

Gubernatorial Candidates: Education Platforms for 2006

ALABAMA

■ **Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley (D):** Proposes to provide money for all high schools to offer Advanced Placement classes in the core curriculum and would pay AP test fees for low-income students. Promises to establish an elective course in Bible literacy to be available statewide. Would give teachers tools to deal with disruptive students. Expects to set up a statewide database of students with behavioral problems to give school officials information on those who have disrupted classrooms in the past.

■ **Gov. Bob Riley (R):** Touts the success of the Alabama Reading Initiative and the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative. Also promoting his efforts to provide online educational programs for the state's rural areas. Recently established a teaching-quality commission and promised to implement its recommendations in a second term.

ALASKA

■ **Tony Knowles (D):** Former two-term governor vows to institute a state-financed prekindergarten program. Pledges to continue recent increases in funding for schools, and set up an additional "trust fund" to help pay for school programs, derived from the state's prodigious oil and gas revenues. Promises to return the state's retirement system to a defined-benefit plan, reversing a decision by state officials two years ago that teachers fought.

■ **Sarah Palin (R):** Former mayor of Wasilla pledges to close the gap in the state employees' and teachers' retirement system, estimated recently at \$7 billion. Opposes the establishment of a state-financed prekindergarten system, believing the private sector provides good service already. Supports having the state set budgets for school funding more than a year in advance, saying it makes it easier for local schools to plan.

ARIZONA

■ **Gov. Janet Napolitano (D):** Intends to continue focusing on early education and working on aligning education goals with the demands of the business community, so that schools and universities turn out people who can get higher-paying jobs. Will continue to support teacher-mentoring and career-ladder programs as ways to encourage teachers to stay in the profession.

■ **Len Munsil (R):** Founder of the Center for Arizona Policy, a conservative advocacy group, favors school vouchers. Defended scholarship tax credits in the Arizona Supreme Court. Wants more charter schools. Supports performance-based pay for teachers.

ARKANSAS

■ **Attorney General Mike Beebe (D):** Favors boosting spending on pre-K programs by \$40 million next year, with the eventual aim of universal pre-K. Would expand the state's teacher-mentoring program. Supports a "traveling teachers" program to make it easier for educators who are certified in high-need areas to teach in multiple districts.

■ **Former U.S. Rep. Asa Hutchinson (R):** Pledges to offer curriculum flexibility and expand distance learning for high-performing smaller schools in rural communities, rather than consolidating them with larger schools. Recommends removing the state's cap on charter schools. Wants to expand teacher pay-for-performance pilot programs and offer extra pay for educators who work in high-need areas or teach math, science, and other hard-to-staff classes.

CALIFORNIA

■ **State Treasurer Phil Angelides (D):** Intends to give schools "targeted" grants they can use to help raise student achievement. Would work to reduce the dropout rate through improving access to preschool and giving extra help to middle school students. Proposes doubling the number of counselors, rolling back college-tuition hikes, and increasing teacher pay to attract more people into the field.

■ **Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R):** Proposes more than \$10 billion in school construction projects through his "strategic-growth plan." Supports English-immersion programs for English-language learners. Has worked to expand after-school programs and career and technical education.

COLORADO

■ **Bill Ritter (D):** Denver district attorney. Pledges to "invest more in, and demand more from" public schools. Plans to target teacher quality by offering more professional development, setting up a pay-for-performance program, and launching a low-interest home-loan program. Wants to create a "principal institute," launch a public-private partnership to expand early learning, and improve the state's data systems to improve teaching and learning. Opposes vouchers. Supported Referendum C, the ballot measure approved in 2005 that suspended the state's "Taxpayer Bill of Rights," or TABOR, allowing more revenue to be spent on education.

■ **U.S. Rep. Bob Beauprez (R):** Calls for requiring more K-12 dollars to "go directly into the classroom," setting a rigorous new standard for high school graduation, and establishing a privately financed early-learning program. Wants to expand school choice, including more charters, online-learning opportunities, and vouchers for low-income students. Proposes to target more aid for rural school construction. Opposed Referendum C.

CONNECTICUT

■ **John DeStefano (D):** Mayor of New Haven proposes "Every Child Reads by 3rd Grade" agenda that includes universal preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds and establishment of a cadre of master literacy educators to work with classroom teachers in grades 3 and 4 in the state's highest-need districts. Wants the state to distribute books to families with children in the early grades and train parents in how to use them to build youngsters' reading skills. Funding for his initiatives would come from new taxes on wealthy residents.

