

ARIZONA

OVERALL RANK: 51ST¹
TIER 5 (WEAKEST)

STRONGER —————> WEAKER

OVERALL						51
1. RESOURCES AND MEMBERSHIP					40	
2. INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS						49
3. SCOPE OF BARGAINING					45	
4. STATE POLICIES						49
5. PERCEIVED INFLUENCE						48

AREA 1: RESOURCES AND MEMBERSHIP TIED FOR 40TH

Arizona’s two state teacher unions contend with low membership numbers and thin resources. Just 44.5 percent of teachers in the Grand Canyon State are unionized, 47th out of 51 states. (Its unionization rate is even 15 percent lower than the average among the fourteen states where bargaining is similarly permitted but not required.) The state’s NEA and AFT affiliates bring in just \$208 annually per teacher in the state (40th). Education resources are low as well: While the state directs 21.5 percent of its own expenditures to K-12 education (16th), Arizona spends a total (from state, local, and federal sources) of only \$8,655 annually per pupil (48th). Teachers do, however, receive a relatively large slice of that small pie, with 55 percent

of those expenditures dedicated to their salaries and benefits (20th).

AREA 2: INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS² 49TH

Teacher unions have not been major donors to Arizona politics in the past decade (perhaps seeing the futility of giving to campaigns in so red a state—see sidebar). Of the contributions received by state political candidates, just 0.16 percent came from teacher unions; unions in only five states contributed less. Union donations to political parties were just as paltry (0.95 percent; 25th). Further, only 6.3 percent of the delegates to the Democratic and Republican national conventions from this historically conservative state identified as teacher union members (44th).³

*AREA 3: SCOPE OF BARGAINING
TIED FOR 45TH*

Arizona state law does not address collective bargaining in education; districts may decide whether to negotiate with employee organizations (and are not legally bound by the resulting agreements). The scope of bargaining is likewise at the discretion of districts. State law does prohibit unions from automatically collecting agency fees from non-members. It also does not permit any public employee strikes, teachers included.

*AREA 4: STATE POLICIES
TIED FOR 49TH*

Arizona teacher-employment and charter policies are less aligned with traditional teacher union interests than in any other state, save Michigan. Arizona law requires that student achievement data significantly inform teacher evaluations, and it does not allow districts to consider seniority in determining layoffs—positions typically opposed by unions. While unions favor limiting charter schools, Arizona promotes their growth. The state does not cap the overall number of charters and allows for multiple authorizers (although the vast majority are overseen by the state, with local school boards authorizing only a handful). Moreover, charter schools are automatically exempt from most state laws (including those related to teacher certification) and district regulations (including collective bargaining agreements).

*AREA 5: PERCEIVED INFLUENCE
48TH*

Stakeholders in Arizona view teacher unions as weak. Survey respondents rank their influence on education policy behind that of the business roundtable/chamber of commerce, education advocacy groups, the state school board, and the charter school association. They report that teacher unions are not effective in protecting dollars for education or in warding off education proposals with which they disagree, and that state education leaders are only sometimes aligned with teacher-union positions.

*OVERALL
51ST*

Arizona's teacher unions are the weakest in the nation. Even though bargaining is permitted, they have low membership and few financial resources. State law limits the unions' power to strike and gather revenue, supports charter school expansion, and does not offer teachers many of the job securities seen in other states.

For the Arizona Education Association (AEA), “strength in numbers” seems like an appropriate mantra. One example of joining forces: The AEA supported Republican Governor Jan Brewer’s Proposition 100—a temporary increase in sales tax to help finance education—and put its money where its mouth was by donating to the campaign and raising additional funds on the initiative’s behalf. The AEA acknowledged that it was “quite unusual” for it to support a Republican-led proposal, but its appetite for funding made for a temporary truce.⁴ With the short-term tax increase about to expire, the union aligned with numerous other groups—including education advocates, business alliances, and state Democrats—to support an initiative on the November 2012 ballot to make Proposition 100 permanent (and the courts have twice-thwarted opponents’ attempts to stop the initiative before the vote).^{5,6}

The tax increase isn’t the only time other organizations, and the courts, gave the AEA a hand. The union couldn’t stop lawmakers from increasing employee pension contributions, but it supported a lawsuit filed by the Arizona State Retirement System citing the state breached its contract with retirees. Before the suit went to court, the legislature not only passed a bill returning to the old rate but also refunded the money back to the teachers, and the AEA celebrated.⁷ The union also won an injunction against a 2011 statute that would have stopped unions from deducting dues from members’ paychecks without annual authorization, if that money were to be used for political purposes. Adamant that this law inhibited free speech, AEA President Andrew Morrill declared “our voice for quality public schools will not be silenced.”⁸ But Brewer and fellow Republicans may do more than silence the union voice—they may well destroy it. If SB 1485, proposed in early 2012, passes, it will prohibit all public employees from unionizing with a law even more devastating than the one recently passed in Wisconsin (which only limited the scope of bargaining).⁹ The bill is currently tabled until the Senate reopens in 2013. Until then, all the unions in Arizona can do is wait and hope that they won’t have to go it alone.

