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AAGT RELEASES THEIR 2020 CANDIDATES SURVEY ON GIFTED EDUCATION IN ARIZONA

PHOENIX, ARIZONA - With heightened awareness around education as it turned virtual this past March, vast disparities became apparent among different socio-economic groups and children with learning differences, including Arizona's 89,000 identified gifted and talented students.

The Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented's (AAGT) mission is to advocate for the diverse population of gifted and talented students in the state of Arizona. It is our duty to identify supporters of gifted education in the Arizona State Legislature and to educate others who are not aware of why funding gifted education is important.

Prior to the release of ballots for the election, AAGT sent out their 2020 Candidates Survey asking two very important questions of these candidates on the ballot:

- Have you had personal experience with a gifted student?
- Will you support fully funding AZ Statute ARS §15-779 at \$5,000,000?

The responses, or lack of, will inform parents, teachers and supporters of gifted students which policy makers understand what "gifted" truly means and why gifted education should be FULLY funded before they cast their votes this fall. AAGT also plans to use this information to identify allies during the 2021 legislative season.

All survey results as they are received, will be posted on our website at arizonagifted.org/2020-arizona-candidate-survey-results/, as well as on our social media.

We encourage our members to review these results before they cast their votes on November 3rd so that they know who supports their children's education and who does not.

Background on Arizona Gifted Education Funding



PRESS RELEASE

Gifted students are found in every demographic. Currently, there are 89,000 identified gifted students in the state of Arizona.

Gifted students are identified by their unique learning differences including the ability to learn quickly and their ability to retain information for long periods of time and recall it quickly. They typically have the ability to work two or more grade levels above their age level peers. These characteristics require appropriately challenging curriculum and instruction at a level commensurate with their high ability and potential. Gifted students benefit most from teachers who are educated in gifted foundations and in gifted pedagogy, as well as teachers and counselors who are trained in responding to their unique social and emotional needs.

Gifted Education is mandated in Arizona Statute, ARS §15-779 which allows school districts that comply with statutory requirements for Gifted Education programs to apply for funding. The estimated cost of fully funding the mandate would be \$5,000,000 under the following assumptions:

- Charter schools also may apply for funding (ARS §15-779 refers to school districts only)
- All school district and charter schools currently meet eligibility criteria prescribed in ARS §15-779
- All school districts and charter schools would apply for the full formula amount

Prior to FY 2011, a line item for “Gifted Support” existed in ADE’s budget to fund the formula, but was eliminated in FY 2011.

About AAGT

Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented (AAGT) is a nonprofit organization of educators, parents and community members working together to better meet the unique needs of our gifted and talented students in Arizona. AAGT is the only organization in Arizona advocating for educational opportunities commensurate with our gifted students' abilities and potential. AAGT is an affiliate of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC).

To learn more about Gifted Education and opportunities for students, parents and teachers please visit www.arizonagifted.org.