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The Myth of Education Cuts and Why Money Can't Buy an A+

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A popular myth claims we severely underfund schools in Arizona. For years, teachers unions and other education interest groups have led a successful “crusade” in the media and the state capitol to spread this idea. “We have reduced education funding levels to the point where they’re really not sustainable for our students and our teachers,” says Ann-Eve Pedersen, who is leading a voter initiative to raise taxes to increase education funding.

Here are some key facts about education spending in Arizona:

1. When you add up all funding sources, Arizona now spends \$9,233 per student, a 9 percent increase from 2000, after adjusting for inflation.
2. During the worst years of the recession, 2009-2011, operational per student spending only decreased 5 percent.
3. When you look back just a few years, from 2006 to 2011, per student spending increased by 10 percent, even accounting for the 5 percent dip during the recession. Federal data show that any cuts to operational dollars have been restored by funding increases.
4. This year alone, education spending in the state budget increased by \$28 million dollars.
5. Between 2006 and 2011, 183 of 218 Arizona districts experienced an increase in total per student spending. Only 31 school districts saw a decline in total spending during that time period.
6. According to the state auditor general, these consistent funding increases have not led to more money being spent in the classroom. In 2011, Arizona districts only spent 54.7 percent of their funds on classroom expenses, “a record low since [the auditor’s office] began monitoring classroom dollars 11 years ago.”

Moreover, higher spending per student hasn’t bought students higher test scores. Arizona student achievement has been virtually unchanged for 20 years. Today, nearly 3 out of 4 fourth graders can’t read at grade level. And, although our scores still rank near the bottom on many indicators, Arizona students score as well as or better than students in some states where per student funding is double or almost triple what we spend. In short, there is not a direct relationship between money and achievement.

Voters should reject the latest attempt to raise the state sales tax to increase education funding, and Arizona lawmakers should commit the state to reforms that are proven to increase student achievement.

Glossary on Education Spending

Keeping track of education spending is complicated. When schools and state offices report expenses, these offices account for spending in different ways. In this paper, “total” spending refers to money spent on K-12 education Arizona on all expenses, from classroom materials to buildings. “Total spending per student” or “total spending per pupil” refers to the total amount of money spent per student in all areas. For example, figure 4 on page 9 provides a graph of total spending per student across the U.S.

For the sake of simplicity, “current” or “operational” spending (or “current/operational per student spending”) refers to the amount of money spent on schools that does not include money spent on school buildings. Figure 1 provides “operational” figures for Arizona.

As you will see, Arizona’s operational spending per student has increased for decades, while total spending decreased during the recession. One reason total spending decreased during the recession is that school enrollment leveled-off and the state no longer had to spend as much on new school buildings (see figure 2). But inflation-adjusted federal data show that we still spend more per student, in current dollars, than at any point since 1969-70. Also, during the last decade, school districts decreased the percent of funds spent specifically in the classroom both when total spending was increasing (from 2003 to 2007) and decreasing (2007 to 2011). So no matter if the total amount spent on schools was going up or down, fewer dollars were making it to the classroom as a result of decisions made by school districts.

Introduction

Arizonans are used to the debate over how much money we should spend on public schools. With another sales tax hike on the electoral ballot this fall, voters have now been asked three times in the past 12 years to raise the sales tax to fund schools. Proposition 301 raised the state sales tax in 2000, and, in 2010, voters approved a temporary increase on top of Prop. 301. Today, education interest groups such as the teachers union and the school boards association have formed an alliance with highway contractors to sponsor another effort to raise the sales tax. This time it’s Proposition 204 and this increase would be permanent.

“The Quality Education and Jobs Initiative [Prop 204] asks voters this November to renew the one-cent sales tax approved by voters and dedicate 80 percent of the funding to education,” says the initiative’s website.⁴