ARIZONA RANKINGS BY AREA AND INDICATOR

OVERALL RANK: 51ST			
Area and Rank ^a	General Indicator	Sub-Indicator	Sub-Indicator Rank/Status ^b
AREA 1: RESOURCES & MEMBERSHIP 40*	Membership	By rank, what percentage of public-school teachers in the state are union members?	47th
	Revenue	By rank, what is the total yearly revenue (per teacher in the state) of the state-level NEA and/ or AFT affiliate(s)?	40th
	Spending on education	By rank, what percentage of state expenditures (of state general funds, state restricted funds, state bonds, and federal "pass-through" funds) is directed to K-12 education?	16th
		By rank, what is the total annual per-pupil expenditure (of funds from federal, state, and local sources) in the state?	48th
		By rank, what percentage of total annual per-pupil expenditures is directed to teacher salaries and benefits?	20th
AREA 2: INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS 49	Contributions to candidates and political parties	By rank, what percentage of the total contributions to state candidates was donated by teacher unions?	46th
		By rank, what percentage of the total contributions to state-level political parties was donated by teacher unions?	25th
	Industry influence	By rank, what percent of the contributions to state candidates from the ten highest-giving sectors was donated by teacher unions?	49th
	Status of delegates	By rank, what percentage of the state's delegates to the Democratic and Republican conventions were members of teacher unions?	44th
AREA 3: SCOPE OF BARGAINING 45*	Legal scope of bargaining	What is the legal status of collective bargaining?	Neither required nor prohibited
		By rank, how broad is the scope of collective bargaining?	38th*
	Automatic revenue streams	What is the unions' legal right to automatically collect agency fees from non-members and/or collect member dues via automatic payroll deductions?	Agency fees prohibited
	Right to strike	What is the legal status of teacher strikes?	Prohibited
AREA 4: STATE POLICIES 49	Performance pay	Does the state support performance pay for teachers?	State supports/ encourages
	Retirement	By rank, what is the employer- versus employee-contribution rate to the teacher pension system?	46th ^c
	Evaluations	What is the maximum potential consequence for veteran teachers who receive unsatisfactory evaluation(s)?	Teacher improvement plan
		Is classroom effectiveness included in teacher evaluations? If so, how is it weighted?	Required; Significantly informs evaluation
	Terms of employment	How long before a teacher earns tenure?	Three years
		Is student/teacher performance considered in tenure decisions? If so, how is it weighted?	Not included
		Is seniority considered in teacher layoff decisions? If so, how is it weighted?	Optional; May be considered among other factors
		Is teacher performance included in teacher layoff decisions? If so, how is it weighted?	Not required
	By rank, what percentage of the teaching workforce was dismissed due to poor performance?	33rd	
Class size	Is class size restricted for grades 1-3? If so, is the restriction higher or lower than the national average (20)?	No restriction	

Area and Rank	General Indicator	Sub-Indicator	Sub-Indicator Rank/Status
AREA 4: STATE POLICIES 49* (cont.)	Charter school structural limitations	Is there a cap (limit) placed on the number of charter schools that can operate in the state (or other jurisdiction) and/or on the number of students who can attend charter schools?	No state cap (but authorizers are capped)
		Does the state allow a variety of charter schools: start-ups, conversions, and virtual schools?	Yes
		How many charter authorizing options exist? How active are those authorizers?	Two or more w/ limited activity
	Charter school exemptions	Are all charter schools automatically exempt from state laws and state/district regulations (except those that safeguard students and fiscal accountability)? If not, are they eligible for exemptions?	Complete automatic exemptions for all schools
		Are all charter schools automatically exempt from state teacher-certification requirements? If not, are they eligible for exemptions?	Yes
		Are all charter schools automatically exempt from collective bargaining agreements (CBAs)? If not, are they eligible for exemptions?	Automatically exempt

