



Save Our Schools Arizona Network Statement in Support of Black Lives Matter

Save Our Schools Arizona Network is committed to ensuring that all students have access to an excellent public education in Arizona, inclusive of all races, zip codes, beliefs, and identities. As teachers, parents and public education advocates, we firmly attest #BlackLivesMatter and vow to redouble our efforts to ensure statewide change.

In that Arizona's state budget is an expression of its values, we pledge to advocate and mobilize for the following funding decisions:

Limit Privatization: Defund voucher programs that divert tax dollars to private schools with discriminatory admissions practices, whether based on race, religion, family income level, orientation, gender identity, academic ability or any alleged capacity and "fit." School privatization has been proven to worsen racial and economic segregation, while quality public schools in every neighborhood provide a ladder to success and economic productivity. Our public funds must be dedicated to public schools with equitable, open and transparent admissions.

Eradicate Student Resource Officers (SROs): Reallocate funding otherwise intended for SROs to hire and develop more school counselors, psychologists, and social workers whose presence in schools is proven to positively impact children and support families through mental health services, academic guidance and trauma-informed care.

Reverse Results-Based Funding: Currently, Arizona's school funding model is biased in favor of high-income schools whose students enjoy strong support networks that foster higher scores on the standardized testing used to determine funding levels. Schools in low-income communities and communities of color receive less funding when in fact the model should be reversed: true equity demands that schools in low-income communities should receive greater funding to ensure students with fewer historic and economic advantages have the same opportunity to thrive as their more privileged peers.

Support Diversity-Focused Employment Practices: Create pipeline programs and incentives for schools to understand the value in recruiting, hiring, promoting and developing educators and administrators who reflect Arizona's diverse student population, and invest in professional development programs that motivate higher numbers of educators, administrators and leaders of color to stay in the profession they love.

Save Our Schools Arizona Network is committed to investing in all of our communities equitably and deliberately. Our public schools are the vibrant fabric of society, and we will do everything in our power to ensure they reflect and serve all of Arizona's children.

Signed by the Board members and officers of Save Our Schools Arizona Network:

Beth Lewis
Cathy Sigmon
Dawn Penich-Thacker
Kate Tice
Melinda Merkel Iyer
Sharon Kirsch

Geoffrey Mobisson
Raquel Salas
Libby Goff