



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 dramatic unintended consequences have come to light. The Arizona Charter School Association's will advance the following refinements to the small school weight reductions:

- **Freeze the small school weight cut at FY16 level: 33%**
- **Reverse unintended reductions to the Classroom Site Fund and restore funding for classroom teachers.**

Although the state budget assumed reductions in the SSW of \$6.5M in FY16, the actual reductions in FY16 have been in excess of \$10M. A portion of this over-collection is the result of reductions in Classroom Site Fund impacts that had not been anticipated by the Legislature. The total actual impacts are 150% larger than listed in the FY16 budget.

The SSW reductions have disproportionately impacted Arizona's highest performing and fastest growing charter schools. The cuts to small school weights have placed an enormous burden on schools. The uncertainty of the reductions and the implementation of the policy intent have led schools to halt expansion planning and are impacting the delivery of curriculum and quality instruction.

By suspending the scheduled reductions to the small school weights, policymakers and the affected schools will have an opportunity to:

- Identify and advocate for rewards for Arizona's highest performing schools.
- Explore meaningful reforms to the small school weights that are consistent with the intended policy and that do not damage the very schools we seek to support.

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. 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.

- Restore additional assistance funding to charter school students.