■ **Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R):** Seeks first election to the post in her own right, having come to it as lieutenant governor. Extols her approval of increased funding in her two years in office for school-readiness initiatives and formation of an early-childhood-education cabinet, whose proposals on expanding access to educational services are expected soon. Appointed a task force to propose changes to the state's school funding formula, which is the target of a lawsuit.

FLORIDA

■ **U.S. Rep. Jim Davis (D):** Proposes spending \$700 million in his first year in office on across-the-board salary increases for teachers. To pay for them, he would end the financial bonuses given to schools and teachers based on scores from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, which would dismantle a core initiative of outgoing Republican Gov. Jeb Bush.

■ **Attorney General Charlie Crist (R):** Supports an amendment to the state constitution to allow vouchers after state courts struck down an existing program. Wants to require schools to spend at least 65 percent of funding in the classroom. Favors more flexibility for schools in complying with a constitutional amendment to reduce class sizes. Proposes to increase teacher pay for those who rank in the top 25 percent among their peers.

GEORGIA

■ **Lt. Gov. Mark Taylor (D):** Instrumental in launching the lottery-subsidized HOPE scholarship program and a pre-K program for 4-year-olds. Wants to raise teachers' salaries and would support a constitutional amendment to reduce class size.

■ **Gov. Sonny Perdue (R):** Focusing on improving high school graduation rates, student discipline, and reducing class size. Pushed through a controversial "65 percent solution" law last year requiring that proportion of state aid be used for instructional purposes.

HAWAII

■ **Randy Iwase (D):** Former state senator proposes to increase funding for repair and maintenance of schools, raise salaries for teachers and administrators, and finance staff training and mentoring programs. Opposes the incumbent's previous plans to decentralize the single statewide district.

■ **Gov. Linda Lingle (R):** Has supported increases in funding for early-childhood education, fought for a weighted student funding formula as a way to address student needs, secured more money for the classroom, and approved millions for school construction and maintenance.

IDAHO

■ **Jerry Brady (D):** A newspaper publisher who has never held a major public office. Helped organize a \$1 million initiative to promote child-care and preschool programs. Supports school prayer and character education. Proposes strengthening community college programs.

■ **U.S. Rep. C.L. "Butch" Otter (R):** Wants to expand the community college system by encouraging partnerships between corporations and the state. Emphasizes math and science education. Voted against \$84 million in grants for black and Hispanic colleges.

ILLINOIS

■ **Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich (D):** Has increased funds for K-12 education, though critics blame him for not helping state's neediest districts more. Opposes any tax increase to pay for schools. Wants to sell or lease the state's lottery to pay for education, an idea he says could raise \$10 billion. Overhauled the state's education agency and the Illinois state board of education, arguing they were ineffective.

■ **State Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka (R):** Recommends freezing the education portion of property-tax bills and replacing that money with more-stable revenue sources, such as state funds.

Pledges to form a state council to align educational goals, including teacher training and student achievement, from prekindergarten through higher education. Says the state's board of education and education agency have become too beholden to Gov. Blagojevich and vows to make them more independent.

IOWA

■ **Secretary of State Chester J. "Chet" Culver (D):** Plans to use loan and mortgage-forgiveness programs to encourage teachers to live and work in the state. Would push for an extra \$20 million in funding for teacher salaries. Proposes a \$3 million program to help more high schools work with community colleges so that seniors can earn up to a year of college credit.

■ **U.S. Rep. Jim Nussle (R):** Proposes accelerating statewide standards, putting greater focus on math, reading, writing, and science. Would expand partnerships between community colleges and high schools to help prepare students for higher education or vocational training. Wants to increase the recently enacted tax credits that provide private or public school scholarships from \$250 to \$1,500 and allow the money to be used for prekindergarten.

KANSAS

■ **Gov. Kathleen Sebelius (D):** Supports the three-year, \$466 million education spending plan passed by the legislature this year. Has ordered privately financed audits of school districts. Pledges to expand all-day kindergarten and pre-K programs.

■ **State Sen. James A. "Jim" Barnett (R):** Argues that the state's K-12 spending plan will produce a \$175 million budget deficit after three years and force legislators to raise taxes or expand gambling. Backs the four-year, \$495 million education budget he proposed this legislative session. Opposes in-state college tuition for undocumented immigrants.

MAINE

■ **Gov. John Baldacci (D):** Supports increased state spending on public schools and higher pay for teachers. Won approval last year for raising starting teachers' salaries to at least \$30,000. Promotes programs that ensure more community college students transfer to the University of Maine.

■ **State Sen. Chandler E. Woodcock (R):** His campaign did not provide information about his education platform.

■ **State Rep. Barbara E. Merrill (Independent):** Wants a merit-pay system for teachers. Supports small, community schools and would oppose proposals to consolidate rural schools.