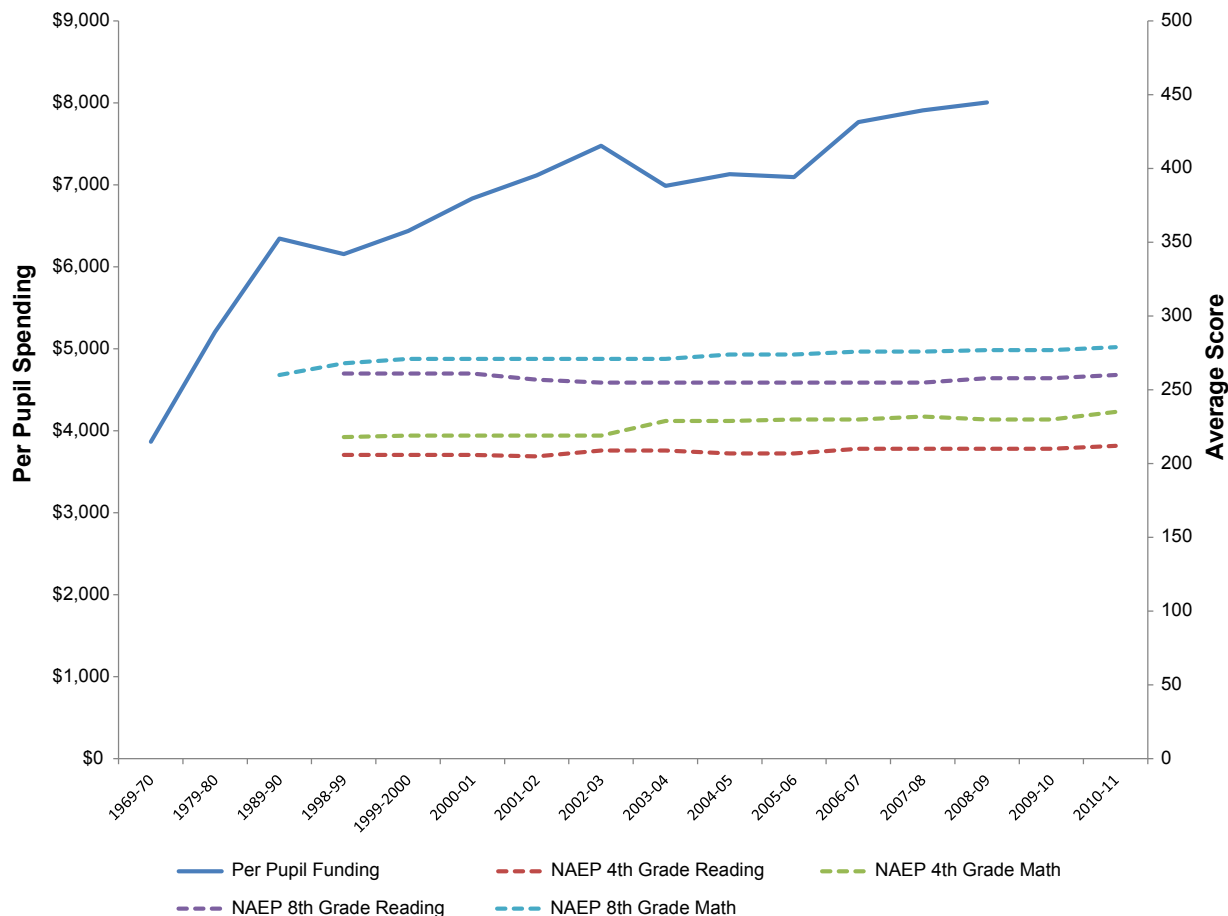
The 2010 sales tax increase (Proposition 100), which Prop 204 seeks to make permanent, was a short-term increase to help Arizona during the recession. The measure increased the state sales tax by one cent (an 18 percent increase) and directed a portion of the new money to public education. The Prop 204 would raise taxes again when Prop 100 expires in 2013. The Prop 204 also locks Arizonans to the tax increase and directs some of the revenue to highways and an assortment of other special interest programs.⁵

Have Arizona lawmakers really cut education funding, and do we need these tax increases? If so, can we expect to see higher test scores? More than 40 years’ worth of data on education spending say, “No.”

Operational per student spending in Arizona has more than doubled over the past 40 years, yet Arizona student average scores in reading and math have remained virtually unchanged since 1992 (see figure 1). Total inflation-adjusted spending per student has increased 9 percent since 2000. No matter how much more we pay for students to attend public schools, the system has not shut down ineffective programs fast enough or adopted innovative solutions quickly enough to change the achievement trend.

The evidence on education spending and student achievement is not what we would expect. When we spend more money on something, we expect a higher quality product. But in education, the state and federal data show that decades—nearly a half century—of funding increases have not translated into higher test scores. Every state in the United States has at least doubled inflation-

Figure 1. Inflation-Adjusted Arizona Operational per Pupil Funding vs. National Assessment of Education Progress Scores, Selected Years



Sources: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), “Digest of Education Statistics: 2011,” Table 194, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d11/tables/dt11_194.asp. See also The Nation’s Report Card, <http://nationsreportcard.gov> and, for a national comparison using a similarly styled graph, Andrew Coulson, “The Impact of Federal Involvement in America’s Classrooms,” Testimony before the Committee on Education and the Workforce, U.S. House of Representatives, February 10, 2011, figure 3, <http://www.cato.org/publications/congressional-testimony/impact-federal-involvement-americas-classrooms>. Missing year test scores linearly interpolated.

