

September 6, 2022

The Honorable Doug Ducey
Governor, State of Arizona
Arizona Capitol
1700 W. Washington Street – 9th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: Fixing the Aggregate Expenditure Limit (AEL)

Governor Ducey:

As the superintendents for traditional community school districts in the Great State of Arizona, we are writing this letter to thank you for your efforts to pass the recent state budget. Your support of an increase to public education is very much appreciated. Your leadership in creating a budget that provided for local control, an increase to the base support level, increases in funding for our most vulnerable populations, increases in funding for school safety and funding for upgrades to school district infrastructure is making a positive difference for our students, staff and local community.

The purpose of this letter is to request the last step presented to you and the Legislature this past Spring, be addressed. We respectfully request this final step be addressed by you through a call for a special session to fix the Aggregate Expenditure Limit (AEL) issue facing traditional community school districts.

The passage of the state budget has positioned our school districts to implement some of the following:

- Across the state, many certified teachers received significant pay raises. This has resulted in many districts starting and average salaries becoming competitive.
- In anticipation of the minimum wage increase, many school districts will use these funds to increase support staff pay at minimum to comply with the legal required increase.
- Dedicated funding for the completion of capital projects that will address district infrastructure, including broadband.
- Continued work to increase school safety through capital projects and additional SROs.

We respectfully ask that **a special session be called prior to the general election** with the purpose of fixing the AEL. Specifically we would ask that **the AEL be lifted for one more year**. The legislature should provide schools relief from the AEL until voters reset the AEL.

The current estimated impact to the school districts if an AEL fix is not enacted, would be a budgetary cut in excess of \$1.3 billion. As some of the largest employers in our respective communities these cuts would devastate our local economies and the families in our communities, not to mention the aggregate effect on the State economy.

Our goal as K-12 educational leaders is to work with you and the Legislature to ensure that the Arizona economy remains strong and workforce development remains a major focus in the state. This funding was allocated and passed by the Legislature, and subsequently developed into and adopted as a budget by school boards. Addressing the AEL will help K-12 public education continue to support the strong

economic growth in Arizona, use the state budget to address key educational challenges, and promote student achievement, through the implementation of school district budgets.

In closing, your passage of the recent state budget is very much appreciated. This demonstrates a desire by our state to invest in public education which will build and support a strong economy. Please feel free to reach out to us regarding the positive impact of the state budget on our school districts and the potential negative impact on our districts if the AEL issue is not addressed. We are ready and committed to work with you and the Legislature in a bipartisan manner to fix the K-12 public education AEL issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Robbie Koerperich, Holbrook USD
Dr. Barbara Remondini, Wickenburg USD
Dr. Mary Kamerzell, Catalina Foothills USD
Mr. David Verdugo, Santa Cruz Valley USD
Ms. Linda Gibson, Payson USD
Dr. Scott Menzel, Scottsdale USD
Dr. Kevin Stoltzfus, Flowing Wells USD
Dr. Greg Wyman, J.O. Combs USD
Mr. Cole Young, Mohave Valley ESD
Ms. Dawn Dee Hodge, Coolidge USD
Dr. Lupita Hightower, Tolleson ESD
Dr. Kevin Mendivil, Tempe UHSD
Dr. Jeff Sprout, Laveen ESD
Mr. David Embrey, Concho ESD
Dr. Roger Freeman, Littleton ESD
Mr. James Sheldahl, Yuma ESD
Dr. Anna Battle, Casa Grande UHSD
Mr. Shad Housley, Vernon ESD
Mr. Ron Tenney, Heber-Overgaard USD
Dr. Troy Bales, Paradise Valley USD
Dr. Dan Streeter, Marana USD
Ms. Lisa Jameson, Wellton ESD
Dr. Tracey Lopeman, Maricopa USD
Mr. Allen Rogers, Picacho ESD
Mr. A.J. Taylor, Safford USD
Dr. Carolyn Stewart, Bullhead City SD
Mr. Stephen Estatico, Superior USD
Mr. Kenny Hayes, Patagonia ESD/UHSD
Dr. Rebecca Stone, Lake Havasu USD
Mr. Kevin St. John, Show Low USD
Dr. Shannon Goodsell, Window Rock USD
Dr. Mario Ventura, Isaac ESD
Ms. Nora Gutierrez, Tolleson UHSD
Mr. Jerry Gastellum, Sunnyside USD
Ms. Shanna Johnson, Mohawk Valley SD
Mr. Todd Jaeger, Amphitheater USD
Dr. LeeAnn Aguilar-Lawlor, Cartwright ESD

