

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Stand for Children Arizona applauds bipartisan budget

(PHOENIX, AZ) – Stand for Children Arizona applauds Governor Hobbs and the legislature for negotiating a bi-partisan budget for FY 2025 with strong compromises that support our students in the year ahead. As Arizona schools and families continue to face unprecedented challenges, the new budget is a step forward for our students and educators. While we are disappointed that ESA vouchers continue to be a drain on the state budget, we are hopeful that this will be addressed in future budgets.

Positive budget changes include increasing funding opportunities for low-income students, with several significant investments in public education worth noting.

- \$1 million to support the critical 9th Grade On-Track program, which helps ninth graders stay on course for graduation.
- High schoolers will benefit from \$2 million in expanded dual enrollment opportunities, which levels the playing field for all students to have free access to college credits while in high school.
- \$3 million for the community college Promise Scholarship program, making higher education more accessible.
- Much-needed relief through Aggregate Expenditure Limit (AEL) waiver extensions to keep our public schools open.
- Caps on the School Tuition Organizations (STO) low-income corporate tax credit that will save more than \$30 million annually.
- \$4 million dedicated to eliminating school lunch debt, so no child has to worry about whether they will eat that day.
- \$12 million invested in stabilizing childcare, along with leveraging \$131 million in federal authorization to further support this essential service.
- \$2 million for K-12 mental health telehealth pilot programs.

While more work remains to be done, we are grateful to Governor Hobbs for her unwavering commitment to education and her efforts in forging a bi-partisan solution. We also extend our thanks to all legislators, both Democrats and Republicans, who voted in favor of this budget and prioritized the future of our children.

Stand for Children Arizona is a nonprofit advocacy organization that focuses on empowering and educating parents, teachers, and community members to become active leaders and serve as a voice for children at the state and local level. Our mission is simple: to ensure that all children, regardless of their background, graduate from high school prepared for, and with access to, a college education.

For more information, visit www.stand.org/arizona