Note: NAEP = National Assessment of Education Progress; According to the NCES Digest, Table 194 notes, “Constant dollars based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to a school-year basis. The CPI does not account for differences in inflation rates from state to state.”

adjusted operational per pupil funding since the 1969–70 school year, yet reading and math scores among 17-year-olds have not changed since 1973 (more on the comparison in this report’s “A National Comparison” section).

Those who believe that we should spend more on the traditional school system must face the stark reality that “business as usual” is failing our students. This failure is particularly true in Arizona, where 74 percent—nearly three out of four—of fourth

graders cannot read at grade level.⁶ National and state data refute claims that education spending has been cut. Money is not the source of public education’s problems, and neither is it the solution to low achievement. Lawmakers and taxpayers must confront the evidence that funding has increased, and student achievement has not.

Education Funding in Arizona

The recession years of 2008–11 were difficult for families, businesses, and governments in the United States and around the world. In Arizona, sales tax revenues decreased nearly 14 percent in fiscal year (FY) 2009 and 10.1 percent in FY 2010, and schools were affected by “rollovers” where the state made the difficult choice to not pay schools as scheduled, thus suspending or skipping payments.⁷ During this period, schools did not see the regular funding increases that came almost uninterrupted for decades as shown in figure 1, but Arizonans should note that state enrollment has plateaued since 2008. Yet, as shown in figure 2, while total Arizona education funding has not returned to its peak in 2007, the state is still spending more—after adjusting for inflation—than in 2003.

Figure 2. Real Arizona Education Funding and Average Daily Membership, 2003–11



Sources: Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee, “K–12 Funding (M&O, Capital, and All Other),” FY 2003 through FY 2012 est. (available from the author) and FY 2004 through FY 2013 est., <http://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/allfunding.pdf>. Figures have been adjusted for inflation (2011 dollars).

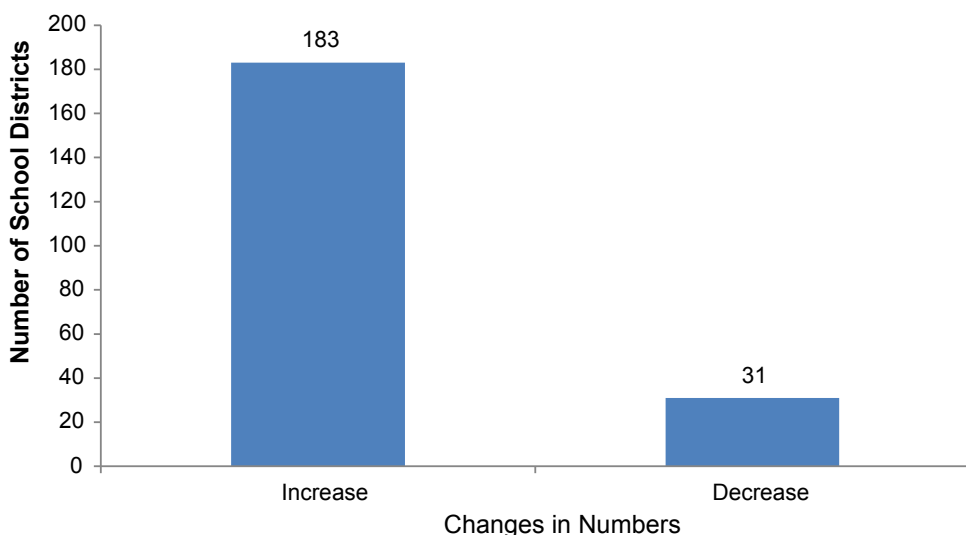
The Prop 204 website reports, “Arizona, unfortunately, led the nation in cuts to K–12 over the past four years, eliminating \$1 billion in funding.”⁸ Center on Budget Policy and Priorities (CBPP) research lists Arizona as first in education cuts from 2008 to 2013 (by a small margin over Alabama).⁹

Arizona and Alabama are not unique for the size of their reported cuts nor are they the only states that made such adjustments during the recession. Oklahoma also reduced education funding by more than 20 percent, and the CBPP reports that 35 states made cuts between 2008 and 2013. In the previous year’s CBPP report, South Carolina, California, Hawaii, and Arizona had made cuts of more than 20 percent from FY 2008 to FY 2012.¹⁰ Across the United States, schools faced cuts during the latest recession. As will be shown shortly by use of national data, those cuts in no way erase the funding increases that states and the federal government have consistently posted for decades.

