“Results-Based” K-12 Funding Leaves Three Out of Four Students Behind

(Phoenix, AZ) – Two years ago, Governor Ducey and the state legislature adopted a new funding formula with $39 million going only to schools with higher test scores. Despite the inequities, they expanded the funding to $69 million for this school year.

“This funding scheme based only on test scores drains our precious resources without addressing the overall school funding crisis and without making a bit of difference for the children facing the biggest challenges,” said Dana Wolfe Naimark, president and CEO of Children’s Action Alliance.

The projections for FY 2020 reveal a funding plan that leaves most students behind and does nothing to close the achievement gap:

- This test-based funding reaches only 1 in 4 of Arizona’s public school students.
- The formula leaves less funding available to strengthen education in three out of four Arizona schools – students in more than 1,490 schools will be left out.
- 55% of students reached attend higher income schools.
- Test-based funding can be as low as $1,400 – making it nearly impossible to expand successful programs.

Because test scores change each year, no school can count on this funding from one year to the next. The inconsistency and convoluted requirements in state law make it hard for schools to invest these funds in education infrastructure.

“The Arizona Chamber of Commerce is talking about asking voters to raise our taxes to direct even more money to this lop-sided, test-based plan,” said Naimark. “But that is the wrong direction. Arizona students need new resources that every classroom can count on every year, with greater attention to the students who are struggling the most.”