AREA 5: PERCEIVED INFLUENCE^d 48	Relative influence of teacher unions	How do you rank the influence of teacher unions on education policy compared with other influential entities?	Fourth- or fifth-most influential
	Influence over campaigns	On a scale from always to never, how often do Democratic candidates need teacher-union support to get elected?	Sometimes/ Often
		On a scale from always to never, how often do Republican candidates need teacher-union support to get elected?	Rarely
	Influence over spending	To what extent, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, do you agree that even in times of cutbacks, teacher unions are effective in protecting dollars for education?	Disagree
		Given recent budgetary constraints, would you say that teacher unions generally make concessions to prevent reductions in pay and benefits or fight hard to prevent those reductions?	Generally concede
	Influence over policy	To what extent, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, do you agree that teacher unions ward off proposals in your state with which they disagree?	Disagree
		On a scale from always to never, how often do existing state education policies reflect teacher-union priorities?	Rarely/ Sometimes
		To what extent, from totally in line to not at all in line, were state education policies proposed by the governor during your state's latest legislative session in line with teacher-union priorities?	Mostly not in line/ Somewhat in line
		To what extent, from totally in line to not at all in line, were legislative outcomes of your state's latest legislative session in line with teacher-union priorities?	Mostly not in line/ Somewhat in line
	Influence over key stakeholders	On a scale from always to never, how often have the priorities of state education leaders aligned with teacher-union positions in the past three years?	Sometimes
		Would you say that teacher unions typically compromise with policymakers to ensure that their preferred policies are enacted, or typically need not make concessions?	Generally compromise

* Tied with another state

a Area ranks are calculated using a weighted average of sub-indicators. For a more detailed description, see Appendix A.

b Where possible, we report a state's rank as compared to other states on a given metric. For example, out of 51 states, Arizona has the 47th-highest percentage of teachers who are union members. Otherwise, we report a status: In Arizona, collective bargaining is neither required nor prohibited, and union agency fees are prohibited. For a more detailed description of our metrics and methodology, see Appendix A. To request the raw data for your state, send an email to uniondata@edexcellence.net.

c At the time our metric was calculated, a lawsuit over Arizona pension contributions was ongoing (see sidebar); at press time, Arizona amended its layoff policy to prohibit a district from retaining teachers based on seniority.

d For all survey questions, stakeholders were asked specifically about teacher unions, candidates, policies, and leaders in their state. In addition, we asked about unions and policies in the "current legislative session," but because legislative calendars vary from state to state, responses refer to policies proposed and enacted within the 2010-11 window.

ENDNOTES

¹ A state's overall rank is calculated as follows: First, we score it on multiple sub-indicators (sub-indicator data and scores for Arizona are shown in the table, *Arizona Rankings by Area and Indicator*). Second, we take a weighted average of the sub-indicators in each of five areas. In each area, we use that average to place the states in rank order: For example, in Area 1: Resources and Membership, Arizona is ranked 40th of 51 based on the weighted average of its sub-indicators. To generate the state's overall rank, we average the five area ranks together, then re-order the states. For a more detailed description of data sources and methodology, see Appendix A.

² Readers should note that these figures include only direct donations from unions and union-connected PACs, but not their spending on electioneering/advertising, mobilizing the union's own membership, lobbying, or advocacy. A recent *Wall Street Journal* report found that donations and lobbying activities account for a small share of union political spending compared with their expenditures on member mobilization and advocacy. Even the AFT agreed, making the argument that since its mission is organizing and activism, it will naturally spend significant amounts on these activities. Thus, the percentages we report here are extremely conservative representations of what unions actually spend on politics. For more information, see Appendix A, Area 2; Tom McGinty and Brody Mullins, "Political Spending by Unions Far Exceeds Direct Donations," *Wall Street Journal*, July 10, 2012; and Jeff Hauser, "Wall Street Journal Compares Union Political Spending to Corporate Donations," AFL-CIO, July 10, 2012.

³ At the time of publication, the 2000 conventions were the most recent for which such detailed data were available in forms that met rigorous standards. However, 2008 data provided by the *Democratic National Convention* were highly correlated with the reliable figures from 2000.

⁴ Jeremy Duda, "Brewer, Allies Make Final Plea For Prop. 100," *Arizona Capitol Times*, May 17, 2010, <http://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2010/05/17/brewer-allies-make-final-plea-for-prop-100/>.

⁵ E.J. Perkins, "Understanding Arizona's Propositions: 2012 Series, Prop 204," Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University, August 2012, <http://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/2012-understanding-arizonas-propositions/2012-proposition-204-quality-education-and-jobs-act>.

⁶ "Prop. 204 Wins Second Court Victory," *Arizona City Independent*, August 22, 2012, http://www.trivalleycentral.com/arizona_city_independent/news/prop-wins-second-court-victory/article_69760958-afc1-553e-83d6-68d6d1f5e79d.html.

⁷ Craig Harris, "Arizona Public Workers Will Get Refunds," *Arizona Republic*, February 10, 2012, <http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/2012/02/08/20120208arizona-public-workers-will-get-refunds.html>.

⁸ "AEA Wins Injunction Against Educator Gag Bill," Arizona Education Association, accessed July 23, 2012, <http://arizonaeducation.org/home/403.htm>.

⁹ Sarah Jaffe, "Arizona's Vicious War On Workers," *Alternet.com*, February 6, 2012, http://www.salon.com/2012/02/06/arizonas_vicious_war_on_workers/.