



# THE VOTER

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY**

[LWVCYC@gmail.com](mailto:LWVCYC@gmail.com)      P. O. Box 11538, Prescott, AZ 86304-1538      July-Aug 2013

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The League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County presents

## LOCAL EDUCATION FUNDING

Saturday, September 7, 2013  
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
Las Fuentes Resort Village  
1035 Scott Drive, Prescott, AZ




**Guest Speakers**

David Smucker  
Superintendent, PUSD

Dr. Paul Stanton  
Superintendent, HUSD

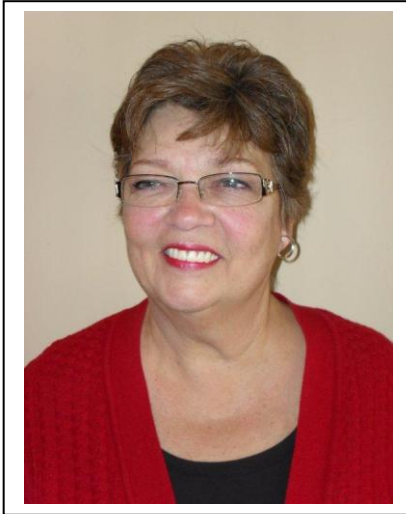
Dr. Mary Ellen Halvorson  
Superintendent, Tri-City Prep

Duane Howard,  
Superintendent, CVUSD



This is the kick off meeting for the '13-'14 year!  
Please plan to attend and bring a friend!

**LWVCYC Website: <http://goo.gl/5R9xU>**



## President's Message

Our summer is drawing to a close, and I hope each of you had a pleasant one. It is now time to resume our Program presentation series at our general meetings. This year will be an extremely timely and informative year. Each month will have a presentation of experts and subjects that are relevant in the world we live in. We are bravely taking on a few subjects that are quite controversial. Please see the calendar list of meetings in this current issue. You won't want to miss any of these meetings.

In the past year and a half the board has been working on organizing all of our local leagues books and paperwork. We have scanned all the materials that were allowed, reducing our many boxes to just a few. Our financial reports are all sorted and boxed. We have 18 years of financials now in good order and accessible. Where there were duplicates, and in some cases, multi copies of the same materials, all were reduced to a hard copy where relevant, and scanned to disc, and put into the "cloud" where they are always accessible should we have losses of the hard copies. We literally have been brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thank you especially to our Secretary, Chris Adams, for her wonderful assistance.

If you haven't already seen it, there is a wonderful article about our local league in the current Issue of "Prescott Woman" magazine. Pick up a copy and share with a friend. This is one of the ways we are making an effort for more presence in our community. We intend to do more along these lines and we are asking for help from our members. It would be nice to have a committee for Public Relations. If you have any interest please contact any of the board members. We will be happy to hear from you. If you feel you are not qualified, set those thoughts aside. We expect to have occasional small chores to get this accomplished. Come join us. Speaking of volunteers, we had a good response to our plea at our Summer Social Luncheon. Thank you to each of you willing to help.

Our Summer Social Luncheon was a great success. We had a good turnout, with good food and camaraderie. Sorry if you missed it, but hope you will be able to join us at our next social.

I intended to summarize the State Convention that occurred this summer in Tucson. However, since our wonderful Voter Services Director, Dale Domzalski attended as my alternate and gave a lovely report of her reaction to the convention in a past Voter, and because of my absence, I have only the Minutes of the Convention to refer to, I decided to just share those minutes with you. Please see them in this Voter. Of special interest is the Program report and the studies that were approved.

We have a lofty goal this year of doubling our membership. We are already off to a good start. Watch for new member biographies in our Voters. The best way to increase membership is to increase attendance at our general meetings. This shouldn't be difficult this year because of our great topics. We ask that you each bring a friend to each meeting. Our expert presenters deserve a full audience. Many of our speakers travel a long distance to share their knowledge. So please again, if you can, make it a goal to bring a friend to each meeting. And of course, attend as many as you can.

Welcome to our new members and welcome to all of you for a new and exciting year in League of Women Voters Central Yavapai County.

See all of you September 7<sup>th</sup>!

Vicky O'Hara, President

## Local Education Funding

**Don't miss this upcoming LWV Program on September 7 at Las Fuentes. This is what you voted for as a primary interest at the last LWV Annual Meeting, so we hope for a huge turnout.** Tell your neighbors, bring a friend! Program Vice President Juliana Goswick has managed to get all three of the area superintendents, plus Superintendent Mary Ann Halvorsen of Tri City Prep Charter, together in one place. It will be a great opportunity to improve your understanding of school needs, and a wonderful source to answer all your questions. While the superintendents cannot lobby for the outcomes of upcoming bond and override elections, they can give out reliable information and respond to questions.

According to a June 13, 2013 story by Michael Chihak of Arizona Public Media, Arizona public schools are getting a better deal from the state Legislature than they have in years, but funding levels are still far off from what they had before the recession. K-12 base-level budget cuts in the last five years totaled \$1.2 billion, according to state data, with additional cuts in capital funding, including a freeze on all funding for school construction and maintenance.

The increase in base-level funding for the 2013-14 fiscal year is \$82 million, which will allow \$58.82 more per student, or 1.8 percent, from the current funding level.

The 2013-14 budget will also include \$2.4 million K-12 funding to get Gov. Jan Brewer's performance-based funding program under way, despite worries that performance-based funding will leave behind schools that are in economically disadvantaged areas, one of the markers of under-performing schools.

Capital funding for schools got more money this year than in recent years - \$14 million for building maintenance and repairs. The new school construction fund was budgeted \$700,000.

Other educational funding in the 2013-14 state budget includes:

- \$5.4 million for a new state database to allow proper tracking of school performance measures.
  - A \$4.5 million increase for adult education and General Educational Development, or GED, programs.
  - \$1.2 million more for Joint Technical Education Districts. Statewide, JTED funding was cut by millions two years ago, eliminating all career and technical training for ninth graders.
  - \$3.6 million for school safety, one-fourth of which must go for safety equipment.
- Additional money is budgeted for various post high school programs.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP REGISTER VOTERS!**

Dates for upcoming voter registration  
Sat., Aug 24 Farmers Market  
Sat., Sept 21 Farmers Market  
Tues., Sept 24 Yavapai College  
/National Voter Registration Day  
Sat., Oct 19 Farmers Market

Contact Dale Domzalski,  
domzalski@cableone.net, 237-9093



## Membership News

Terri Farneti

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### Linda Greenberg New Member



Linda was born and raised in San Diego, CA. She graduated from National University-Sand Diego with a BA in Financial Accounting.

She married Abe Greenberg in 1989 and moved to Richland, WA where she worked in public accounting, auditing

Colleges and non-profit organizations. After her years in public accounting, she worked in business/industry. Her last position was a Audit Director, Internal Audit for Fluor Daniel Hanford.

She and Abe retired to Prescott in 2002 and settled in Williamson Valley where they enjoyed ten years of traveling, hiking and just puttering. They has two great trips to the Grand Canyon. The first one hiking for 5 days and the second on the Colorado River from Lee's Ferry to Lake Mead. Abe passed away in October 2012 after almost 30 years together.

Linda looks forward to her association with the League of Women Voters. The recent spate of restrictive voter registration legislation make the mission of the League ever more important.



We have plenty of opportunity to get involved in League activities such as voter registration, program planning and publicity. Just let the Board know what you'd like to do!

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### Bonnie Gaborik New Member

Bonnie moved to Prescott Valley in 2009. A retired educator, Bonnie was a classroom teacher, head teacher, and principal. She lived and taught in Alaska for over 30 years.

She was born and raised in Oregon and grew up in Klamath Falls, OR. Bonnie attended Pacific University in Forest Grove, OR and earned a BA. She received her MA/Administration degree from the University of Alaska - Fairbanks.

Bonnie's hobbies include music, nature, walking/hiking, traveling, and working in her yard. She has two children - a daughter and son.

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### "Cappi" Lang Comba, PhD Member

Cappi grew up right in the heart of Hollywood. She moved to Arizona in 1962 and lived in Scottsdale, where she was married and raised 3 children. She was a teacher for 10 years and then became a psychotherapist. She moved to Prescott in



1999, continuing her work in private practice and as faculty for Prescott College in the Counseling Psychology Expressive Art Therapy, and Somatic programs.

She founded the Expressive Art Therapy Program and Institute and the Somatic Psychology programs.

Today, she is semi-retired and pursuing her work as an artist, specifically in the painting of people. She is interested in doing socially conscious art.

She lives here with her husband, Paul, who is a retired mathematician and astronomer. They have 9 grandchildren.



## Clippings

### School report cards show off students' achievements, challenges

Taken from story in the Prescott Valley Tribune, 8/7/2013, by Sue Tone

**The State measures each school's performance on two scores - students' AIMS scores count 50 percent, and students' growth counts for 50 percent, with the lowest performing student scores counting twice.**

**This is the third year the ADE has implemented this system. In previous years, schools received extra points for the number of students who exceeded the passing standard on the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards, the AIMS. Currently, the State focuses on the progress and improvement of lower-achieving students, and making sure all students achieve at least one year's academic growth.**

**In Prescott Valley and Dewey-Humboldt:**

"Granville is the highest rated elementary school in Yavapai County. We are very proud." HUSD Superintendent Paul Stanton said.

