



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives
House Majority Leader Warren Petersen (R-12)
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Due to Major Investments, K-12 Education Funding is Near its Constitutional Cap

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – House Majority Leader Warren Petersen (R-12) today noted that because of recent investments in K-12 education, such as implementing the teacher pay raise and restoring district additional assistance, the Legislature may need to override the aggregate expenditure limit (AEL).

Voters amended the State Constitution in 1980 to put a cap on statewide school district spending, which is annually adjusted for enrollment growth and inflation. Funding from bonds, overrides, federal grants, and Prop. 301 are exempt from the AEL, and the Legislature can override the cap by a two-thirds vote.

School districts are currently \$317 million below the AEL. However, when the 20x2020 teacher pay raise is fully implemented and district and charter additional assistance is restored next year, it may cause the AEL to be exceeded.

“While there’s a false narrative that the state is underfunding K-12 education, the numbers tell a much different story,” said Representative Petersen. **“The state has invested so much funding in K-12 education that the Legislature may have to override the cap on district school spending, which has only been done three times before. The difference between then and now is that we are enjoying surpluses instead of deficits.”**

“K-12 education has been a top priority at the Legislature. Per-pupil funding is at an all-time high of more than \$10,000, teachers have received the largest raises ever, and Arizona students have great educational choices and opportunities.”

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