

2020 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY AGENDA

Goals

ADVANCE SOUND EDUCATION POLICY supporting high standards for teaching and learning and ensuring access to a high-quality education for all Arizona students. Commit to the recruitment and retention of professionally trained and certified educators for all schools.

RESTORE NECESSARY FUNDING for public education and fully invest in the future of Arizona's children.

ADVOCATE FOR FAIRNESS AND RESPECT of the education profession and all public education employees.

PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN A SECURE RETIREMENT system for current, retired, and future school employees.

Quality Teaching and Learning

AEA advocates for policies that:

- Promote a statewide systemic approach to quality teaching and learning, including highly effective educator preparation programs and certification; professional development; mentoring and induction; career development pathways; and compensation structures.
- Promote equitable access to social-emotional learning for all students through curriculum and training for educators.
- Provide funding to meet the social and emotional needs of all students.
- Support legislation declaring instruction as the primary duty of teachers.
- Recognize educators as professionals and ensure them the autonomy to deliver a flexible curriculum and make instruction-based decisions to meet the needs of their students.

Public Education Funding

AEA advocates for policies that:

- Attract and retain a workforce of certified employees with sufficient and immediate salary increases that will create competitive pay with neighboring states.
- Education Support Professionals (classified staff) must receive compensation that reflects a livable wage and must be competitive with similar jobs in the private sector.
- Establish permanent salary structures for all public school employees which includes annual raises.
- Restore \$1 billion in revenue to provide immediate, sustainable, and significant public education funding (FY2021) focused on equity and closing the opportunity gap for all students to meet the needs of our public schools in Arizona as follows:
 - a. Provide critical resources for classrooms such as support services, supplies, updated textbooks, and technology.
 - b. Fund school building maintenance and repairs to give students safe, clean, and functional places to learn.
 - c. Provide adequate funding for smaller class sizes, lower caseloads, and appropriate student-to-school counselor ratios based on current research recommendations.

- d. Invest in school readiness via early childhood and pre-Kindergarten through third-grade educational programs, including state-funded, full-day kindergarten.
 - e. Provide career and technical education funding to assist students in preparing to enter the workforce.
- Prevent the Arizona Legislature and Governor from diverting revenue away from public schools through tax cuts, tax credits, and vouchers (i.e., empowerment scholarship accounts and student tuition organizations) until per-pupil funding reaches the national average.
 - Secure affordable, quality healthcare coverage for all public school employees.

Fair Employment Rights

AEA advocates for policies that:

- Strengthen educator employment rights relating to fair contract practices and dates, Reduction In Force (RIF) process, salaries, nonrenewal notices, and association work.
- Establish due-process rights for Education Support Professionals (classified employees).
- Remove high-stakes consequences tied to mandated assessment data, including: Local Education Agency (LEA), school, and individual ratings of effectiveness (i.e., A-F accountability system and results-based funding); evaluations; compensation structures; and personnel decisions.
- Provide for fair and relevant evaluation systems that:
 - a. include educator input and a clear appeal process;
 - b. support professional development and growth;
 - c. promote quality teaching and learning; and
 - d. use various data points that reflect the course of instruction.

Retirement System

AEA advocates for policies that:

- Sustain and protect a Defined Benefit plan for public employees.

The 2020 AEA Legislative and Policy Agenda is approved by the AEA Board of Directors. It is based on the public policy statements in the AEA Legislative Platform adopted by the 2019 AEA Delegate Assembly