Three HUSD schools earned an "A" grade this year: Humboldt Elementary for the third year in a row, Mountain View Elementary for the second consecutive year, and Granville regaining an "A" with an amazing 19-point gain over the past year's score. Liberty School was only three points short of an "A."

Overall, HUSD raised its score three points from the previous year, now ranking just one point behind the Prescott Unified School District overall score for 2012-13.

The Arizona Department of Education scores districts and schools on A-D grade system based on student achievement on the AIMS and student academic growth. Below are results of local schools' report cards for the 2011-2012 and the 2012-2013 school years.

A: 140-200; B: 120-139; C: 100-119; D: 0-99

		2011-12	12-13
<b><u>Humboldt Unified School District</u></b>			
	B	133 B	136
Granville Elem	A	136 A	155
Humboldt Elem	A	151 A	146
Mountain View Elem	A	141 A	143
Liberty Traditional K-8	B	130 B	137
Coyote Springs Elem	B	123 B	128
Lake Valley Elem	B	130 B	121
Bradshaw Mountain MS	C	118 C	117
Glassford Hill MS	C	106 C	117
Bradshaw Mountain High	B	131 B	136

**Prescott Unified School District**

	A	143 B	137
Abia Judd Elem	A	154 A	149
Taylor Hicks Elem	B	138 B	132
Lincoln Elem	B	127 B	130
Washington Traditional	B	124 B	122
Miller Valley Elem	C	118 C	118
Granite Mountain MS	A	150 A	146
Mile High MS	B	133 B	138
Prescott High	B	137 B	132

**In Prescott:**

Abia Judd Elementary and Granite Mountain Middle School both scored "A's," while all other schools in PUSD scored "B."

**In Chino Valley:**

Elementary schools and the Middle School scored "B", while the High School scored a "C."

**High Schools:**

High schools receive an additional three points in each of three categories: reclassification of English Language Learners, graduation rate, and dropout rate. Humboldt District has one of the best ELL programs in the state and therefore not enough students in ELL classes to receive the bonus points. They did receive the other six points.

Bradshaw Mountain High School earned a "B" grade for the third year in a row, and gained five points this past year with 136 points, but needs four more points to achieve an "A" grade. Prescott High also received a "B" with 132 points. Chino High received a "C" with 113 points.

**Chino Valley Unified School District**

	B	132 B	121
Del Rio Elem	B	138 B	133
Territorial Elem	B	123 B	131
Heritage MS	B	125 C	116
Chino Valley High	C	108 C	113

**Mayer Unified School Dist.**

	C	108 D	99
Mayer Elem	C	110 D	84
Mayer High	D	83 C	101

**Charter Schools**

AAEC	A	155 A	162
Franklin Phonetic	A	152 A	141
Tri-City Prep High	A	151 A	158
Acorn Montessori	B	127 B	121
Park View MS	C	118 C	101
Prescott Valley Charters	C	103 D	95
Northpoint Exped.	C	102 C	106
Yavapai Cty Accom HS	B	Alt. D	Alt.
Aspire High School	D		58

**Charter Schools:**

Two charter high schools ranked "A" ratings: AAEC and Tri-City Prep. Northpoint High School rated a "C", while Kestrel was not included in the listings. Franklin Phonetic Elementary in Prescott Valley was the only charter elementary with an "A" ranking. Several other charter elementary schools were not included in the listings.

The state Move On When Reading program calls for retention of third-grade students who cannot pass the AIMS by the end of the 2013-2014 school year - with two exceptions: English Language Learners and those students with disabilities.

**\$28M bond would fund Prescott school improvements**

Patrick Whitehurst, The Daily Courier, 7/3/2013

PRESCOTT - Prescott Unified School District Facilities Director Jay Collier said his staff has resorted to a "baling wire and duct tape" method for keeping the district's buildings in operation.

Should voters approve a \$28 million bond in November, however, the district would implement a number of improvements to its infrastructure - enough to keep the schools and offices up to par for another decade or more, Collier said.

"On this new bond, we're looking at the kinds of things that could put us in good shape for the

next 10 to 15 years, the major items being safety improvements, energy management, technology, buildings and grounds projects, furniture and equipment, athletic facilities and transportation," Collier said.

Roofing and playground equipment are among those items sorely in need of repair and replacement. More than \$8,000 is proposed for roofing, concrete and asphalt repair, and \$7,000 would go to update the district's technology systems, including computers and networking needs.

With decreases in state funding, schools have been forced to seek money from other sources, Collier said. That includes bonds and grants when possible.

Members of the PUSD Governing Board voted unanimously to proceed with the bond effort in early June. Besides the bond, voters will also decide on an override initiative, which effectively raises the district's maintenance and operation budget by just over \$2 million.

PUSD Superintendent David Smucker said the November bond and override questions will be mail-only elections, with ballots expected in October.

If voters approve the measures, owners of average-priced homes (about \$185,000) would pay about \$60 more per year in property taxes, or \$5 a month.

There are currently five elementary schools, two middle schools, a high school, a preschool, an administrative office, a central kitchen and a bus barn in the district.

"The average age of our buildings is 67 years old," Smucker said.

"A lot of the furnishing within the buildings are really antiquated," Collier said. "The most critical need right now is roofing. If we have continued breakdown of the roofs, then the rest of the building is compromised."

PUSD Chief Financial Officer Renee Raskin said administrators will also speak to the public about the bond and the override in order to provide facts, but school district employees are not allowed to make any for-or-against statements themselves.

"We'll go out and factually talk about it. We can't say yes or no," Raskin said. "We work with a bond company and they give us a checklist of what we need to go through for both of the elections. For the bond, the next thing is getting ready to gather the pro and con statements for the pamphlet."

Pro and con statements can be submitted through the PUSD website, Raskin added.

With the help of PUSD staff, a committee made up of community members first began the process for the bond in February before bringing the proposal to the Governing Board for a decision.

"The committee was made up of local business folks, folks outside of the school district, and they're the ones who put all the information together," Smucker said. "Our board had a big decision to make, but they also recognized they want the best for the students in this community.

I think that's really what drove their decision."

Members of that committee will also do the brunt of the legwork when it comes to selling the bond to voters, Smucker said.

Voters last approved a bond in the district nine years ago for \$18.7 million.

### **Proposed bond expenditures**

*Safety improvements* - totaling \$5,594,026

- Revamping the district's fire systems, which include fire alarms, valves, intercoms and campus surveillance.

- Replacing entrances for outdoor security.
- Replacing unsafe playground equipment.
- Bringing bleachers up to code.
- Replacing outdated bathroom stalls.

***Technology improvements*** - totaling \$7,863,722

- Rehaul of district's network system.
- Replacing hardware.
- Positioning for worldwide classroom and distance learning enhancements.
- Renovations to existing technology locations and infrastructure.

***Energy management*** - totaling \$3,575,250

- Replacing single-pane windows with dual pane.
- Sprinkler repairs.
- Repairing leaks in water systems.
- Updating utility infrastructure.
- Replacing inefficient hot water and boiler systems.
- Field renovations, including a possible alternative to grass at some sites.

***Buildings and grounds improvements*** - totaling \$8,242,892

- Roof repairs.
- Paving replacement.
- Concrete restoration.
- Locker room renovations.
- Painting and sealing.

***Furniture and fixture improvements***

- totaling \$239,004

- Replacement of lunch tables.
- Replacement of teacher and student desks.

***Athletics***

- totaling \$763,200

- Maintenance for tracks, tennis courts and gym floors.

***Transportation***

- totaling \$1,644,163

- Replacement buses and travel vans.

**Total: \$28 million**



## Prescott Valley Schools to ask voters for 10 percent override

Sue Tone, Prescott Valley Tribune, 7/3/2013

Since the 2008-2009 school year, cuts in education funding by state legislators, decreasing student enrollment, and efforts to balance the budget by eliminating programs and personnel have meant Humboldt Unified School District could not give its teachers and staff a raise.

For six years.

The district governing board is now asking voters to support a 10 percent override for \$2.8 million that will support four purposes:

- Increase school safety.
- Restore academic programs including music, PE and early childhood.
- Reduce class size.
- Attract and retain high quality staff.

Board members unanimously approved the call for a maintenance and operation budget override election in November at its June 25 special meeting. Member Suzie Roth was not present.

The district hired consultant Paul Ulan to conduct a survey of voters to explore community support for an override. Of the 300 people surveyed, 55.8 percent indicated they would vote for a 10 percent override; a lesser number, 46.8 percent, said they would approve a 15 percent override.

One survey question provided a list of uses for the money. Ulan said answers indicated the most important factors were music, art and PE classes (93.4 percent) and school safety (92 percent). Competitive salaries received 83.7 percent, reduced class sizes 82.1 percent, athletics 86.4 percent, and increase student achievement ranked third at 87.4 percent.

"Originally, we were looking at a 15 percent override. Ten percent is doable," Ulan said, adding that 10 percent is not what is needed, it is what the community is willing to support.