■ **Patricia LaMarche (Green Party):** Proposes that the state, instead of municipalities, pay teacher salaries. Would push for an "extraction fee" to charge corporations that extract Maine's water as a way to generate revenue for education.

MARYLAND

■ **Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley (D):** Promises to build new schools and reduce class sizes. Proposes to improve the state's teacher-pension program to retain veterans, attract principals to struggling schools with signing bonuses, and revitalize loan-assistance programs to attract new recruits to teacher education programs. Would finance schools under the Thornton formula passed by the Maryland legislature in 2001 that seeks to increase funding for K-12.

■ **Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. (R):** Wants to spend \$800,000 to study a merit-pay system for teachers, and proposes to work for the growth of charter schools in the state. Would continue to give additional funding for public schools under the Thornton formula.

MASSACHUSETTS

■ **Deval Patrick (D):** Former Clinton administration official and Coca-Cola executive. Wants to extend the school day, reduce class sizes, and raise teacher pay. Promises free, full-day kindergarten for all 5-year-olds and an expansion of early education programs for 3- and 4-year-olds. Proposes a new funding formula for charter schools, so that regular public schools are not disadvantaged.

■ **Lt. Gov. Kerry Murphy Healey (R):** Proposes raising the mandatory school attendance age from 16 to 18 to address dropout rates. Wants students to be tested at the beginning and end of every school year to better measure performance. Would lift the cap on charter schools.

MICHIGAN

■ **Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm (D):** Wants a \$4,000 state scholarship guaranteed to every student who completes two years of postsecondary education. Proposes anti-bullying legislation, prompt notification of parents when their children are falling behind, and a requirement that teacher colleges help new teachers learn how to maintain classroom discipline. Opposes vouchers.

■ **Dick DeVos (R):** Former president of Amway Corp. and leader of a failed 2000 campaign to allow vouchers for religious schools. Advocates merit pay for teachers and the “65 percent solution,” which requires at least that much school funding go to the classroom rather than administration. Wants better integration of technology into the classroom and more practice-teaching for aspiring teachers. Would put more state funding into middle school math and science, promote alternative routes to certification for math and science teachers, and provide incentives for universities to graduate more math and science teachers. Proposes revamping state scholarships for postsecondary education.

MINNESOTA

■ **Attorney General Mike Hatch (Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party):** Promises to lower class sizes and invest more money in education. Would like to make higher education more affordable. Wants to build more flexibility into the No Child Left Behind Act. Would make funding for special education and gifted children a priority, and plans to work for public-private partnerships to make early-childhood programs available.

■ **Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R):** Wants to work on closing the achievement gap for students of color and those who are disadvantaged. Would continue working on his plan to reinvent high schools with a stronger emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and math. Proposed a plan to reward high school students finishing in the top quarter of their classes with full-tuition scholarships for at least two years to a state university.

■ **Peter Hutchinson (Independence Party):** Former superintendent of Minneapolis schools pledges to direct more funding for all-day kindergarten and early-childhood programs. Would focus accountability measures on gains in learning and would raise high school graduation standards to ensure all graduates are college-ready. Proposes to reform special education funding.

NEBRASKA

■ **David Hahn (D):** Lawyer and technology-company executive seeks to double public school funding by doubling aid for the state Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Act. Simultaneously, proposes to cut property taxes, the major source of education funding. Also seeks to extend broadband Internet access statewide so schools could better access online learning.

■ **Gov. Dave Heineman (R):** Seeking second full term. Wants to re-establish rural small districts, which were ordered to consolidate by the state legislature. Has the backing of the Nebraska State Education Association. Supports school choice and local control.

NEVADA

■ **State Sen. Dina Titus (D):** Wants to raise teachers’ salaries to attract and retain higher-qualified applicants, establish a pay-for-performance system, form a teachers’ advisory council to meet periodically with the governor on education issues, and require schools to hold “open forums” to increase parent involvement.

■ **U.S. Rep. Jim Gibbons (R):** Supports the “Education First” initiative on the November ballot, which would require the legislature to pass an education budget for K-12 schools before moving on to other government departments. Would like to see schools get more money, but wants less bureaucracy.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

■ **Gov. John Lynch (D):** Wants to raise the minimum dropout age from 16 to 18, establish alternative education programs for struggling high school students, and double the number of students who take college courses in high school. Plans to extend a state incentive program for kindergarten construction. Has criticized legislators’ efforts to pass a constitutional amendment to remove the state supreme court’s jurisdiction over school finance matters.