Mr. Hollis Merrell, Snowflake USD
Dr. Melissa Sadorf, Stanfield ESD
Dr. Manuel Valenzuela, Sahuarita USD
Mr. Joe Howard, Prescott USD
Dr. Kristi Wilson, Buckeye ESD
Ms. Gina Thompson, Yuma UHSD
Dr. Mike Fisher, Saddle Mountain USD
Dr. Lori Shough, Liberty ESD
Ms. Denise Rogers, Toltec ESD
Mr. Jerry Jennex, Globe USD
Ms. Jodi Gunning, Litchfield ESD
Dr. Dawn Foley, Higley USD
Dr. Adam Leckie, Casa Grande ESD
Mr. Bryan Fields, Joseph City USD
Ms. Rochelle Pacheco, Ray USD
Dr. Jennifer Cruz, Pendergast ESD
Mr. Quincy Natay, Chinle USD
Mr. Slade Morgan, Round Valley USD
Dr. Amy Fuller, Red Mesa USD
Ms. Laurie Doering, Crane ESD
Dr. Donna Lewis, Creighton ESD
Dr. Steve Bebee, Buckeye UHSD
Dr. Lynette Michalski, Sacaton ESD
Mr. Chris Knutsen, Florence USD
Mr. Tom Woody, Bisbee USD
Mr. Kyle Patterson, St. Johns USD
Mr. Matthew Petersen, Thatcher USD
Ms. Nora Ulloa, Fowler ESD
Mr. Jeff Gregorich, Hayden Winkelman USD
Dr. Michael Wright, Blue Ridge USD
Ms. Kristin Turner, Paloma ESD
Mr. Peter Dwyer, Red Rock ESD
Ms. Christine Morris, Union ESD
Dr. Paul Stanton, Washington ESD
Mr. John Carruth, Vail USD
Ms. Ana Samaniego, Douglas USD
Mr. Daniel Erickson, Bowie USD

Ms. Sherry Dorathy, Miami USD
Dr. David Dumon, Altar Valley ESD
Dr. Curtis Finch, Deer Valley USD
Dr. Kim Guerin, Madison ESD
Dr. Betsy Hargrove, Avondale ESD
Mr. John Scholl, Chino Valley USD
Ms. Risha Vanderway, Mayer USD
Christopher Bonn, Baboquivari USD
Mr. Kyle Hart, Pearce ESD
Dr. Laura Noel, Somerton ESD
Dr. Tim Richard, Colorado River UHSD
Dr. Chad Geston, Phoenix UHSD
Mr. John Warren, Topock ESD
Ms. Katie Ast, Pine Strawberry ESD
Mr. Dennis Dearden, Sedona-Oak Creek JUSD
Mr. Lemual Adson, Kayenta USD
Mr. Kim Pearce, Sanders USD
Mr. Marty Bassett, Pinal County RSD
Mr. Micah Mortensen, Benson USD
Mr. Eldon Merrell, Duncan ESD
Mr. Ron Aquallo, McNeal ESD
Mr. Timothy Mayclin, Naco ESD
Mr. Mark Yslas, Agua Fria UHSD
Mr. Robert Devere, Tombstone USD
Mr. Jaime Rivera, Riverside ESD
Dr. Cain Jagodzinski, Fountain Hills USD
Mr. Ernest Rose, Wilson ESD
Mr. Steve Hicks, Camp Verde USD
Mr. Danny Brown, Clarkdale-Jerome ESD
Mr. Steve King, Cottonwood-Oak Creek ESD
Dr. Frank Narducci, Chandler USD
Mr. Jim Dean, Dysart USD
Dr. Laura Tjoenjes, Kyrene ESD
Mr. Nate Dettmar, Murphy ESD
Dr. Brian Capstran, Glendale UHSD
Dr. Jason Reynolds, Peoria USD
Mr. Robert Aldridge, Palo Verde ESD
Ms. Heather Wallace, Apache Junction USD
Ms. Angela Jangula, Canon ESD
Dr. Bryce Anderson, Page USD
Mr. Kyle Hart, Valley UHSD
Ms. Susan Rohrig, Bicentennial UHSD
Mr. Wes Brownfield, Chevron Butte TSD
Dr. Deborah Dennison, San Carlos USD
Ms. Leena Lacapa, Whiteriver USD