### **2013-2014 budget**

The board also approved the 2013-2014 budget following a presentation by Finance Director Cynthia Windham that set out revenues the district expects from the state and its expenditures.

The state no longer gives districts soft capital money - which would have provided \$200,000 this past year - that pays for textbooks, library books, technology, and curricular software. The state no longer provides building renewal funds and has reduced unrestricted capital funds. Because the state legislators took that money away, the district cannot rely on a projected \$1.7 million.

By law, the state also was to give a 2 percent increase to the base level amount per pupil each year, but has not done so since 2008-2009, a loss of more than \$2 million to the district for the 2013-2014 year.

Windham also covered actions taken by the district to reduce its budget since 2008-2009 that include eliminating: custodial staff, technology staff, free full-day kindergarten, middle school librarians, counselors and assistant principals, English Language Learners teachers and staff, mail delivery driver, district office staff, and administrator performance pay.

The district also has reduced its budget for supplies, maintenance efforts and elementary music

staff. It has increased class sizes and pay-to-play athletics fees.

Budget reductions for 2013-2014 include eliminating 11 teachers (accomplished through attrition), increased health insurance deductible, reduced allocation for substitute teachers/staff, and requiring tax credit donations to support middle school sports.

"To not be able to offer cost of living raises for our people for six years is painful," HUSD Board President Rich Adler said.

### **Teachers seek higher pay**

Windham said the impact on teaching staff over the past three years has led to a turnover of about a third of the teachers. A large number of teachers retired or resigned this year, said Dan Streeter, HUSD Human Resources director.

"With frozen salaries entering their sixth year and additional requirements coming from the state and federal levels, more and more retirees are recognizing this as a good time to leave the profession," he said.

He said there was little incentive for teachers nearing retirement to stay working based on the economy, the way the Arizona State Retirement System works, and new mandates for teachers. Teachers' resignations also are based on salary freezes.

"What was once a manageable difference between salary schedules in our area and those in the Phoenix area become increasingly problematic as many districts have been able to maintain raises for their employees through override elections and steady or increased enrollment," Streeter said.

### **Override efforts**

By asking the community to step up and support education, Jeri Kooiman, member of the Superintendent's Steering Committee, said, "We have our work cut out for us."

Board member Gary Hicks said in one community where he was gathering signatures to run for school board, he heard several people say teachers are paid enough already. Many retired people on fixed incomes may not support the override.

"We have to do this. It's our obligation for our students and our community," said board member Carm Staker.

## **Districts convert schools to charters for more money**

By Amy B Wang The Republic | azcentral.com Sun Jun 30, 2013 12:34 AM

Amid run-of-the-mill agenda items recognizing volunteers and approving playground renovations, the Paradise Valley Unified [School](#) District governing board last month quietly made a significant change: It converted one-third of its elementary schools to charter schools.

District officials said the motivation was simple. With charter status, the 11 schools will receive about \$1,100 more per student after the first year. That's on top of the roughly \$4,400 the district receives per elementary student from the state. School names, teachers, curriculum and policies will remain the same.

A growing number of schools in Arizona are considering similar switches. At least 20 districts across the state — from Maricopa to Sierra Vista to Wickenburg — have submitted documentation stating that they intend to convert 60 schools to charters the coming year, according to the Arizona Department of Education. As in Paradise Valley, any changes the conversions bring seem to be on paper only.

For many public-school district officials, the move is perfectly legal, a no-brainer after years of cuts to Arizona K-12 education. In Paradise Valley, the changes will bring in more than \$7 million after one year.

Opponents say the conversions are, at best, a well-intentioned but financially unsustainable trend. State-sponsored charter schools are concerned they are losing out on money intended to help them compete with traditional public schools. Some lawmakers want to put the brakes on conversions, saying Arizona cannot afford it. At worst, others say the conversions are an abuse of a loophole in the system that could lead to a multimillion-dollar drain on state funds.

### **Birth of charter schools**

Arizona was ground zero of the charter-school movement. In 1994, the state Legislature passed laws allowing charter schools be established “to provide a learning environment that will improve pupil achievement.”

Charter schools could be sponsored and overseen by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, a public university, a community college or a public-school district. In the beginning, almost all were state-sponsored charters, those overseen by the Arizona charter board. Some belonged to larger charter-school chains that owned their own buildings. Others were single-school operations that held classes in shopping centers or office complexes. Some developed solid academic reputations, while others failed within a year.

To help charter schools compete with traditional public-school districts, the state gives on average about \$1,000 more in per-pupil funding to charter schools. The amount varies based on the students’ ages, size of the school and other factors. Ostensibly, lawmakers intended the extra amount to make up for charter schools’ inability to hold override elections, but the overarching idea was to encourage school competition and school choice.

It worked. Arizona’s 535 charter schools now make up about 25 percent of the public schools in Arizona and about 14 percent of K-12 students in the state. Arizona has the highest percentage of charter students of any state.

For more than a decade, state-sponsored charter schools dominated the scene. Before 2008, only five public-school districts in Arizona converted schools to district-sponsored charters, and those that did chose highly specialized, alternative schools catering to at-risk students.

### **Converting traditional schools**

With the proliferation of state-sponsored charters came a natural tension between them and Arizona’s public-school districts. Both faced competition for the same students and for funding from the state.

A common refrain from school-district officials was that state-sponsored charters did not have to comply with the same financial-reporting guidelines and oversight that they did. Meanwhile, charters complained that large school districts had access to greater resources because of their ability to ask voters for bonds and overrides.

“The reality is that both district-sponsored charters and state-sponsored charters have different kinds of financial advantages not available to the other one,” said Calvin Baker, superintendent of the Vail Unified School District.

In 2008, Vail became the first district in the state to convert traditional schools to charter schools. Covering 425 square miles southeast of [Tucson](#), with 12,000 students, Vail is something of an anomaly in Arizona because it had no state-sponsored charter schools in its boundaries. The competition from charters common in metro Phoenix did not exist.

Baker said his district was trying to give parents options. Before 2008, the district had converted two alternative schools to charters with positive results, Baker said. In 2008, Vail converted Acacia and Mesquite elementaries, two schools that were not particularly different from the others in the district.

The district required that each school create a site council made up of a quorum of parent members, as well as a chairman or chairwoman who was a parent. Vail officials gave the site councils and principals the freedom to spend part of the additional funding as they saw fit.

Baker insists that nothing else changed about the schools.

“They’re still Vail-run schools,” Baker said. “If (parents and students) were there before the conversion, they notice no difference. It’s the exact same quality education.”

### **Debate in Paradise Valley**

For years, Vail remained alone until the Cave Creek Unified School District last June converted four of its five elementary schools to charters, with relatively little fanfare. Officials in the adjacent Paradise Valley Unified district monitored Cave Creek’s conversion closely.

Longtime Paradise Valley school-board members said conversations about the charter option had been casually discussed for at least two years, if not longer. But with increasing budget cuts, the option became more difficult to ignore.

One of the largest public K-12 districts in the state, Paradise Valley in the northeast Valley has lost \$18.5 million in state funding since the 2007-08 school year, said Tom Elliott, assistant superintendent for business services.

Over the last five years, Paradise Valley dealt with cuts in ways most districts did: Reducing benefits. Increasing class sizes. Freezing pay raises. At the end of last month, the district took what some considered a drastic step in closing Foothills and Village Vista elementary schools, a move expected to save about \$1.1 million annually.

The district’s residents have traditionally supported bonds and overrides. They approved a \$15.9 million override for maintenance and operations funding in 2009. In 2011, the district’s voters approved both a bond and a capital override, which pay for things such as furniture, equipment, textbooks and other instructional materials. This fall, the district will hold another \$21 million override election.

Despite all of that, the district faces a \$7.8 million budget shortfall heading into the 2013-14 school year, according to a draft budget. When officials began revisiting the charter option, it seemed an obvious choice, Superintendent James Lee said. With relatively few changes, it would bring in an extra \$1,100 per student, or about \$7.2 million. And it was legal.

“We’re just following the guidelines and the law that has been set for years,” Lee said.

They chose 11 of 31 elementary schools to convert to a charter designation.

Paradise Valley officials are quick to point out that the 11 schools all have “charter-school-like qualities” in the signature programs they provide: Whispering Wind has Mandarin and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programs, for example. Sandpiper offers Spanish-immersion classes.

“Rather than say, ‘Oh, we’re just going to charter,’ we really looked very hard at which programs were in which schools that fit the mold of what a charter school would offer in terms of specialized

programs,” governing board President Anne Greenberg said. “That’s why we selected very specifically the schools that we did.”

The specialty programs have proven to draw and retain students, Lee said.

“But we also realize it’s costly to operate,” he said.

The board’s decision to charter the 11 schools was unanimous.

Though the district won’t see additional funds until the 2014-15 school year, the annual increase for Paradise Valley then will amount to about \$7.2 million. (In the first year, the school receives the extra funds only for new students.)

“It became, at least for me, a way to infuse more dollars into public education, into Paradise Valley schools,” board member Sue Skidmore said.