In Arizona, education spending levels must be considered in the proper time frame. Operational per pupil spending (for all public schools, charter and traditional) decreased 5 percent between 2009 and 2011, according to Arizona’s auditor general. The same auditor’s report also found that if we look back just a few more years, operational per pupil spending increased by 10 percent statewide between 2006 and 2011.¹¹ Furthermore, 183 of 218 Arizona school districts experienced an increase in total operational per pupil spending during this five-year period, while only 31 experienced a decrease (in unadjusted dollars, see figure 3. For individual districts, see

Of Arizona school districts, 183 of 218 experienced an increase in total operational per pupil spending between 2006 and 2011, while only 31 experienced a decrease.

Figure 3. Number of Arizona School Districts with Changes in Operational per Pupil Spending, 2006–11



Source: Arizona Office of the Auditor General, “Arizona School District Spending, Fiscal Year 2011,” http://www.azauditor.gov/Reports/School_Districts/Statewide/2012_February/AZ_School_District_Spending_FY2011.pdf. Four districts had no percentage change in total per pupil funding levels from 2006 to 2011. See p. 18, 26, 90, and 229. See p. a-1: “Auditor General staff analysis of district-reported accounting data and AFRs, and ADE ADM for fiscal years 2006 through 2011.”

FICTION:

“Public school funding has been on the decline for over a decade,” says the Arizona Education Network.¹³

FACT:

Inflation adjusted total spending per student has increased 9 percent since 2000. Inflation adjusted operational and total education spending in Arizona increased from 2000 to 2007. Between 2007 and 2011 operational funding continued to increase, but total expenditures decreased. One reason total spending decreased during the recession is that school enrollment leveled-off and the state no longer had to spend as much on new school buildings. Federal sources show a 24 percent increase in inflation-adjusted operational spending since 1999-2000 (\$6,440 to \$8,006), a 30 percent increase since 1998-99 (\$6,155 to \$8,006), and a 107 percent increase since 1969-70 (\$3,869 to \$8,006).¹⁴ Federal data are the most consistent over time and provide spending data over more years than any other source.

As is the case with the national average, decades of funding increases are not matched with increased student achievement. Arizona scores on the nation’s report card have remained virtually flat for more than 20 years.

the appendix).¹² Turn the clock back even more, and *inflation-adjusted* federal data indicate that the decrease from 2009 to 2011 was merely a temporary interruption of spending increases that have been going on for more than 40 years (see figure 1).

The recession simply slowed the long-term trend of funding increases. Total per pupil funding for traditional schools leveled off between 2010 and 2011 (\$9,386 and \$9,412, respectively), according to the JLBC. Charter schools saw a decrease, averaging \$8,156 and \$7,834, respectively, per pupil.¹⁵

This funding plateau does not spell doom for Arizona schools. Rather, the state has experienced nearly a half century of dramatic funding increases, with no sustained improvements in student achievement. Claims to the contrary ignore those increases, along with stagnant test scores.

Lawmakers resumed year-to-year increases in education spending again in the FY 2013 budget. Education saw a net increase of \$28 million in total funding over the FY 2012 budget.¹⁸

Initiatives to raise the Arizona sales tax and claims that school funding has been cut distract from efforts to help students achieve and to give parents more choices in their children’s education. Some of those distractions appear in odd ways, such as the competing claims from media in several states that their state is not last, but second-to-last in education spending.

States Battle for Second-to-Last in Education Spending

One example of how debates about school spending direct attention away from the subject of school performance is the claim from state media sources that their state is 49th in education spending. Using data from the school years 2007–08 and 2008–09, newspapers in Idaho, Florida, and Arizona claimed (in stories printed as recently as 2011) that their state does not rank last in the nation in education funding, but 49th:

- “Idaho ranks near the bottom of the country in the amount of money it spends per student on public elementary and secondary education.... Idaho ranked 49th ... in 2007–08, according to the study from the U.S. Census Bureau.”¹⁹
- According to 2008–09 data, “Florida ranks 49th among the states in the amount that the state contributes to educate a child each year—\$3,449.”²⁰
- According to a 2008 survey: “Arizona ranks 49th in per pupil education spending,” says a headline from the *East Valley Tribune*.²¹

The claim for 49th place is not new. In 2005, reports from Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Utah said their state was next-to-last in education spending.²² An Oklahoma advocacy group even created a website called “49th Is Not OK” and owns the web address www.49thisnotok.org.²³ All of those states cannot share in 49th place without having exactly the same education spending levels, which they do not.

