fewer words in their young lives. The high cost of quality child care and preschool education put them out of reach for many hardworking parents (costs of up to \$8,000 per year or more). Often, the children who start out behind stay behind. Please indicate the strategies you would support to promote reading success: (Check all that apply)

Educational programs to help parents read and sing with their young children and prepare them for kindergarten.

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State funding to help working parents afford quality preschool and child care education.

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Professional reading coaching for child care teachers and elementary school teachers.

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An Early Literacy Grant Program for schools, child care, preschools and community programs to improve reading readiness.

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Comments

We owe it to our children to give them the greatest opportunities for advancement. Investment in early childhood education, with a focus on reading, has a proven track record of success. Once elected I will work with education experts to ensure our children have a wide range of programs that encourage the development of early childhood reading skills.

2016 Candidate Questionnaire

Q6: Arizona has cut taxes every year (except one) for the past 26 years. Tax cuts passed just since 2009 will remove \$900 million from the state budget every year when they are phased in. Tax credits, like tax cuts, are permanent because they require a 2/3 vote of the legislature plus the signature of the governor to reverse or reduce. Tax credits have been growing far faster than state revenue, the state's economy, or state investments in public education without any evidence that they have created a single job. The amount taken out of state revenues for tax cuts and tax credits is not available to invest in public district and charter schools. What are your priorities for tax policy?(Check all that apply)

Cap the growth in tax credits. ,

Take a time out from tax cuts to reinvest in public education.

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Adopt tax policies that make the system more fair for low and middle income families.

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Comments

Currently Arizona's tax structure is out of balance, with too many tax cuts going towards corporations and the wealthy, while the rest of us see only cuts to our services. Our economy cannot be built on the backs of our low and middle income families. When Arizona is 50th in per pupil funding and one of the top States in tax cuts our legislators have lost their way. When elected I will work towards balancing Arizona's tax formula so families will see funding towards education restored and investment in our infrastructure increased. We need a tax structure committed to the success of all Arizonans, not just those at the top.