A district memo distributed to parents in May reassured them that there would no discernible changes: School names, teachers, hiring qualifications, personnel policies — all would remain the same. And, the memo said, the extra \$7.2 million would come from the state, not from district taxpayers.

### **Questions remain**

Some have raised red flags about charter-school conversions.

Ultimately, money from the state is money that comes from taxpayers, said Eileen Sigmund, president and chief executive of the Arizona Charter Schools Association. The vast majority of the non-profit’s member schools are state-sponsored charters.

“My charters are very concerned,” Sigmund said. “The additional assistance was originally intended to help charters make up for buckets of funding that they did not have access to.”

Public-school districts with charters in Arizona can still hold elections for bonds and overrides, and if approved, can use money from those bonds and overrides toward their district-sponsored charters.

Sigmund said a quality education can come in many different forms, but her group wants to ensure that state-sponsored charters have an equal playing field.

“The bottom line is that our 33-year-old system of finance is broken, and people are looking for any legal ways to get more dollars for their students,” she said. “If there is an ability and autonomy for the school leaders to be able to meet what that community and that student needs, then yeah, we agree with it. But that’s not what we’re seeing.”

Vail Superintendent Baker disagrees.

“It’s a little bit of semantics, maybe, maybe not,” he said. “We’re very careful to note that when we go to a charter school, we are accepting a market-driven model.”

Like state-sponsored charters, district-sponsored charters cannot require attendance by students who live in the nearby area.

If a district-sponsored charter fails, for whatever reason, it could lead to overcrowding in surrounding district schools.

Furthermore, if a district converts a charter school back to non-charter status, it must return all additional funds received as a charter back to the state — in one lump-sum payment.

But the incentives to convert schools to charters outweighed the risks, Baker said.

“We are changing our educational behavior, our educational structure, because that is the incentive that has been provided by the Legislature,” he said. “If I hold out an incentive to teachers and say to them,



‘If you become National Board-certified, then we will give you additional money,’ (then) if the teacher becomes National Board-certified, people don’t say, ‘Oh, she’s just doing it for the money.’ She’s responding to the incentive.”

### **What’s ahead**

During the legislative session, Senate Majority Leader Andy Biggs, R-Gilbert, included a provision in one of the budget bills to establish a one-year moratorium on traditional public-school districts converting schools to charters.

“This has the potential of costing hundreds of millions of dollars extra to the state (general fund) as school districts view this as another way to get funding,” Biggs said. “It’s very dangerous to do that because that increases the funding exponentially, and the state doesn’t have the revenue.”

But the provision didn’t go anywhere. Biggs said he worries that more public-school districts — perhaps sensing there may be an impending moratorium — will turn to charter conversions while it is still legal.

“Is it in line with the intent and the spirit of the law? No,” said Stacey Morley, executive director of policy development and government relations at the Arizona Department of Education. “Right now, it’s a loophole.”

According to a June 3 memo, the Joint Legislative Budget Committee estimated that at the current level of charter conversions, the state’s baseline budget for K-12 education could grow by \$5 million in fiscal 2014, \$22 million in fiscal 2015, \$39 million in fiscal 2016 and \$52 million in fiscal 2017.

The estimates are “very speculative,” but there is a high possibility that these projections are understated, given the financial incentives, said Steve Schimpp, the committee’s deputy director.

School districts wanting to convert schools to charters for the 2013-14 school year have until today to report their plans to the state Education Department.

“There’s just been this unexpected surge in charter conversions,” Schimpp said. “There’s nothing capping or limiting people at this point.”

## **Report: Phoenix area leads nation in idle youths**

By Eugene Scott The Republic | azcentral.com Wed Aug 21, 2013 10:49 PM

Metropolitan Phoenix has the highest rate of disconnected youth” — someone ages 16 to 24 who doesn’t work or attend school. in the nation, according to recent report from Measure of America, a New York nonpartisan non-profit that studies well-being in America.

Nationally, one in seven young adults does not work or attend school.

In metro Phoenix, it’s one in five.

Experts say the reasons Phoenix has a higher disconnection rate vary — from students who come from communities that don’t place a high value on a diploma or lack educational options, to a weak economy where youths and young adults struggle to find work.

Disconnected youths and young adults are more likely to lean on the government for services, such as welfare and health care, costing taxpayers. And they can hamper economic development as companies look to locate in areas with skilled workers.

“The costs both to the kids and our society is very high,” Burd-Sharps said. “It can actually leave scars that last for a lifetime, affecting everything from earnings and financial independence, physical and mental health — and, research shows, even to the marital prospects.”

### **Spotlighting the issue**

Measure of America defined disconnected youths as young adults who attend neither school — high school, college, trade school — nor work.

This is Measure of America’s first report on youth disconnection. The group, founded in 2006, is an initiative of the Social Science Research Council, a New York-based non-profit. The California-based Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, which helps the disadvantaged and underserved, funded the report.

The group used enrollment and employment data from the U.S. census.

The organization determined there are 5.8 million disconnected young adults in the country. The number grew by more than 830,000 since the beginning of the economic downturn in 2007, the report said.

The report included only the country’s 25 largest metro areas based on population. The goal: bring attention to the magnitude of this issue and its impact on the rest of the country, Burd-Sharps said.

### **Low school enrollment**

One of the main reasons the Phoenix area didn’t fare well is that the Valley had the lowest school enrollment of all the 25 metro areas studied.

Only 55 percent of people in this age group were enrolled in school.

Researchers say youths drop out of school or don’t seek higher education in the Phoenix area for several reasons.

### **Pregnancy**

The report said the rate of teen pregnancy in metro Phoenix is twice that of Boston — the city with the lowest rate.

Arizona had the 12th-highest birth rates among mothers ages 15 to 19 as of 2010, the latest year for which data are available, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Trying to finish high school while caring for a child is difficult at best, said Veronica Morrison, director of Young Lives, a Phoenix outreach project for teen mothers. Juggling the responsibilities of mothering an infant late at night with homework can be too much to handle, she said.

“They then have to get up at five or six in the morning to sometimes take multiple buses with their babies or toddlers just to be at school on time,” Morrison said. “Multiple tardies equal absences that can get girls expelled.”

Many teen mothers also can’t afford child care.

“It is very difficult for these young women to find safe people to leave their children with while they are at school,” Morrison said. “Often times, they are rejected by their families when they find out they are pregnant, which, of course, creates major challenges.”

Many teen moms must choose between finishing their education and staying home, Morrison said. And a significant number of them drop out.

“They are simple teenagers having to deal with grown-up realities,” she said.

## **Culture**

Arizona’s graduation rate is 67 percent, compared with the national average of 75 percent, according to Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, a Bethesda, Md.-based education research non-profit.

Most high-school dropouts live in communities where there’s a high rate of dropouts already — so the importance of obtaining a diploma isn’t stressed, Burd-Sharps said. These areas tend to have higher Hispanic and Black populations and higher concentrations of poverty, the report said.

“There’s a really strong association between what happens with adults and what happens with kids,” she said.

David Bennett, founder and director of New City Phoenix, a south Phoenix-based non-profit that helps underserved youths, said there are success stories coming out of these neighborhoods but keeping people plugged in is nearly impossible.

“Most who succeed leave their neighborhood and don’t come back, so there is not an example of any rational motivation to pursue something that isn’t easy,” he said.

“Communities with high rates of college-going are communities where there’s more mentoring, more volunteerism, more parent and more social-network connections and who are more likely to help all the kids in the community,” Burd-Sharps said.

## **Opportunities**

Too many high-school curricula are designed for those interested in a four-year degree, Burd-Sharps said.

“While every American needs some education after high school, the idea that it has to be a four-year college degree gives the message that anything else would be second-best,” she said.

“If you look at other affluent democracies, especially in Europe, they have really strong vocational- and technical-education systems and have far, far lower disconnection rates than we do in the U.S.”

Bennett said the responsibility to prepare kids for non-college alternatives goes beyond school districts: Parents must also help push the students in that direction.

## **Employment**

The report said youth employment is not the area of greatest challenge in Phoenix. The number of unemployed youths in the Valley is nearly equal to the national unemployment rate for that age group.

But that doesn’t mean metropolitan Phoenix isn’t struggling.

Many young people don’t work because there simply are no jobs for them — high-school diploma or not, said Dennis Hoffman, director of the L. William Seidman Research Institute at Arizona State University’s W.P. Carey School of Business.

Phoenix eliminated its youth-employment program amid budget cuts, and countless private companies scaled back hiring. Younger people with limited skills and education are competing for fewer jobs.

They can’t compete with people who have been working for a decade.

“If all those kids overnight chose to go to school, our labor market would have a challenging time providing employment opportunities for them upon their graduations,” said Hoffman, who studies economies.

Teens and young adults with less work experience felt the brunt of the bad economy hardest. According to the Washington, D.C.-based Employment Policy Institute, the teen unemployment rate is at its worst since World War II.

“For years, the Phoenix economy has provided abundant opportunities for people with modest skills, but a really good work ethic,” Hoffman said. “Over the last five years, those jobs really evaporated pretty rapidly, and so as a result, people have to get their heads around the notion that they are going to have to pursue more knowledge-based employment opportunities. And that means they are going to have to acquire knowledge and skills at a greater rate than they’ve been accustomed.”

