

OVERRIDE QUESTIONS

1. What is an override?

An override is a financial mechanism that allows voters within a school district to approve additional funding for operational expenses for its schools. The proposed override at the upcoming election would permit the District to exceed its budget limit by 15%. If this measure is approved, the increase will continue for an additional seven years, with funding reductions beginning in year five.

2. Has the District been operating under an override?

The District has maintained a maintenance and operations (M&O) override for over three decades. This M&O override at the 15% level has been in effect since 2013.

3. What is the difference between a bond and an override?

A bond provides the district with additional funding for capital expenditures such as new buildings, building additions, land acquisitions, school buses, building renovations, furniture, equipment, and technology. Conversely, an override pertains to operational expenses including salaries, benefits, supplies, purchased services, utilities, and insurance.

4. How does Arizona fund schools?

Arizona funds its schools based on student enrollment numbers and the miles students are transported. It utilizes a formula-based funding model; hence, a school district's budget limit remains unaffected by changes in the assessed property value within the district. Arizona allocates specific dollar amounts per student for both maintenance and operational expenses (salaries, benefits, supplies, services, utilities) as well as for capital needs (furniture, equipment, technology, vehicles, textbooks, library books, instructional aids).

5. What exactly does a successful override mean to my specific school?

As the override has previously been in place, successful continuation of the override supports District efforts to continue:

1. to maintain **safety personnel & initiatives** at District schools;
2. to maintain **competitive class sizes**;
3. to **support teacher pay**;

4. to maintain specialized programming, instructional materials, and enhance technology.

6. How does the pupil-to-teacher ratio in the District compare to other districts?

The District has an average pupil-to-teacher ratio of 24:1. According to a self-reported study, the District has one of the lowest pupil-teacher ratios among the surrounding districts.

7. Many community members donate \$400 to a school each year to obtain the Arizona tax credit. Why doesn't the District just find new ways to get more people to donate?

By statute, tax credit monies must be allocated toward extracurricular support for students. The District is legally prohibited from using these funds for regular expenditures such as hiring new teachers, salaries, benefits, supplies, or utilities. While tax credit funding is vital for providing out-of-school opportunities for students, it does not contribute additional funds for the District's general spending needs.

8. What is the impact on the District's budget if the override does not pass?

If the override vote is not successful, the override is required by law to phase out. This will have a direct impact on teacher compensation, class sizes, and is expected to result in the elimination of various programs throughout the District.