The implicit assumption is that if a state is “second-to-last,” students in the higher-spending states are better off. However, evidence shows that just because a state spends more than Arizona (or Florida, Idaho, Oklahoma, etc.) does not mean students in that state (or district) perform at a higher level. For example, in Washington, D.C., the average per pupil expenditure was \$19,889 in 2008–09, yet students in the nation’s capital scored last in the country in fourth grade and eighth grade in both math and reading on national tests.²⁵ Similar comparisons can be made with New York, where the per pupil funding level (\$17,918) is almost double Arizona’s figure, yet fourth grade Arizona students perform the same as their New York peers in math. Even in a generally high-achieving state like Connecticut, where taxpayers pay \$15,502 per pupil, black and Hispanic students do not score significantly different in math than do similar students in Arizona.

Such examples do not mean that money does not matter at all to schools. Schools, like any other institution or business, have expenses such as employee payroll, utilities, and buses. But evidence shows that we cannot depend on funding increases to produce better results. And lawmakers should not increase funding for public schools simply because other states fund at higher levels.

A National Comparison

Arizona’s education interest groups are not unique in campaigning for funding increases. School leaders, district officials, and teachers unions around the country have long advocated for more money for schools.

Examples abound:

- Diane Ravitch, education researcher and professor at New York University, on the primary federal education law titled No Child Left Behind: “Instead of sending the vast sums of money that schools needed to make a dent in its goal, Congress simply sent testing mandates to every school.”²⁶
- Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, on federal spending in 2011: “The modest increase in funding ...

FICTION:

“We have reduced education funding levels to the point where they’re really not sustainable for our students and our teachers,” Ann-Eve Pedersen says in the *East Valley Tribune*.¹⁶

FACT:

We haven’t reduced education funding, and as we’ve spent more on education, less has gone to the classroom. In 2011, Arizona districts spent 54.7 percent of their total operating dollars on classroom expenses (\$4,098 per pupil), the lowest percentage since the auditor general’s office began reporting the figure 11 years ago. Arizona’s dollars-to-the-classroom figure is more than 6 percentage points lower than the national average.¹⁷ As a result, only about half (approximately 55 cents) of every dollar spent on education in Arizona is used in the classroom. Between 2010 and 2011, the “shift in spending out of the classroom accelerated,” and “the percentages spent on administration, plant operations, food service, transportation, student support, and instruction support ... all increased,” according to the auditor general.

For decades, taxpayers have spent more on public schools. Yet less money, as a percentage of the total, is being used in the classroom.

FICTION:

TELL CONGRESS: BE FAIR! NO MORE CUTS TO EDUCATION! (National Education Association headline [emphasis theirs].)²⁹

FACT:

Between 1970 and 2010, inflation-adjusted federal spending on K–12 education nationwide increased 165 percent, from \$33.5 billion to \$88.7 billion.³⁰

The United States already spends more per pupil than 24 other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (the OECD includes some 70 countries in its international analyses). In 2007, only six nations spent more per student on all levels of education than did the United States.³¹ Those figures also show that only four nations spent more on K–12 education than did the United States.

while welcome, is less than what is needed.... Our schoolchildren are depending on Congress to continue to work together to make education funding a top priority.”²⁷

- National School Boards Association (NSBA) on federal funding: “IDEA must be fully funded—as well as the mandates from the No Child Left Behind Act and any new requirements.... NSBA also opposes general budget reductions by formula.”²⁸

Despite claims that education funding might not be a “top priority,” the national spending trend is the same as Arizona’s: For more than 40 years, taxpayers across the country have spent more on schools.