### **Quality of life**

Being a disconnected youth dramatically affects a person’s quality of life, the report said. Disconnection from the workforce as a youth increases the likelihood of chronic, long-term unemployment later in life.

“Youth disconnection matters a lot for these kids,” Burd-Sharps said. “Rather than laying the foundation for a productive adult life, they’re adrift at the margins, missing out on the life skills and the identity and purpose that school and work offer.”

Disconnected youths eventually face more challenges long-term and have fewer resources to address them. Unemployed young adults with less education are more likely to depend on the government, and thus taxpayers, for services such as welfare, food stamps and health care, the report said.

An undereducated and skilled labor force also does not complement the increasingly high-tech industry, said Althe Allen, assistant superintendent for instruction and accountability in the Phoenix Union High School District.

“We’ve heard from our business partners and people in the work industry that we need to partner together to keep kids engaged in school, so that not only could they be successful in school, but in the workplace,” she said.

Arizona’s higher-than-average dropout rate means local companies have fewer options when looking for highly skilled workers, Hoffman said. And it means that new businesses that could provide work often stay away.

“Employers contemplate opening businesses in Phoenix because they know we have an abundant workforce, but we don’t have an abundant (educated) ... and skilled workforce,” Hoffman said. “They don’t come here in large numbers because we don’t have the talent for them.”

### **Making changes**

Researchers said schools, businesses and governments can do several things to decrease the Valley’s youth-disconnection rate.

#### **Early education**

Arizona school districts need to make early education a priority.

Two out of three Arizona children don’t attend preschool, according to the annual Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Kids Count Data Book.

“Preschool is one of the best investments for preventing youth disconnection,” Burd-Sharps said. “And while preschool may seem a long way off from the teenage years, research shows a high-quality preschool is a really sound investment for lower dropout rates and higher employment later on.”

### **Emphasize alternatives to four-year college education**

More school districts need to implement alternative school-to-work options that encourage students to pursue careers that do not require a four-year degree.

“We really need to move beyond this college-for-all mantra,” she said.

### **Offer flexible schedules**

The Phoenix Union district has continued to implement programs for students who cannot follow a traditional school-day schedule. The district’s dropout rate has dipped to 2 percent, said Allen, the assistant superintendent.

The district’s dropout rate was more than 20 percent in the mid-’90s, she said.

“When I think back to the early ’90s, there weren’t a lot of choices,” she said. “You come from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. If that doesn’t work for you, ‘Oh well.’ So in essence, we created the dropout system.”

The district now offers evening school, online classes and weekend options.

### **Partner with businesses**

This summer, Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton started the Mayor’s Summer Teen Workforce Program, a partnership with several businesses to decrease the teen unemployment rate. Stanton said businesses that were initially hesitant to hire teens have been surprised.

“They often find out that the teens come ready to work and that advances the cause of the business and ends up being a pretty good bargain,” Stanton said.

Phoenix also restored funding for Phoenix Summer Youth Employment in this year’s budget.

“Giving a student an opportunity to have a professional experience, where they go to an office or professional workplace, has long-term dividends, makes that student more ready for college and life skills — even if the pay is minimal,” Stanton said.

## **Arizona's public-school funding still battered by recession**

### **State's school districts cope in varying ways with cuts in funding**

The Arizona Republic **NOTE DATE: 2-27-2011**

For the first time in two decades, Arizona is facing two, possibly three, consecutive years of declines in basic per-student funding for K-12 schools.

The Great Recession battered the state's take from sales, property and income taxes and public-land sales, causing Arizona to chop its per-student funding, hike the sales tax and patch in with federal stimulus aid. Basic funding slipped in fiscal 2010 and 2011.

The stimulus money will vanish in 2012, likely forcing further budget cuts.



The state is trying to shore up K-12, but already it has dropped support of all-day kindergarten, cut funding for classroom equipment, and stopped kicking in money to maintain school buildings. Schools are making up for losses with property taxes and other federal money, yet still have laid off staff, trimmed salaries and raised class sizes.

The question that lingers for many schools and parents: Will Arizona's funding support for K-12, perennially among the weakest in the nation, rebound to the levels of even a few years ago?

Many educators see signs of chronic frugality ahead. The economic recovery is only inching forward, and population growth, which brings new per-student funds to schools, has slowed. Laws are being floated to put in place more cost-saving approaches for K-12, such as offering more online education and graduating students sooner out of high school.

Arizona K-12 schools are looking for ways to survive, and succeed, with less money.

The pain of adjustment, however, is not being shared equally among the state's 227 school districts and 510 charter schools. Schools are struggling in different ways and to different degrees.

To illuminate the issues, *The Arizona Republic* examined some typical financial situations playing out in traditional school districts in the Valley and outside Tucson.

Some Arizona districts have trimmed their budgets because voters in their communities decided to stop paying extra school property taxes.

Others are suffering declining enrollment, which causes revenue from per-student state funding to drop even as many of their fixed costs remain.

Schools that serve mainly poor families enjoy additional federal aid. But it comes with restrictions, and the money can't always be used where it's needed most.

Others are in good financial shape and are preparing for any eventual drops in enrollment and state funding.

Whatever their situation, all are hoping the state's economic tide shifts for the better in the next several years. The demands for improved academic performance are only accelerating.

"Standards are higher for what we expect of a high-school graduate, but you wrestle with that at the same time you see your dollars being limited," said Gene Dudo, the Glendale Union High School District's finance administrator.

### **Enrollment:**

#### **Make or break**

When schools lose students, they also lose per-student state funds while overhead costs, such as air-conditioning, food service and transportation, remain steady.

The Paradise Valley Unified School District grew this year by about 120 students, a small number but the first growth in six years. The recession has helped.

"A lot of our housing became much more affordable, and people want to be in this district," Assistant Superintendent Tom Elliot said about the northeast Valley district. This means its budget will grow a bit from last year and offers hope that in coming years it can fill its classrooms, operate more efficiently and avoid closing some schools.

Other districts haven't seen a halt in their slide.

In west-central Phoenix, the Alhambra Elementary School District, which is 70 percent Latino, has lost 1,000 students, 6.5 percent of its enrollment, since 2007. Superintendent Karen Williams doesn't

blame the recession. She blames a 2007 state law that permits fining businesses for hiring illegal immigrants and the subsequent rancorous debate over immigration around the state. Williams says many parents moved out of Arizona.

"When that conversation, those guidelines, came into play, our enrollment started to decrease," Williams said.

But one of the district's 15 schools is an exception: Alhambra Traditional School, which is K-8, is at capacity and has a waiting list of students from across the Valley. Half of the school's students are from outside the district. Families seek out the 28-year-old alternative school because of its exceptional reputation, intensive curriculum, disciplined environment and required parent involvement.

It would seem smart for the district to convert more schools into the traditional model and start growing again.

But it's not that simple.

Federal money makes up 24 percent of the Alhambra district's budget, a relatively high proportion. The reason is the district's high poverty rate: 90 percent of Alhambra's students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. But federal money can't be used to support specialty schools, such as Alhambra Traditional, that enroll many kids outside the district who aren't poor.

The district cannot afford to create another such school using only the money it gets from the state, Williams said.

Federal money allows the district to pay for high-end learning programs and teacher training, but it can't be used to replace state funds. When Williams builds her budget, hires teachers and pays for supplies and utilities, she uses only state money.

Without stimulus dollars next year and with a declining enrollment, Alhambra will shed 60 teaching positions, increase class size and freeze teacher and staff pay.

### **Overrides:**

#### **Voters grow wary**

More and more, "overrides," or extra property taxes, are becoming critical for districts to improve or maintain quality. But more and more, voters are giving the taxes a thumbs-down.

In Maricopa County, for instance, 50 of its 57 school districts get revenue from overrides to help pay teachers, buy technology and keep nurses and librarians.

"It's now something almost needed to be competitive," said Chuck Essigs of the Arizona Association of School Business Officials.

In November 2009, 20 of 36 override votes failed in the Valley. In November 2010, six of 16 overrides failed, and several others, including in Deer Valley and Peoria Unified, were only narrowly approved.

Override failures often force districts to cut budgets and rethink their outreach to voters.

In the Vail Unified School District southeast of Tucson, Superintendent Calvin Baker preached his management creed for two decades: Give a community excellence and innovation, and that community will support its public schools.

But in November, the superintendent's faith was shaken. Voters said no to an override for the first time in 17 years.

"It's a very difficult time," Baker said. "The biggest adjustment we've had to make is, frankly, an emotional one."

Vail was the first district to open its own charter schools and an all-laptop high school. The state has labeled its 17 schools excelling. Its schools have waiting lists, and no independent charter has opened its door to compete with the district.

"Then boom - taxpayers said no," Baker said.

Baker has no management magic to avoid laying off 45 teachers next school year, reducing pay for teachers and staff, increasing class sizes and cutting the number of music, art and physical-education classes. District enrollment was flat this year, so Vail enrolled more out-of-district students to keep classrooms full and running efficiently. It will grow next school year by about 2 percent, down from the 4 to 6 percent it saw each year up until two years ago.