Ms. Connie Gover, Winslow USD
Dr. Greg Fowler, McNary ESD (77/82)
Dr. Aspasia Angelou, Nadaburg USD
Dr. Cort Monroe, Cave Creek USD
Dr. Cecelia Maes, Alhambra ESD
Ms. Stephanie Miller, Congress ESD
Mr. Mark Goodman, Fort Huachuca ASDDr.
Ms. Lizeth Esparza, Gadsden ESD
Mr. Christopher Maynes, Sentinel ESD
Ms. Susan Rohrig, Salome CSD
Ms. Darlene McCauley, Littlefield USD
Dr. Gabriel Trujillo, Tucson USD
Mr. Brad Sale, Parker USD
Mr. Rob Varner, Gila Bend USD
Mr. Chad Greer, Tonto Basin ESD
Mr. Chris Ostgaard, Pinon USD
Dr. George Barnes, Balz ESD
Dr. Greg Copeland, Antelope UHSD
Mr. Karl Uterhardt, Cochise ESD
Mr. Kyle Hart, Elfrida ESD
Mr. Dean Slaga, Cedar USD
Ms. Sherri Rosaliks, Palominas ESD
Dr. Eric Holmes, Sierra Vista USD
Mr. Kevin Davis, Wilcox USD
Mr. Michael Roberts, Osborn ESD
Dr. Quintin Boyce, Roosevelt ESD
Ms. Karen Ward, Beaver Creek ESD
Mr. Mike Westcott, Mingus UHSD
Dr. Scott Hagerman, Tanque Verde USD
Dr. Shane McCord, Gilbert PSD
Dr. Perry Berry, Queen Creek USD
Dr. Andi Furler, Mesa PSD
Dr. James Driscoll, Tempe ESD
Ms. Roxana Rico, Continental ESD
Ms. Cindy Segotta-Jones, Glendale ESD
Mr. Chad Turner, Arlington ESD (60/98)
Mr. Michael Penca, Flagstaff USD
Ms. Chrystle Nehmeyer, Oracle ESD
Mr. Kyle Hart, St. David USD
Mr. Justin Roberson, Maine CSD
Dr. Aspasia Angelou, Morristown ESD
Ms. Ruby James, Eloy ESD
Ms. Karli Wade, San Simon USD
Dr. Roman Soltero, AJO USD
Mr. John Truschke, Bonita ESD

Career & Technical Education Districts

Mr. Matt Weber, NAVIT
Mr. Joel Todd, CVIT
Mr. Bill Stiteler, MICTED
Mr. Tom Tyree, STEDY
Ms. Amy West, WAVE

Mr. Mike O'Neal, CAVIT
Dr. Brent Nielsen, CAVIAT
Ms. Kathy Prather, Pima JTED
Mr. Bob Weir, VACTE
Dr. Scott Spurgeon, West-MEC

County School Superintendents:

Ms. Jaqui Clay, Cochise County
Mr. Roy Sandoval, Gila County
Mr. Bryan Boling, Greenlee County
Ms. Jalyn Gerlich, Navajo County
Ms. Jill Broussard, Pinal County
Mr. Tom Hurt, Yuma County

Ms. Cheryl Mango-Paget, Coconino County
Ms. Donna McGaughey, Graham County
Mr. Steve Watson, Maricopa County
Mr. Dustin Williams, Pima County
Mr. Tim Carter, Yavapai County

Arizona Association of County School Superintendents(AACSS)

Executive Directors:

Mr. Howard Carlson, GPEMC/AZEMC
Dr. Paul Tighe, ASA
Mr. Kevin Imes, Arizona Career and Technical Education District Consortium

Mr. Wes Brownfield, ARSA
Mr. Brian Mee, AASBO