



The current majority at the Arizona Legislature believe that voters elected them to cut government—including K-12 education. With this belief as their mantra, the AEA’s “wins” are most categorized by those issues we were able to defeat in the legislative process by communicating with legislators and Governor Brewer’s office and testifying in committee hearings. If the AEA had not been present at the legislature, things would have looked much different for this current school year.

### **2011 Legislative Session Victories**

- Increased available funding to the Classroom Site Fund (Proposition 301 dollars) for the 2011-2012 school year so that the budget capacity is \$120 per student instead of the \$94 per student level. [Enacted SB1263]
- Prevented a bill from passing that would have tied Classroom Site Fund monies (Prop 301) so that performance pay dollars would be based on a scale where 50% was determined by student test scores on AIMS, 25% by academic programs and 25% by teacher evaluations. [Defeated SB1603]
- Preserved the right of retirees, current school employees, and future school employees to receive a permanent benefit increase to their pension. As introduced, the bill would have eliminated the ability for the Arizona State Retirement System to ever give a permanent benefit increase (similar to what some may know as a COLA). [Defeated HB2726]
- Defeated a bill that required all school employee’s salaries and benefits to be posted on the Arizona Department of Education’s website. [Defeated SB1209]
- Prevented additional unfunded mandates placed onto school districts such as a bill that would have required school districts to have a reading coach at every school but not provided any funding to hire these professionals. [Defeated HB2419]
- Defeated HB2219 as introduced which would have required each county to have a maximum of six school districts, thus forcing unification/consolidation statewide. This bill would have also required a statewide textbook adoption.
- Defeated two bills which would have required school district officials to serve in the capacity of a federal immigration officer by reporting on the number of students who couldn’t provide lawful residence. School districts would have state aid funding withheld for failure to comply. [Defeated SB1407 and SB1611]
- Implemented an alternative contribution rate for those who return to work. The AEA got language onto the pension reform bill that requires employers of those who hire retired employees (like Smart Schools and ESI) to pay an

alternative contribution rate to the ASRS. This will allow the retirement system to remain solvent and not increase the contribution rate of current workers to compensate for those who return to work. [SB1609]

- Defeated an attempt to change the normal retirement age so that the only way a person could retire would be at 62 years of age plus 10 years of experience. This would have required a school employee who started working at the age of 22 to work for 40 years before they could reach retirement age. [Defeated HB2726]
- Defeated SB1467 as introduced which would have required school boards to allow guns on campus.
- Passed a bill to allow districts the ability to go before their voters to extend their school bond length from six to 10 years. [Enacted SB1263]
- Increased the bonding capacity for already approved bonds from 5% to 10% for elementary and high school districts and from 10% to 20% for unified districts. [Enacted SB1263]
- Defeated SCR1032 which was a ballot referral that required 60% approval of any new taxes or bonds and override elections.
- Defeated HB2636 which would have created a flat tax system with numerous exemptions that would have forced school employees to pay more for goods and services while the rich got a tax break.
- Defeated numerous TABOR bills (HB2707, SB1231, SCR1019 and SCR1026) which would have locked in the state's expenditures at this recession level thus making it near impossible to ever provide additional funding to public education.
- AEA encouraged Governor Brewer to veto two bills that diverted taxpayer dollars to private schools. Governor Brewer vetoed both of them—HB2581 and SB1186.