Three years ago, the state approved money that the district can use to build a new school if it is confident the school will be needed when growth restarts. While it seems irresponsible not to accept the cash, some people in the district cannot comprehend why a district could lay off teachers at the same time it is building.

"It's hard to explain," Baker said. "It seems like it's in conflict."

Vail has not yet determined if it will ask voters for an override again in November. If it doesn't or if voters say no again, Baker envisions stripping down courses in his four high schools to offer only state-required core classes. That would mean eliminating advanced courses that students need to prepare for college, such as second-year Spanish and Advanced Placement courses. He already is talking to Pima Community College about providing teachers and college-prep classes on Vail's campuses, but those students will have to pay tuition.

"If the cuts continue to come, something has to give," Baker said.

### **Bonds: Maintaining buildings**

Except for emergency funds, the Legislature hasn't put money in the school-building renovation and repair fund for three years. That means school districts must rely on voter approval to sell bonds in order to pay for maintaining campuses and offices, whether renovating older schools or repaving parking lots.

When districts sell bonds, they take on debt and interest payments. Lawmakers restrict the amount of debt districts can hold, based on a percentage of the assessed value of all the property within a district.

As property prices have plummeted, so has the amount of money that schools can generate through bonds.

The problem has become acute in the Glendale Union High School District.

The district believes its academic success can be attributed partly to having nine smaller neighborhood high schools. It also believes those nine campuses provide many, and so far free, extracurricular activities that keep students engaged in their schools. They provide students more opportunities to be involved in sports, band or debate clubs. But maintaining nine schools is expensive.

"We believe in small schools, and small schools have been supported by our community," said Dudo, the finance administrator. "We're asking for bond funds in order to address the needs of those schools."

The district relies on bond sales to repair and renovate the nine schools. Its last bond sale was in 2003, the money has been spent, and the district's buildings are in need. Glendale Union must get voters'

permission to sell bonds. It is addressing health and safety issues at its schools but doesn't have the money to improve any buildings, Dudo said.

The most crucial needs for reconstruction and renovations are at Greenway and Thunderbird high schools. In the past, the district's bond sales have never reached its debt cap of 5 percent of assessed property value, but the plummeting value of the district's property means it could get close next time, Dudo said.

"This time we may go out for the most we can, relative to where property values are," Dudo said. But "we're trying to keep the impact to the average property owner to \$25 to \$27 a year."

### **What recession?**

There are some school districts that have not suffered much from the recession.

In Chandler Unified, while overall student enrollment was flat in recent years, the district still has more students in its elementary grades than in its high schools. That gives it a growing amount of cash until 2017 if elementary enrollment stays level or grows, said Joel Wirth, the district's chief financial officer.

"Our student growth pattern hasn't been that much different than we've expected," Wirth said. It may be a little less because of slower growth and housing sales, "but we were pleasantly surprised," Wirth said.

He said Chandler has long known that growth will stop one day and has money-making ideas for when that day comes.

For example, the district has a \$25 million "rainy day" fund it has built over the past 30 years for tough financial times. The district could charge fees to students participating in athletics but hasn't needed to yet.

Chandler voters agreed to a bond sale in November and an override in 2008. But the district has never reached its override tax cap, and it could ask voters to raise their property taxes a little higher. It hasn't yet.

"Chandler's one of the lucky districts," Wirth said.

### **Online:**

#### **A way out for some**

Arizona and other states are turning to online classes as a way to reduce costs.

For a decade, online courses have been popular with parents who home-school their children and can help them stay focused on the work. Researchers say only a small group of disciplined K-12 students can independently succeed in self-directed online courses.

For schools, the popular approach is "hybrid" or "blended" online learning, which involves K-12 courses that combine live teaching, perhaps for three classes a week, with online learning, perhaps for the other two classes.

Limiting the time students spend working with teachers and textbooks frees teachers to take on more students and can save districts the cost of replacing textbooks every five to seven years.

In 2009, Arizona law allowed any school in the state to offer online courses. The state so far has approved 28 online programs. Lawmakers give schools 85 to 95 percent of per-student funding for students who take online-only courses. A state Senate bill would require the State Board of Education to create a hybrid learning model for all schools and allow schools to be paid for students who successfully complete online courses, even if they are not physically at the school.

The stumbling block is the high upfront costs, such as designing the curriculum, ensuring Internet access and training teachers to work with the technology. Some districts can't afford to make the change rapidly.

Paradise Valley Unified views online learning as the best way to survive in a future of slower growth and less cash. It has used override money over the past decade to buy technology and train teachers on how to use it in the classroom. Now, it's poised to provide full online courses to families in and out of the district. About 7,000 students in the district attend dozens of charter and private schools or are home-schooled by their parents, said Elliot, the assistant superintendent.

"I think we can get some of those students back by having a strong online curriculum," Elliot said.

Alhambra's Williams brushes off all the talk about the benefits of online classes. The district has been ahead of many others in adding technology and training teachers to use digital tools, such as interactive whiteboards. But Williams is not putting time or money into online curriculum.

"We know the importance of technology in our classrooms and exposing students to technology," Williams said. "But they don't have it in their homes. Our families don't have the Internet. They don't own computers."

From LWV-US:

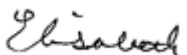
### August 15, 2013

There has been more news on the voting rights front this week, especially as we prepare [to celebrate the anniversary of the March on Washington](#). The Governor of North Carolina signed [an omnibus voter suppression bill into law](#) on Monday. This new law restricts voting not just by requiring the most restrictive voter photo ID, but also significantly cuts back on early voting and restricts voter registration.

North Carolina has a proud tradition of forward thinking election administration. Early voting and Election Day registration during the early voting period have worked well for voters in the state. The new law cuts early voting periods in half and ends registration at the polls during the early voting period. With a stroke of his pen, the governor eliminated North Carolina as a model of good election administration practices and made it the subject of lawsuits aimed at returning the state to Justice Department preclearance under [the Voting Rights Act](#). The [League of Women Voters of North Carolina](#) is [the lead plaintiff in one of the lawsuits](#) that have already been filed.

It is truly sad that as we gather to celebrate the achievements of the Civil Rights movement, states are continuing to curtail voting rights and erecting barriers to voting that disproportionately impact the young, the elderly, poor and minority populations. The March on Washington was not just about voting, it was about equality of opportunity. It is up to all of us who care about this issue to be alert and active in insuring that equality of opportunity is the hallmark of our election laws.

In League,





# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARIZONA MINUTES OF THE CONVENTION

May 18-19, 2013  
Sheraton Tucson Hotel & Suites  
5151 E Grant Road  
Tucson, AZ 85712

**Call to Order:** President Barbara Klein (MP) called the Convention to order at 9 a.m.

**Welcome from LWV Greater Tucson:** Phyllis Carnahan, President, gave the Welcome to members on behalf of the GT League.

**Welcome to Tucson:** Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor of Tucson, welcomed the delegates to Tucson.

**Welcome to Convention:** Barbara Klein welcomed the delegates and Gini McGirr (GT) convention chair gave a few announcements.

**Appointments:** Klein made the following appointments:

Parliamentarian: Shirley Sandelands (GT)  
Credentials Committee: Phyllis Wassenberg, Trish O’Flaherty, Dorothy Riley, all of

GT

Timekeeper: Shirley Muney (GT)

Minutes Committee: Carol West (GT) and Alice Stambaugh (MP)

**Report of Credentials Committee:** Secretary Gini McGirr advised the report as follows: Present are: 3 presidents, 2 alternates, 15 local League delegates, 7 state board members for total of 27 delegates. There are 11 non-voting members present and one guest. There is a quorum.

**Roll Call of the Leagues:** McGirr called the Roll:

League	Pres.	Alternate	Delegates	Allowed	Members	
Central Yavapai County	--	1	1	3	47	
Greater Tucson		1	--	9	10	223
Greater Verde Valley	1	--	0	3	43	
Metro Phoenix	--	1	3	4	76	
Northwest Maricopa County	1	--	2	4	69	
Board	--	--	7	8		
Totals	3	2	22	32	460	

**Adoption of Order of Business:** Klein advised that the Order of Business would have to be changed because of the change of time for one speaker. AZ SOS Ken Bennett’s talk would be changed from 11 a.m. to 1:30 pm. The workshops would follow his talk. **Motion to adopt the Amended Order of Business as found on pages 1-3 of the Workbook. Motion carried.**

**Introduction of State Board and Staff:** Klein introduced the state board members that were present: Barbara Klein, president; Robyn Prud’homme-Bauer, 1<sup>st</sup> VP (GVV); Mary Gresham, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP (GT); Gini McGirr, Secretary (GT); Joanie Mauger, Treasurer (GT); Terri Farneti, Director (CYC); Sandra Goodwin, Director (CYC); Dana Johnston, Director (NWMC).

Off board: Tricia Gerrodette, Natural Resources (MAL); Marion Pickens, Education (GT); Valerie Ellien, Health Care (NWMC); Shirley Sandelands, Nominating Chair (GT).

**Minutes of 2011 Convention:** Klein advised that the Minutes had been read by the Minutes Committee, adopted by the state Board and filed as printed.

