

# Proposals for the Voters



Nearly a dozen states have education-related measures on their Nov. 7 ballots.

## ARIZONA

▶ **Proposition 203, the First Things First Initiative**, would increase the state's tobacco tax by 80 cents, up to \$1.98 per pack, to pay for early-childhood health and development programs.

▶ **Proposition 106, Conserving Arizona's Future**, would set aside almost 700,000 acres of land for conservation and protect a classroom funding stream by improving management of state trust lands.

▶ **Proposition 300** would prohibit adults who are not citizens or legal residents of the United States from taking classes offered by the Arizona education department's adult education division. They would also be barred from receiving child-care assistance and would not be given in-state student status.

## CALIFORNIA

▶ **The Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2006** would authorize \$10.4 billion in state general-obligation bonds to provide aid to school districts, county superintendents of schools, county boards of education, community colleges, the University of California system, the Hastings College of the Law, and the California State University system to construct and modernize facilities.

▶ **Proposition 88** would provide additional public school funding for K-12 by imposing a \$50 tax on each real-property parcel, though it would exempt certain homeowners who are elderly or have disabilities. The money would have to be used for class-size reduction, textbooks, school safety, Academic Success (successful schools that have never received money from school bond issues for construction or modernization) facility grants, or a data system to evaluate educational program effectiveness.

## COLORADO

▶ **Amendment 39**, a citizens' initiative, asks whether the state constitution should be amended to require that in each fiscal year a school district spend at least 65 percent of its operational expenditures on classroom instruction, with limited exceptions.

▶ **The Public School Expenditure Accountability Act**, placed on the ballot by the state legislature, would require that each district spend at least 65 percent of its operational expenditures on services that directly affect student achievement.

## IDAHO

▶ **Proposition 1, the Idaho Local Public Schools Investment Act**, would increase funding for K-12 education by adding 1 cent to the state sales tax, bringing it to 6 cents.

## MAINE

▶ **Question 1** asks voters whether they want to limit increases in state and local government spending to the rate of inflation plus population growth and to require voter approval for all tax and fee increases. This is a Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, or TABOR, proposal.

## MICHIGAN

▶ **Proposal 5, the Educational Funding Guarantee**, would increase current funding by approximately \$565 million and require the state to provide annual funding increases equal to the rate of inflation for public schools, intermediate school districts, community colleges, and other higher education institutions.

## NEBRASKA

▶ **Initiative Measure 421** would authorize the use of video "keno" gaming devices, with the proceeds used to support K-12 education.

▶ On **Referendum Measure 422**, voters will decide whether to retain or repeal a school district consolidation law passed in 2005.

▶ **Initiative Measure 423**, a TABOR proposal, would amend the state constitution to limit state spending based on a calculation involving previous appropriations, the inflation rate, and population change. The legislature could seek voter authorization to exceed the spending limit.

## NEVADA

▶ **The Education First** initiative provides that during a regular session of the legislature, before any appropriation could be enacted to finance a portion of the state budget, the legislature would have to appropriate sufficient money for the operation of Nevada's K-12 public schools for the next biennium, and that any appropriation in violation of that requirement would be void.

## NORTH DAKOTA

▶ **Constitutional Measure 1** would change the way the Common Schools Trust Fund, which benefits K-12 and higher education, is managed by the state's land board, allowing the board to make longer-term investment decisions.

## OHIO

▶ The proposed **Ohio Learn and Earn** amendment to the state constitution would permit up to 31,500 slot machines at seven horse-racing tracks and two Cleveland nontrack locations. Thirty percent of the proceeds would go to the state board of regents for college scholarships and grants to eligible students, as well as administration of the program.

## SOUTH DAKOTA

▶ **Measure 3** asks voters to prohibit school boards from establishing the start of a school term earlier than the last day of August.

▶ **Measure 2** would add \$1 to the state's current tobacco tax of 53 cents. The money would be used for smoking-prevention and -cessation programs, health care, education enhancements, and property-tax relief.

SOURCE: *Education Week*