

## AzPHA Supports Invest in Ed Initiative

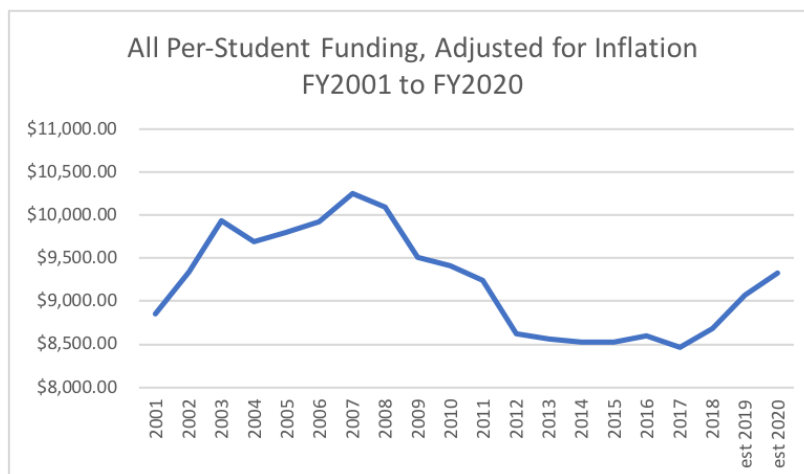
### The Role of the Education System in Promoting Public Health Goals

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the direct contact and amount of time schools have with 95 percent of our nation's children and youth make them critical in promoting student health and safety and helping them to establish lifelong health patterns.<sup>1</sup> The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found that student connection to adults at school is strongly positively correlated with reductions in violence, substance-use, emotional distress and pregnancy.<sup>2</sup>

Adult health status is directly associated with higher educational levels, regardless of income.<sup>3</sup> Children who do not learn to read in the first few grades, who read poorly, or who are retained in grade more than once are more likely than their peers to be drawn into a pattern of risky behaviors.<sup>4</sup> People who acquire more education not only are healthier and practice fewer health risk behaviors, but their children also are healthier and practice fewer health risk behaviors.<sup>5</sup>

### The Need for Increased Funding for Education in Arizona

According to 2020 U.S. Census data, Arizona spent \$8,239 per pupil in FY2018 (federal, state and local sources) as compared to the U.S. average of \$12,612.<sup>6</sup> The chart below displays the trend in Arizona public education funding over the past two decades (all sources, in 2007 dollars). Total funding has recently begun to approach levels in the early years of the recession but **has not reached the funding level of 2007.**<sup>7</sup>



(Data from Joint Legislative Budget Committee staff)

One of the greatest impacts of inadequate funding is inadequate pay for teachers and Arizona ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation for elementary teacher pay and 49<sup>th</sup> for secondary teacher pay.<sup>8</sup> Chronic underfunding and inadequate pay for staff translate into underserved students:

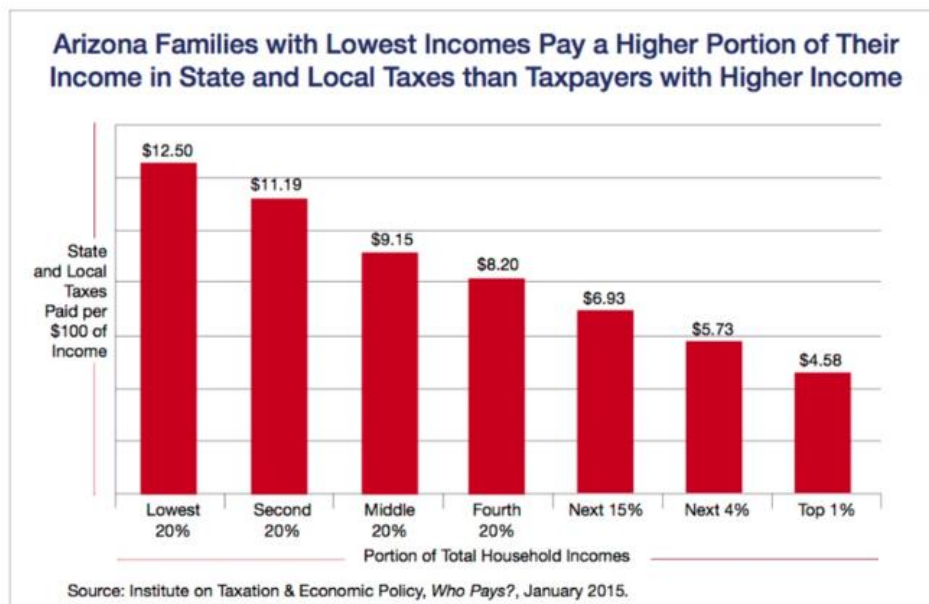
- 1800 unfilled teacher vacancies (Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association, December 2019)
- Largest class sizes in the nation
- Over 3000 teachers not meeting standard requirements, for example, not certified
- Highest student to counselor ratio in the nation with 903 to 1
- Enough nurses to serve only one-third of schools<sup>9</sup>

### Invest in Ed Initiative

The Invest in Ed Initiative, supported by education, health, small businesses, faith and civic groups, raises revenue for K-12 education by creating a dedicated, voter-protected fund. Funds raised must be spent according to the following requirements:

- 50 percent for hiring and pay increases for teachers and classroom support personnel including counselors and nurses
- 25 percent for hiring and pay increases for student support services personnel, including classroom aides, school safety and student transportation
- 10 percent for teacher mentoring and teacher retention
- 12 percent for Career and Technical Education vocational training programs
- 3 percent for the Arizona Teachers Academy for scholarships<sup>10</sup>

The Initiative generates necessary revenue through a 3.5 percent surcharge on earnings over \$250,000 for single filers or on earnings over \$500,000 for married filers. The surcharge is applied only after deductions, on taxable income. The vast majority of Arizonans, 99 percent, including the average small business owner, lawyer, doctor and dentist will **not** pay this surcharge. Only the top one percent of earners will contribute. The federal tax cuts of 2017 saved these highest earners over \$47,000 on average.<sup>11</sup> This method of revenue generation avoids further negative impact on low wage earners, who pay a higher portion of their income in state and local taxes, as illustrated in the following chart.



<sup>1</sup> *About CDC Health Schools*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2019., <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/about.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Blum, Robert. "Forward." *Prevention Science in School Settings*, edited by Kris Bosworth, Springer, 2015, p. v.

<sup>3</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. *The Condition of Education 2002*. NCES 2002–025, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. May 31, 2002. Online: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002025.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Tyson H. Kappan special report--A load off the teachers' backs: Coordinated school health programs. *Phi Delta Kappan*. Jan 1999:K-1. Online: <http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/ktys9901.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> Lowry R, Kann L, Collins J, Kolbe L. The effect of socioeconomic status on chronic disease risk behaviors among U.S. adolescents. *JAMA* 1996;276:792-97.

<sup>6</sup> Arizona Interfaith Network. "Education in Arizona." Education Civic Academy, 2020, Phoenix AZ.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> *Teacher Pay*. Expect More Arizona, 2020, [https://www.expectmorearizona.org/progress/teacher\\_pay/](https://www.expectmorearizona.org/progress/teacher_pay/)

<sup>9</sup> School District Employee Report, Arizona Department of Education, 2020, <http://www.ade.az.gov/sder/PublicReports.asp>

<sup>10</sup> *Where Will the Money Go?* Invest in Education, 2020, <https://investined.com/get-the-facts/where-will-the-money-go/>

<sup>11</sup> Arizona Interfaith Network. "Education in Arizona." Education Civic Academy, 2020, Phoenix AZ.