



Congratulations on your candidacy for the Arizona Legislature. Stand for Children is a non-partisan, non-profit education advocacy organization. Our mission is to ensure all Arizona students graduate from high school prepared for, and with access to, college and career opportunities. We do this by educating and empowering community members, advocating for effective policies, ensuring strong policy implementation, and supporting courageous leaders at the ballot box.

In the 2018 election cycle, Stand for Children will consider endorsing candidates aligned with our mission and current policy priorities. In the questionnaire below please provide responses indicating your position on our key focus areas. Please limit your overall responses to 6 pages.

Thank you for your willingness to share your perspectives and preferences regarding public education.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Candidate's Name: Matt Bullock

Office Sought: AZ House of Representatives Legislative District (LD): 22

Party Affiliation: Republican

E-Mail Address(es): matt@mattbullockaz.com Phone: 602-481-2988

Alternate Campaign Contact: Kyle Moyer - 480-941-0781

Campaign Website: www.mattbullockaz.com

Education (Please note highest degree achieved): Graduated University of Arizona 1990 BA Economics - minor's in Chemistry and Biology

Previous Elected Office(s) Held: Elected 2012 to the Peoria School District governing board. Served as President of the board in 2015 and 2016

Current Profession: Business owner - IT services and computer manufacturing

Please describe why you are qualified for the office sought:

I have been a business owner for 27 years and have created hundreds of jobs, so I understand financial planning, project management and the importance of a robust small business economy. My experience on the Peoria school board helped me to understand the urgent need for correctly funding education and moving career and technical education programs forward as college is not for every child. Also, my experience in technology and cybersecurity will help me to be an effective leader in the digital economy.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What are your top three priorities for public education in Arizona?
 - Correctly fund education and not be deterred from looking beyond property taxes to spread our tax base for additional funding
 - More evenly fund and legislate district and charter schools to allow both to succeed on their own merits
 - Provide equity in educational opportunities so no part of our population is left behind (which will have an effect on our economic growth)

2. What state policy change(s) do you believe could allow more Arizona children attend a quality school, be taught by an effective teacher and be provided with opportunities to succeed?

Correctly funding education to show future teachers that we see education as an investment. Because of our funding rollercoaster over the past 10 years, we are seeing a large drop in the number of high school graduates wanting to go into the teaching profession. Without the best teachers, we will not move the quality of education forward.

3. What role should the state play in holding schools accountable for student academic growth and achievement?

The State is the distributor of education funds and is responsible for ensuring our tax dollars are invested wisely. There is nothing wrong with requiring a high level of performance from every school. However, we can't correctly require increased performance without first offering a clear direction on our education "roadmap" and then resourcing our school correctly.

Currently, Stand for Children Arizona is focused on several policy areas: Early Literacy and Grade-Level Reading, English Language Instruction and School Finance. The following questions address those priorities.

Early Literacy & Grade-Level Reading

Based on the Spring 2017 statewide assessment, 56% of Arizona students cannot read on grade-level by the end of third grade, meaning only 44% of students are reading on grade-level. Scores have improved overall, but with the statewide goal of 72% of 3rd graders reading on grade-level by 2030, we have a long way to go. When looking at the data by school and region, it shows the improvement is concentrated in a small percentage of schools while many Arizona schools struggle to increase students' reading ability (see attached data sheet). Reading proficiency at this point in a student's academic career is vitally important. Research shows failure to read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade is linked to ongoing academic struggles, failure to graduate high school on time, and it dramatically reduces and creates barriers to entry into a postsecondary institution or career opportunities.

4. Would you support providing targeted funding and evidence-based programs, such as reading coaches and summer school, to improve the reading proficiency of Arizona students?

Yes. We implemented many of these types of programs when I was on the Peoria school board and saw much success when we had a clear direction and resourced those programs correctly. We also worked with local cities to form partnerships to get parents involved (one of the most important indicators of a student's success) and even to help parents who couldn't read.

5. Would you support state funding for early learning opportunities such as full-day kindergarten or quality pre-school for 3 and 4-year olds?

Yes. I am on record several times (while on the Peoria school board) promoting these types of programs as they help to create a "highly educated electorate".

English Language Learners (ELL)

Current state policies regarding ELL students were adopted in response to a lawsuit and limited by voter-protected requirements. They have been in place for 12 years. These policies use a one-size fits all approach, unlike any other education policy. During the 2018 legislative session, Stand moved H.B. 2435 through the process. The bill allowed for flexibility at the local level while preserving voter mandates and it provided for needed transparency and accountability. HB 2435 passed unanimously out of the House and Senate Education committees. Unfortunately, the bill failed to get a final vote in the last days of the session as time ran out.

6. Would you support legislation similar to HB 2435 to change current ELL instructional requirements in order to provide local flexibility, increased accountability and transparency and more efficient use of funds?

Yes. It is interesting that so much changes so quickly (in response to market changes and conditions) in the business world, technology, etc. However, education policies seem to get “stuck” in the same place for great lengths of time. The State needs to provide a clear direction for where we want to be in 5 years (and then renew that regularly) and then provide the resources and then get out of the way and trust the experts (teachers and administrators) at the local level to rise to the occasion and maximize our education investment.

7. Would you sign a pledge to support similar legislation, if elected?

Yes

8. If not, what policies would you support to improve ELL instruction?

School Finance

Arizona's current school finance system is over 30 years old. It was designed to support local school districts funded by their taxpayers with the state providing what could not be raised locally. Since that time, Arizona's public-school system has expanded to include a myriad of choices: open enrollment, charter schools and Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESAs); many students don't attend their local community school. The current system is outdated and continues to increase reliance on state funding. State policies which continue to limit the ability to raise revenue have resulted in the chronic underfunding of public schools. Short-term solutions and targeted investments fail to address the underlying problem. Stand for Children advocates for sufficient funding for all Arizona students, regardless of where they live or what type of school they attend.

9. What would you do or support to increase public school funding to at least the national average?

Sell more state trust land to increase the land trust endowment. This requires Congressional involvement, so State legislators will need to work efficiently with our Federal representatives. We also need to spread our tax base across new revenue opportunities instead of only looking to property taxes. We should also streamline our property and sales tax policies to more fairly and accurately increase revenue. Everyone in the State should have a part in paying for education as it will increase our economic output and eventually reduce everyone's taxes.

10. How do you plan to grow state revenue, establish new revenue sources and provide additional resources for education?

See #9 above

Below, please include any additional information you believe Stand for Children should know about your priorities:

A strong education system, available to every child and filled with a wide variety of knowledge opportunities will be an investment which will pay dividends for decades to come. We have to start seeing education as an investment and not as an expense.