**Treasurer's Report & Ed Fund Report:** Joanie Mauger, Treasurer, reviewed both reports. She advised both organizations had operated at a loss this year. The LWVAZ has approved joining the Association of Fundraising Professionals to help volunteers learn the art of fundraising.

The general fund has \$12,042.00 in the checking account in the National Bank.

The Ed Fund has \$31,553.72 in the checking account in the National Bank.

Copies of the reports are filed with the Minutes.

The local League members as of January 2013 are: Central Yavapai County 47, Greater Tucson 223, Greater Verde Valley 43, Metro Phoenix 76 and Northwest Maricopa County 69 for total of 460 members. The Cochise County League disbanded in 2013.

**Proposed Budgets:** Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer (GVV) presented the General Operating Fund as found on page 16 of the Workbook. The budget will be adopted on Sunday morning.

Prud'homme-Bauer presented the Ed Fund proposed budget as found on page 17 of the Workbook.

Budgets are attached to the Minutes.

**Nominating Committee Report:** Shirley Sandelands (GT) presented the Slate of Officers and Directors as found on page 19 of the Workbook.

Officers:

President:	Barbara Klein (MP)	2013-2015
1 <sup>st</sup> VP:	Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer	2013-2015
Secretary:	Gini McGirr (GT)	2013-2015

Directors – Elected

Development:	Dana Johnston (NWMC)	2013-1015
Impartial Courts:	Sandra Goodwin (CYC)	2013-2015

Elected – Off board

Nominating Chair:	Shirley Sandelands (GT)	2013-2014
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**Bylaws:** McGirr advised that there were no new amendments to the Bylaws this year.

**Speaker: Congressman Ron Barber (D2-AZ)** spoke to the group after being introduced by Phylis Carnahan.

**Proposed Program:** Prud'homme-Bauer presented the proposed program as found on page 18 of the Workbook.

On discussion of Not-Recommended Program items, Margot Champagne (MP) **moved**, seconded, **the consideration of the End of Life Choices: a study on the Oregon Law. Motion carried.**

**Reports:**

**Election Reform:** Barbara Klein (MP)

Clean Elections: HB2593 signed by governor which raises the amount of money traditional candidates would raise approximately four times. Not known if constitutional. LWVAZ testified on this bill many times. HCR2026 sends the question of Clean Elections back to the ballot and it would sweep all monies into education funds. Todd Lang, Exec Director, is leaving the CCEC which is a great loss. CCEC down one commissioner, need names for this.

National Popular Vote (NVP): SB1042 was introduced in AZ Senate but was not heard in a committee. CA is 9<sup>th</sup> state to enact the bill. Gallup Poll shows public support.

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV): HB2367 was introduced in AZ House but did not get a hearing. HB2518, Local option for approval voting," had amendment with wording from H2367. Bill is still pending.

Parity for Independent Voters: Small committee tried to promote bills that included parity. AZ judge says listing only the Democratic & Republican parties on registration form is okay. Libertarians and Green Parties in AZ asked US District Court to reconsider the decision.

Standing committee: SB1003 and SB1261 were addressed separately and then put in omnibus bill. LWVAZ testified on these bills on numerous occasions, met with stakeholders and participated in new

‘AZ Voters Coalition’ whose effort this year was these bills. SB1003 placed limitations on who can collect and drop off a voter’s early ballot. SB126 allowed election officials to remove voters from the permanent early voting list if they didn’t vote in both of the two previous primary and general elections and do not opt back in to the list.

**Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP):** Barbara Robertson (MP). This is a grant sponsored grassroots training of local Leagues to develop new avenues of Voter Protection. In 2008, Gini McGirr, Tucson, and Barbara Klein, Phoenix, represented the state League at a training session in VA. They were requested to develop a program for Arizona, based on the training. The plan was for all eligible citizens using DMV and Social Services Departments to be registered to vote. The plan was implemented by gaining permission to post signs in the DMV and DES locations throughout the state advertising the fact that citizens are encouraged to register to vote at these state government locations. In Jan. 2013, Barbara Robertson was asked to oversee any future PAVP projects and grants. At this time no projects have been funded. There is still \$900 in the budget for use for a state project.

**Legislative Action:** Gini McGirr (GT). The Legislature has gone over their 120 days and now has the lower per diem rate. They only meet three days a week as the governor has said not to send her any bills until the budget and Medicaid expansion bill is done. On May 14, ten bills on the budget and HCR 2026 were heard in Appropriation committee. The latter would do away with Clean Elections and give the funds to education. Then on Wednesday, the full Senate heard the bills and passed the Medicaid bill. This now goes to the House where the Chair of Appropriations has said he will not hear it. The Speaker of the House has said he will not bring it to the floor. Another bill was put in at the end of the budget bills. This is Omnibus and has several of the bills we are tracking put into this bill to get other ones moving again. The legislature will still be in session in June.

They passed SCR1016 which will let the voters decide if they want to be able to challenge the federal government. This is the first referendum to go on the 2014 ballot.

Independent Redistricting Commission: There are three court cases going on at this time. One filed as to the map being unconstitutional was heard in March and should have a ruling in June.

**Impartial Courts:** Sandra Goodwin (CYC). HB2600 would change the number of judicial nominees presented to the governor for appointment from three to five, once again allowing for political intrusion into the system. This bill was passed and signed by the governor and will be the law if a challenge to its constitutionality fails. Goodwin and Klein attended conference with several groups to discuss challenging the law.

**Natural Resources:** Tricia Gerrodette (MAL). Mining remains an issue for parts of AZ. There is a plan to re-open uranium mining near the Grand Canyon. A federal judge agreed with a 20-year federal ban on new uranium mining but a company with an old mine claims it has grandfathered rights to start mining again. There is a proposal to allow copper mining to occur in a sacred area called Oak Flats, near Superior. The Rosemont Mine, near Tucson, fight has been going on for years, the company still lacks some permits.

Water is the major natural resource issue for the southern part of the state. The Verde Valley has stretches of water which are threatened by proposals to pump water from the Big Chino aquifer to supply growth in Prescott and Prescott Valley. Because the Salt River Project in Phoenix relies on Verde River flows, it is involved in the fight on Verde flows. The San Pedro River, also with perennial stretches, remains the center of a development fight in southeastern AZ. A lawsuit against ADWR was filed in Maricopa County Superior Court in mid-May by three parties: BLM, Tricia Gerrodette, and Robin Silver.

Global warming has just passed a bad milestone of 400 ppm for CO2 in the atmosphere. The scientific recommendation is that 360 ppm is a safe limit to maintain life as we humans have known it for a few million years.

**Education:** Marion Pickens (GT). The governor wants to include more state funding in the budget for schools. Schools must implement the Common Core Standards and students are to be evaluated with a new test through a computer program, which will require additional funding. SB1444 is supposed to

reform the schools through a system of performance pay with schools earning funding through a point system. A lot of the schools will struggle to survive.

**Social Media:** Terri Farneti (CYC). LWV is on Facebook and our readership is up. She posts material and links to other pages. She has also started Twitter and asks members to search for LWVAZ and follow the state. She just opened the account this week and is following 20 organization's 'tweets.'" She would like recommendations of "who" to follow as to not appear partisan in any way.

**Health Care:** Valerie Ellien (NWMC). The goal of our efforts this past year was education and advocacy for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in AZ. We are in a coalition to develop educational material for the ACA, presenting program to the LWVMP, following legislation on the Medicaid Expansion and contacting local non-profits to share information on funding opportunities and encouraging application for federal funds.

**Luncheon:** Phylis Carnahan, LWVGT president, introduced Paula Aboud, a former AZ lawmaker, who spoke on "*Women Ignited Now.*"

**Speaker:** Barbara Klein introduced the AZ Secretary of State Ken Bennett who spoke on "*Arizona Election Administration: A Guide to Who Does What and When.*" This was a show and tell of which departments work on the registration of voters and what happens to the ballots after election.

**Workshops:**

"*Social Media: Make Facebook & Twitter Work for Your League*" presented by Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer, LWVAZ 1st VP (GVV) with speaker, Rocelle Aragon, Copywriter at the McFadden/Gavender Advertising Co. She is involved with the AZ International Film Festival.

"*Introduction to Membership & Leadership Development*" was presented by Mary Gresham, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, LWVAZ (GT) and Gini McGirr, Ruth Shur Fellows coach (GT).

Plenary session recessed.

**Dinner:** Barbara Klein introduced the dinner speaker: Dr. Ann Weaver Hart, President, University of Arizona, speaking on "*Go West Young Woman OR Hard Hat Required; Breaking the Glass Ceiling, A Career in Higher Education.*"

**Sunday Morning – May 19, 2013**

**Plenary session reconvenes.**

**Call to Order:** President Barbara Klein called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Credentials Report:** McGirr gave the following report: Presidents 3; alternates 2; local League delegates 15, state board delegates 7 for total of 27 delegates. There are 5 non-voting members present and 2 guests present.

