Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence

2016 Candidate Survey

Candidate Name: **Representative Ann Kirkpatrick**

QUESTION 1:

Nineteen percent of Arizona youth are unsupervised during the hours after school. What are your views on access to out-of-school time (after school, before school and summer) programs for school-age youth? What legislative or policy actions might you consider engaging in based on your views?

Question 1 Response:

I believe that every child should have access to out-of-school program, these programs help foster academic growth and lessen the burden for parents who don't have flexible work schedules. We must continue to build programs across our state so that working families do not have to make unnecessary sacrifices. I have worked with schools in Arizona in rural and urban communities to secure funding so that schools can fund after-school programs.

QUESTION 2:

Jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) professions are becoming a larger share of the job market, and the demand for skilled workers in these fields is increasing. However, many students graduating from high school are not prepared for the college-level math and science required for the vast majority of these jobs. What are your views on this issue and on the role out-of-school time can play?

Question 2 Response:

STEM jobs are some of the fastest-growing in the U.S. We need to equip our students with the right skills to be competitive in the 21st Century economy. I have worked with communities in my district to help secure funding for STEM training programs, learning centers, and after-school programs that assist students in learning essential skills to help them succeed in their future. I will continue to work to bring funding for these programs to Arizona.

QUESTION 3:

The traditional school day and a variety of supplementary programs are available to support low-income students' access to both meals and academic enrichment during the school year. But this access decreases substantially over the summer. How would you approach this from a policy perspective?

Question 3 Response:

After representing one of the poorest congressional districts per capita in the nation, I understand how critical support for low-income students and their families can be. I firmly believe that programs that help low-income families should not decrease simply because school is no longer in session and that a family's income shouldn't define a student's access to education. We must work together to create solutions that support these programs in the summer to ensure that children don't have to go hungry or miss other supplementary academic programs. Due to drastic cuts to our education budget, these schools lack the necessary funds to run these programs year round. I will always fight against attempts to cut funding to crucial education programs that play significant roles in preparing students to be happy, healthy, and safe.

QUESTION 4:

Given a growing epidemic of childhood obesity, what types of opportunities might help children be physically active in the hours outside the school day? Do you think these types of opportunities ought to be supported or encouraged, and if so, how?

Question 4 Response:

As a mother and a grandmother, I fully believe one of our greatest duties in public service is to ensure all children are given the opportunity to be healthy both mentally and physically. I believe that we must combat the growing epidemic of childhood obesity. In my district, I have helped schools secure grants to help fund physical education programs as a part of after-school programs. After-school programs have proven critical and successful options to combating childhood obesity, particularly in rural and tribal areas, and I will continue to fight to ensure our children are always afforded these opportunities.