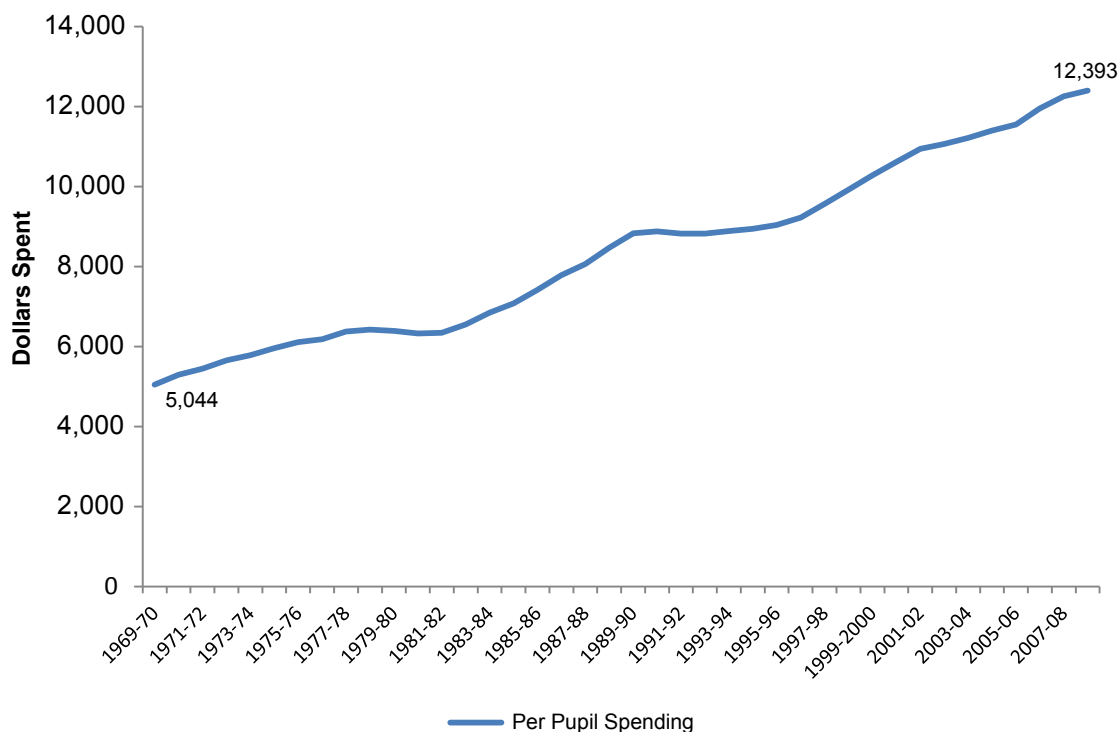
Just as in the debate over which state is 49th, attention to how much money schools receive—education inputs—distracts from the pressing issue of student achievement education outputs. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, high school seniors’ average score on the 2008 mathematics test was not significantly different from the score in 1973 (306 vs. 304, respectively).³² Reading scores are also not significantly different (286 vs. 285, respectively).

The recent financial recession reminds us that we cannot expect education funding to consistently increase. National and state budgets change from year to year, and financial markets fluctuate. As average unemployment levels have hovered between 8 percent and 9 percent for the past two years, everyone has been forced to adjust during this period of financial uncertainty.³³ Should the economy continue to stagnate and state budgets remain lean, schools may not experience increases at the same level as previous years.

Public schools often account for nearly half of state budgets, so lawmakers have few options outside of education from which to adjust spending when facing other state needs.³⁴ In Arizona, a 2009–10 report shows that education expenditures accounted for 40.3 percent of Arizona’s general fund appropriations, more than any other category (the next largest category was health and welfare, which accounted for 28.6 percent).³⁵ Some programs, such as Medicaid, further constrain lawmakers because states must maintain certain spending levels to obtain matching federal funds.

Is any decrease in an education budget a drastic cut? If a state budget does not increase education funding at the same rate as previous years, again, has education been cut? For some, the answer is yes. “The fact is too many states are making cuts to education that I think are too big,” President Barack Obama told state governors in February.³⁶ In reality, as national per pupil spending figures indicate, any decreases to education during the recession did not erase the funding increases of previous years (see figures 1 and 4). Between 1969–70 and 2008–09, every state

Figure 4. Real Total U.S. per Pupil Expenditures, 1969–70 to 2008–09



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, “Digest of Education Statistics,” Table 191: Total and current expenditures per pupil in public elementary and secondary schools: Selected years, 1919–20 through 2008–09 (constant 2009–10 dollars), http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d11/tables/dt11_191.asp. “Constant dollars based on the Consumer Price Index, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, adjusted to a school-year basis.”

in the country increased inflation-adjusted operational per pupil spending by a factor of two or more.³⁷

Again, as with Arizona’s example, no national decreases in education funding, to date, have been sustained over time. The average total per pupil expenditure level in the United States more than doubled between 1969–70 and 2008–09, from \$5,044 to \$12,393, with virtually no interruption (in constant 2009–10 dollars, see figure 4).³⁸

Conclusion

A debate over how best to help children succeed cannot even begin if arguments persist that we don’t spend enough on public schools today. This position distracts from the important topic of student achievement.

