



BUDGET PRIORITIES

SMALL SCHOOL WEIGHTS

During last year's budget discussion, the Legislature adopted several dramatic revisions to the small school weight funding available to many of Arizona's fastest growing and most successful charter school networks. Unfortunately, the policy changes were adopted based on flawed data and several unintended consequences have come to light. The Arizona Charter School Association's has advanced the following refinements to the small school weight reductions:

- Limit the total financial impact of small school weight reductions to an amount consistent with the original JLBC/OSPB assumptions.

Based on last year's budget documents and assumptions provided in the OSPB budget proposal, the total impact of the Small School Weight reduction would be \$13.8M for FY17. This could be easily calculated as a pro rata reduction applied by the Arizona Department of Education.

- Further refine the allowance of small school weights for geographically separate schools.

Determining a geographic distance between charter schools of the same network would restore the original policy intent of the law. Based on a review of district boundaries, the Association would recommend allowing Small School Weight for schools that are more than X miles from the closest network school.

- Provide new charter school sites access to small schools weights for a limited number of years.

Allowing new schools access to small school weights for a period of five years would give charter schools the necessary resources to overcome upfront costs associated with opening a new school and encourage those schools to outgrow the small school weight within five years.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE CUTS

Arizona's charter school and the more than 170,000 students they serve have been affected by ongoing reductions to charter school additional assistance. The cut to charter school additional assistance grew to more than \$18.5 million in the current fiscal year.

- Restore additional assistance funding to charter school students.

The restoration of additional assistance amounts for charter schools will allow schools to invest in the teachers and capital necessary to meet the growing demands for academically rigorous and high-performing charter schools. Charter schools do not have access to bonds and overrides.