**Roll Call of the Leagues:**

Name	President	Alternate	Delegates	Allowed		
Members						
Central Yavapai County	0	1	1	3		47
Greater Tucson	1	0	9	10		223
Greater Verde Valley	1	0	0	3		43
Metro Phoenix	0	1	3	4		76
Northwest Maricopa County	1	0	2	4		69
State Board			7	8		
Totals	3	2	22	32		460

**Speaker:** Karen Nicholson, LWVUS board member, spoke to the delegates on "*What's New with National.*" She reported on activities at the national office and took questions. She advised that the MP League had gained 18% in membership.

**Adoption of the General Fund Budget:** Moved, by Prud'homme-Bauer, Budget Chair, that the proposed General Fund Budget as printed on page 16 of the Workbook be adopted. Motion carried.

**Adoption of the Action Agenda:** 1<sup>st</sup> VP Prud'homme-Bauer moved the adoption of the proposed program as printed on page 18-19 of the Workbook.

**Moved, by Prud'homme-Bauer, the adoption of the LWV Arizona Executive Branch Position Statement as printed on page 18 of the Workbook. Motion carried.**

**Moved, by Prud'homme-Bauer, the adoption of the LWV Arizona Charter School Concurrence Statement as printed on page 18 of the Workbook. Motion carried.**

**Moved, by Marion Pickens (GT), seconded Joan Tobar (GT) to adopt an amendment that the new Charter School Concurrence statement replaces the old Charter School position. Motion carried.**

**Moved, by Prud'homme-Bauer, the adoption of the proposed program as amended. Motion carried.**

**New Study:** Prud'homme-Bauer moved the adoption of the new study on State and Local Finance. **Scope:** A study of state and local revenue sources and the allocation of revenues, using the LWV principles: 1) that the government must maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation; 2) that efficient and economical government require adequate financing. **Motion carried.**

**Prud'homme-Bauer moved the adoption of writing a white paper on the use of striker (strike-all) bills by the Arizona legislature and the alternatives, for concerted action by LWV Arizona. Motion carried.**

NWMC League has a committee that will work on this.

**Non-recommended study:** Margo Champagne (MP) moved, seconded, to adopt a study on End of Life Choices. After discussion, this motion was withdrawn.

**Moved, by Valerie Ellien (NWMC), that the League approve the development of a White Paper on end of life choice and related legislation as it relates to the League's Health Care Position. Motion carried.**

**Fund Raising:** Dana Johnston (NWMC) spoke on the need for all Leagues to give names to her for fundraising project. She gave out cards to all delegates for them to write names and return to her. Funds are needed for sending person to national council/conventions and the Voter Guide.

Carol West (GT) advised all local Leagues to have League birthday parties in February and to ask businesses for funds for specific projects. Joanie Mauer (GT) advised to do this now before the end of the yearly budgets in the business world.

**State of the League Report:** President Klein started with the sad loss of the Cochise County League, our weakest moment, but said that while 'the state of the LWVAZ is not STRONG'... it seems Stronger.

We are stronger for two prime reasons – **Visibility and Membership.** "Membership increases with more visibility and it works the other way as well. If we have more ACTIVE members, they get us more visibility. We have increased both of these in the last two years – we have dramatically increased our visibility and we have had an uptick in membership in most places."

She visited most of the local Leagues in the past two years. They have had productive meetings and great events; everyone helped prepare a wonderful Voter Guide and delivered many voter services before and during election season. She spoke about Leagues moderating debates, doing ballot prop talks, and taking part in immigration reform, instruction for new health care changes, transportation planning, women's issues, economic development and much more.

She represented us at numerous meetings with other organizations, coalition allies and many issue stakeholders. She spoke to different groups, worked with state officials and many Legislators on bills and changes to bills, helped prepare supportive documents and member trainings, wrote controversial op-eds and delivered (with any luck, provocative) testimonies, yet always showed the LWV as a diplomatic face –her personal goal.

She also observed a Citizen's Initiative Review program in Oregon, which the LWV supported. LWVAZ also co-sponsored the "'Student Voices' video contest which we took part in with Project Civil Discourse. We now have one of the videos to use with a League logo.

**Election of Officers/Directors:** Shirley Sandelands, Nominating Committee Chair (GT) read the slate of officers/directors on page 19 of the Workbook. Klein asked for nominations from the floor. Following no nominations, she instructed the secretary to cast a unanimous vote.

Klein introduced the new board: President, Barbara Klein; 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer; Secretary, Gini McGirr; Directors: Dana Johnston and Sandra Goodwin.

**Recommendations to the Board:**

1. The Board consider having the state meeting at an earlier date.
2. Sign the blue cards with possible donor's names and return to Dana Johnston.
3. Discussion that one delegate thought the League was stuffy.
4. Pickens would like names for education meeting.
5. When discussing issues, be non-partisan; do not mention people or parties.
6. Need to meet more people so have longer social time before dinner.
7. Go around the meeting room and say who you are and what League you belong to.
8. Have reports from Local Leagues in the state Voter. One person to call each month for items.
9. Do Facebook at convention.
10. One member spoke that this was first time she had not been a delegate and felt like an outsider.
11. Meet different people, set the clock and go talk to someone else.
12. Use U shape tables.
13. Sit with different people each meeting.
14. Extend the legislative team. Klein, McGirr and Stambaugh need more help.
15. Discussion on how diplomatic Klein is when talking to legislators and at meetings. We need to tell her often how much we appreciate her.

**Invitation to 2014 Council:** Barbara Robertson (MP) extended invitation to the delegates to come to Phoenix for the Council next year.

**Invitation to 2015 Convention:** Ellie Bauer (GVV) and Dale Domzalski (CYC) extended an invitation to meet in their area for the 2015 convention.

**Speaker:** McGirr introduced David Fitzsimmons, Editorial Cartoonist, *The Arizona Daily Star*, who entertained the group with his ample wit and cartoons.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Klein adjourned the convention at noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini McGirr, Secretary LWVAZ

Alice Stambaugh                      Date

Carol West                              Date

**Motion to adopt the Amended Order of Business as found on pages 1-3 of the Workbook. Motion carried.**

On discussion of Not-Recommended Program items, Margot Champagne (MP) **moved**, seconded, **the reconsideration of the End of Life Choices: a study on the Oregon Law. Motion carried.**

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**2013-2014 LWV Calendar**

**General meetings** open to the public will be held on the first Saturday of the month, beginning in September. We will continue at Las Fuentes for most meetings.

**Board meetings** will be on the first Friday after the first Saturday, will alternate between 8:00am and 11:00am, and will be held at Vicky O'Hara's house.

**Social meetings:** The Annual Business Meeting/Luncheon will move to May. December will be social only, with a Holiday Luncheon.

Saturday, Sept. 7	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Funding of Education
Friday, September 13	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Oct. 5	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Gun Regulations
Friday, October 11	11:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Nov. 2	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Hunger and Poverty
Friday, November 8	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Dec. 7	TBA	Members	Holiday Luncheon
Friday, December 13	11:00AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Jan. 4	9:30 AM	General Meeting	ALEC/Common Cause
Friday, January 10	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
January 29	TBA	Meet and Greet	Non-Profits and Government Officials
Saturday, Febr. 1	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Local and State Program Planning
Friday, February 7	11:00AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Mar. 1	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Legislative Update
Friday, March 7	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Apr. 5	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Poverty and Education
Friday, April 11	11:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, May. 3	TBA	Members Only	Annual Meeting and Luncheon,



**IMPORTANT WEBSITE  
REFERENCES**

LWVUS Website  
[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

LWVAZ Website  
[www.lwvaz.org](http://www.lwvaz.org)

LWVCYC Website  
<http://centralvavapai.az.lwvnet.org/>  
OR: <http://goo.gl/HxKph>

We recommend that you check these out monthly, or more often. Lots of good information! Bookmark them to save on typing, or go to [lwvaz.org](http://lwvaz.org), where there are links to click on. Or Google LWVCYC!

Our website includes current and past VOTERS, and other great material. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

*Reminder – Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings, at the home of President Vicky O’Hara. To request placement of an item on the Board agenda and/or to receive the Board agenda packet, contact the LWVCYC President a week in advance.*

**LWV MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION**

**2013-2014**

Membership in the LWV is open to any person 18 and over who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the LWVUS. Dues for 2013-2014 cover payment for local (\$11.00), state (\$13), and national (\$31.00) memberships.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Note type of membership, and make check to “LWVCYC”:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$55/Yr Individual Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$82.50/Yr Household Membership

Plus suggested donation:

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to League (not tax deductible)

\$\_\_\_\_\_ \*Contribution to Education Fund (tax deductible)

\*Donations to the LWVAZ Education Fund must be made by separate check, to preserve tax deductibility. This supports our Webpage and Voter Service activities. Thank you!

Both new and renewal members, please include this form with your check.

New: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

Be a “Friend” of LWVCYC:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50/Yr Individual or \_\_\_\_\_ \$75/Yr Household  
(open to businesses and individuals)

Please mail this form and all checks to:

**LWVCYC  
PO Box 11538 Prescott, AZ 86304-1538**

**Please renew your membership, if you have not already done so!**



**League of Women Voters  
of Central Yavapai County  
P.O. Box 11538  
Prescott, AZ 86304-1538**

**A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.**