If weak economic trends persist, schools may not see large funding increases as in years past, though Arizona lawmakers have already resumed education funding increases in the state budget. But student achievement does not turn dramatically upward or downward with budgets. Arizonans must turn their attention to real reform and reject spending increases that offer little more than vague promises. Evidence demonstrates more money does not mean better report cards.

Appendix:
Arizona School District Total Per Student Spending Changes, 2006–11³⁹

District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change	District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change
Arizona Average	10	Arizona Average	10
Agua Fria Union High School District	0	Catalina Foothills Unified School District	-1
Aguila Elementary School District	26	Cave Creek Unified School District	10
Ajo Unified School District	9	Cedar Unified School District	15
Alhambra Elementary School District	22	Chandler Unified School District	13
Alpine Elementary School District	33	Chinle Unified School District	5
Altar Valley Elementary School District	26	Chino Valley Unified School District	9
Amphitheater Unified School District	13	Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District	5
Antelope Union High School District	20	Clifton Unified School District*	100
Apache Elementary School District	0	Cochise Elementary School District	-3
Apache Junction Unified School District	15	Coconino County Regional ASD	73
Arlington Elementary School District	15	Colorado City Unified School District	-3
Ash Fork Joint Unified School District	-21	Colorado River Union High School District	14
Ash Creek Elementary School District	19	Concho Elementary School District*	37
Avondale Elementary School District	7	Congress Elementary School District	29
Bagdad Unified School District	14	Continental Elementary School District	-3
Balsz Elementary School District	33	Coolidge Unified School District	13
Beaver Creek Elementary School District	29	Cottonwood–Oak Creek Elementary School District	25
Benson Unified School District	2	Crane Elementary School District	3
Bicentennial Union High School District	-7	Creighton Elementary School District	21
Bisbee Unified School District	2	Crown King Elementary School District	11
Blue Elementary School District‡	-9	Deer Valley Unified School District	12
Blue Ridge Unified School District	6	Double Adobe Elementary School District	23
Bonita Elementary School District	23	Douglas Unified School District	8
Bouse Elementary School District*	63	Duncan Unified School District	8
Bowie Unified School District*	55	Dysart Unified School District	26
Buckeye Elementary School District	22	Elfrida Elementary School District*	56
Buckeye Union High School District	12	Eloy Elementary School District	11
Bullhead City Elementary School District	26	Flagstaff Unified School District	18
Camp Verde Unified School District	11	Florence Unified School District	13
Canon Elementary School District	25	Flowing Wells Unified School District	12
Cartwright Elementary School District	23	Fountain Hills Unified School District	16
Casa Grande Elementary School District	7	Fowler Elementary School District	9
Casa Grande Union High School District	1	Fredonia-Moccasin Unified School District	6

District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change
Arizona Average	10
Ft. Huachuca Accommodation School District	-4
Ft. Thomas Unified School District	24
Gadsden Elementary School District	2
Ganado Unified School District	10
Gila Bend Unified School District	6
Gila County Regional School District‡	70
Gilbert Unified School District	6
Glendale Elementary School District	10
Glendale Union High School District	12
Globe Unified School District	0
Graham County Special Services‡	-22
Grand Canyon Unified School District	7
Hackberry Elementary School District*	200
Hayden-Winkelman Unified School District	-1
Heber-Overgaard Unified School District	11
Higley Unified School District	7
Hillside Elementary School District‡	-25
Holbrook Unified School District	9
Humboldt Unified School District	11
Hyder Elementary School District*	36
Indian Oasis–Baboquivari Unified School District	13
Isaac Elementary School District	12
J. O. Combs Unified School District	16
Joseph City Unified School District	9
Kayenta Unified School District	7
Kingman Unified School District	14
Kirkland Elementary School District*	51
Kyrene Elementary School District	3
Lake Havasu Unified School District	10
Laveen Elementary School District	6
Liberty Elementary School District	12
Litchfield Elementary School District	2
Littlefield Unified School District	1
Littleton Elementary School District	19
Madison Elementary School District	-1
Maine Consolidated School District	7

