



TO: GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENTS AND SUPERINTENDENTS

FROM: John Sparks, Legislative Committee Chair

DATE: July 6, 2021

SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2022 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 2022 Political Agenda.

The Legislative Committee reviewed and discussed every submitted proposal at its meeting on June 4th. Most boards indicated support for items included in the 2021 Political Agenda, and the committee appreciates your overwhelming support of ASBA's agenda to advance public education statewide.

This year, staff has decided to present 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 11th.**

The Delegate Assembly will be held in person again this year, at the JW Marriot Scottsdale Camelback Inn.

Please copy and distribute this ENTIRE packet to all board members and place the proposed 2022 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](#).

Report of the ASBA Legislative Committee

Draft 2022 Political Agenda

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

- Maximize state funding for nationally and locally competitive salaries to attract, recruit, and retain talented teachers and staff, including **SUPPORT FOR THE AZ TEACHER'S ACADEMY AND EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF THE TEACHING WORKFORCE, AND** incentives 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.
 - Ensure the formula addresses the unique financial needs of schools serving students in poverty and in rural & remote schools.
 - ~~Revise the funding formula to add funding for student mental health and well-being initiatives.~~ **FUND DISTANCE LEARNING AT 100%**
- Fully fund full-day kindergarten and include kindergarten students in the override calculations.
- 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, SUCH AS PROP. 301 AND PROP. 208**
- Index district additional assistance (DAA) funding for inflation
- Provide funding for new space before existing schools exceed their maximum capacity and become overcrowded, and provide dedicated and flexible ongoing maintenance funding, including ~~building replacement~~ **REPLACEMENT OF BUILDINGS THAT HAVE EXCEEDED THEIR USEFUL LIFE.** Advocate for capacity standards that reflect the design of instructional space.
- Eliminate unfunded mandates and administrative burdens.
- Return desegregation funding to a primary tax levy.
- Conduct an exceptional student services cost study to ensure students, including in rural or remote areas, ~~are being funded at the actual cost of their~~

~~services.~~ **RECEIVE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR THE ACTUAL COST OF THEIR SERVICES.**

- Adequately fund the cost of student transportation.
- Provide funding for preschool programs **IN THE K-12 FUNDING FORMULA.**
- Reform current year funding to a system that provides districts with appropriate stable annual budgeting ability and technical reliability.
- Prorate funding over the entire school year among all public schools that a student has attended during the year.
- Provide funding to individual districts to implement locally directed school safety programs as well as student mental health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Equitably invest in technology and reliable internet access for all students.
- ~~Adequately fund programs under exceptional student services.~~
- Provide funding for districts to improve student achievement by addressing social-emotional learning needs and create training programs for school staff in cultural proficiency and responsiveness.
- **GIVE ALL DISTRICTS THE AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS TO TEACHERS.**

Preserve and Strengthen Local Control

- 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.
- Change “override/budget increase” language to better reflect what voters are being asked to support.
- Allow school districts greater flexibility in the divestiture or use of taxpayer-funded assets.
- Oppose legislative intrusion on school site budgeting decisions.
- Maintain exclusive local authority over any measure that would propose to consolidate and/or unify any number of school districts into a larger district.
- Support local board authority for student suspensions and **TO ADOPT** open enrollment **POLICIES BASED ON CAPACITY.**
- Support policy that eliminates the use of corporal punishment in Arizona schools.
- Amend current statute to allow school board members to use the E-Qual system in addition to in-person signatures to appear on the ballot.
- **OPPOSE ANY LEGISLATION THAT HAS AS ITS INTENT TO LESSEN OR CURTAIL THE LEGAL AUTHORITY OF LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS INCLUDING THEIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE OR PRESENT CURRICULUM.**

Improve Outcomes for All Students

- Increase the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18 years **OR THE ATTAINMENT OF A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED.**
- ~~Enact research-based reform of the English Language Learner model of instruction that may include primary language literacy to improve student achievement that does not segregate English Language Learners from English speaking peers; integrates reading, writing and oral language instruction; and incorporates multiple assessment measures to demonstrate English proficiency.~~ **CONTINUE REFORMING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER MODELS OF INSTRUCTION TO INCREASE INTEGRATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS AND GIVE SCHOOLS FLEXIBILITY AND RESOURCES TO ADMINISTER THEM.**
- Fully restore 9th grade CTE/CTED eligibility and funding to allow students to explore career fields and/or certification completion.
- Allow CTEDs to serve students through age 21 regardless of graduation status.
- Support policy that recognizes, respects, and promotes teaching as a profession.
- Defend against efforts to chill the free speech rights of school employees.
- 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.**
- Support policy that protects school district employees and students from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Require Public Accountability for Taxpayer Dollars Spent on Education

- Establish financial and academic transparency for all institutions and individuals that accept public funds.
- Repeal any program that gives public funds for private schools, vouchers (Empowerment Scholarship Accounts) and private school subsidies (Student Tuition Organizations) and prevent any future expansion.
- 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.
- Enforce financial requirements and seek recovery of improperly received and/or expended public funds by charter and private schools and organizations.

- OPPOSE ANY MEASURE THAT WOULD RESULT IN FEWER QUALIFIED VOTERS FROM BEING EASILY ABLE TO VOTE OR REGISTER TO VOTE.

Manage the Impact of COVID-19 on Public Schools

- Hold school districts harmless for significant enrollment losses for school year 2020-2021.
- Provide flexibility in seat time and attendance requirements for school districts for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Suspend state standardized testing requirements for school year 2020-2021.
- Enact a moratorium on school letter grades for school year 2020-2021.
- Provide districts flexibility in teacher evaluation requirements and procedures.
- Regulatory relief in the event the pandemic continues to (or does so at a future date) interrupt the academic year.
- A state-funded program designed to bulk purchase sanitation supplies (i.e. PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.) for distribution to school districts & schools.
- Funding for increased expenses incurred due to COVID-19, including costs to meet the social/emotional needs of students.
- Technology modernization and accessibility to ensure students have the technology and equipment to use during times like these with the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- Unless a public emergency is declared, maintain the right of school districts to close for safety concerns related to COVID-19 outbreak in the community.
- Protect public schools from liability if a community member contracts COVID-19 while engaged in school-sponsored activities.

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 on September 11, 2021.

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 2022 Political Agenda, and, direct the District's delegate to the ASBA delegate assembly to represent the Board's determined position.

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.