District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change
Arizona Average	10
Mammoth–San Manuel Unified School District	13
Marana Unified School District	16
Maricopa County Regional School District*	26
Maricopa Unified School District	16
Mary C. O'Brien Accommodation School District	50
Mayer Unified School District*	39
McNary Elementary School District	20
McNeal Elementary School District	-1
Mesa Unified School District	13
Miami Unified School District	-4
Mingus Union High School District	4
Mobile Elementary School District‡	-22
Mohave Valley Elementary School District	15
Mohawk Valley Elementary School District	16
Morenci Unified School District	6
Morristown Elementary School District	10
Murphy Elementary School District	16
Naco Elementary School District	-15
Nadaburg Unified School District	4
Navajo County Accommodation School District‡	0
Nogales Unified School District	6
Oracle Elementary School District	-15
Osborn Elementary School District	7
Owens-Whitney Elementary School District*	50
Page Unified School District	13
Palo Verde Elementary School District	9
Paloma Elementary School District‡	-25
Palominas Elementary School District	5
Paradise Valley Unified School District	11
Parker Unified School District	11
Patagonia Elementary School District	4
Patagonia Union High School District	34
Payson Unified School District	21
Peach Springs Unified School District	32
Pearce Elementary School District*	70
Pendergast Elementary School District	15

District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change
Arizona Average	10
Peoria Unified School District	5
Phoenix Elementary School District	15
Phoenix Union High School District	6
Picacho Elementary School District	13
Pima Accommodation School District	24
Pima Unified School District	11
Pine Strawberry Elementary School District	71
Pinon Unified School District	21
Pomerene Elementary School District	37
Prescott Unified School District	6
Quartzsite Elementary School District	18
Queen Creek Unified School District	-4
Ray Unified School District	23
Red Mesa Unified School District	-1
Red Rock Elementary School District‡	-39
Riverside Elementary School District	34
Roosevelt Elementary School District	20
Round Valley Unified School District	10
Sacaton Elementary School District	5
Saddle Mountain Unified School District	9
Safford Unified School District	4
Sahuarita Unified School District	16
Salome Consolidated Elementary School District	6
San Carlos Unified School District	24
San Fernando Elementary School District	15
San Simon Unified School District*	49
Sanders Unified School District	29
Santa Cruz County Regional School District	23
Santa Cruz Elementary School District	20
Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District	12
Santa Cruz Valley Union High School District	1
Scottsdale Unified School District	10
Sedona–Oak Creek Joint Unified School District	8
Seligman Unified School District*	56
Sentinel Elementary School District*	100

District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change
Arizona Average	10
Show Low Unified School District	19
Sierra Vista Unified School District	10
Skull Valley Elementary School District*	44
Snowflake Unified School District	1
Solomon Elementary School District	1
Somerton Elementary School District	-5
Sonoita Elementary School District*	39
St. David Unified School District	13
St. Johns Unified School District	7
Stanfield Elementary School District	-8
Sunnyside Unified School District	1
Superior Unified School District	1
Tanque Verde Unified School District	-5
Tempe Elementary School District	17
Tempe Union High School District	7
Thatcher Unified School District	-1
Tolleson Elementary School District	20
Tolleson Union High School District	-2
Toltec Elementary School District	8
Tombstone Unified School District	9
Tonto Basin Elementary School District	33
Topock Elementary School District	-2
Tuba City Unified School District	15
Tucson Unified School District	7
Union Elementary School District	-5
Vail Unified School District	3
Valentine Elementary School District	23
Valley Union High School District	9
Vernon Elementary School District	13
Washington Elementary School District	19
Wellton Elementary School District	9
Wenden Elementary School District*	36
Whiteriver Unified School District	16
Wickenburg Unified School District	9
Willcox Unified School District	8

District	Total Per Pupil Funding Percentage Change
Arizona Average	10
Williams Unified School District	23
Wilson Elementary School District	16
Window Rock Unified School District	9
Winslow Unified School District	11
Yarnell Elementary School District	-13
Yavapai Accommodation School District	83
Young Elementary School District*	56
Yucca Elementary School District*	100
Yuma Elementary School District	-7
Yuma Union High School District	-2

Notes: *Enrollment decrease from 2006–11.
 ‡Enrollment increase from 2006–11.
 †First year of operation.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Frederic M. Hess and Eric Osberg, eds., *Stretching the School Dollar* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2010) 4.
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