■ **State Rep. James B. Coburn (R):** Favors the constitutional amendment regarding the supreme court, seeing it as a way to end court battles over school funding, but would not impose sales or income taxes to pay for schools. Supports vouchers, charter schools, and other mechanisms for giving parents more choice. Would streamline what he sees as the state’s “top heavy” education department.

NEW MEXICO

■ **Gov. Bill Richardson (D):** Would continue to strive to make prekindergarten available to all 4-year-olds and increase access for children to physical education in schools. Is devising an initiative to redesign high schools, which would aim to increase the attendance age from 16 to 18, toughen graduation requirements, set up a statewide online academy, and increase funding for career-technical high schools and Advanced Placement courses.

■ **John Dendahl (R):** Former chairman of the state GOP favors increased local autonomy for school districts in writing budgets and curricula and making decisions about staff and operations. Supports school choice.

NEW YORK

■ **Attorney General Eliot Spitzer (D):** Vows to resolve the school finance lawsuit in which the state’s high court ordered the state to pay up to \$5.6 billion over four years to New York City schools.

Favors a statewide school funding solution, but without raising property taxes. Wants to reduce class sizes, especially in early grades, and give districts more flexibility to enact changes, such as making the school day longer.

■ **Former State Assemblyman John Faso (R):** Pledges to increase the number of charter schools. Favors education tax credits to help parents pay for additional tutoring or private schools. Wants to grant homeowners more relief from school property taxes. Would pursue alternative-certification programs for professionals who want to enter teaching and advocates merit pay for teachers.

OHIO

■ **U.S. Rep. Ted Strickland (D):** Proposes spending \$50 million a year for two years on education for 3- and 4-year-olds. Wants to expand the number of districts offering full-day kindergarten. Would create a “Knowledge Bank” account for every child, with the state depositing \$500 the first year and at least \$100 a year until graduation (more for low-income families) to help students afford college.

■ **Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell (R):** Urging the legislature to set up two separate committees that would examine the structure and financing of public schools. Committees’ recommendations would be put to voters as a proposed constitutional amendment. Supports the “100 percent” school funding solution, in which dollars follow individual students with extra funding allocated to those with special needs.

OKLAHOMA

■ **Gov. Brad Henry (D):** Wants to expand a scholarship program for students who come from low-income families to attend the state’s public colleges and universities. Proposes investing \$100 million in the state’s teacher-retirement system. Vows to continue support of teacher raises.

■ **U.S. Rep. Ernest Istook (R):** Supports merit pay for teachers. Would oppose new restrictions or mandates on home-schooling. Wants to repeal state law allowing in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants. Critical of school consolidation.

OREGON

■ **Gov. Theodore R. Kulongoski (D):** Proposes a \$6 billion school budget for the next two years, pledging that at least 61 percent of the state general fund go to education. Wants to increase the state’s minimum corporate income tax to help pay for Head Start and retain the corporate-tax rebate for a school rainy-day fund.

■ **Ron Saxton (R):** Former Portland school board chairman and president of the Portland Schools Foundation pledges to expand the number of charter schools and supports performance-based salaries for teachers. Advocates stricter education spending, opposes tax increases, and promotes more transparent school budgeting processes.

PENNSYLVANIA

■ **Gov. Edward G. Rendell (D):** Running on his record of expanding early-childhood programs and overall K-12 funding, investing in high school reform, and securing flexible block grants for districts for programs shown to boost achievement, such as smaller class sizes, all-day kindergarten, and tutoring.

■ **Lynn Swann (R):** Former Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver proposes to expand the state’s corporate-tax-credit program to benefit low-achieving schools, create “education opportunity zones” to funnel extra help to needy schools and families, and give teachers bonuses for raising student test scores. Would require 3rd graders to demonstrate grade-level reading and math skills to be promoted to 4th grade.

RHODE ISLAND

■ **Lt. Gov. Charles J. Fogarty (D):** Recommends making a top priority of changing the state’s system of school funding, which many argue produces inequities by overrelying on local property taxes. Wants to freeze tuition at current levels at public colleges and universities for college students who maintain a B average, and pledges to spend new state money on college scholarships for needy students.

■ **Gov. Donald L. Carcieri (R):** Running on his record of work to improve mathematics and science instruction, including hiring additional specialists in those subjects at the state education department, and underwriting “physics first” strategy to get schools to teach physics earlier in high school. Promoted expansion of charter schools, a longer school day, and the drafting of voluntary state curricula in English, math, and science.

SOUTH CAROLINA

■ **State Sen. Thomas L. Moore (D):** Wants to expand charter schools. Opposes vouchers. Proposes a statewide preschool program. Wants to put a counselor in every school.

■ **Gov. Mark Sanford (R):** Proposes “some form of merit pay” for teachers. Continues to support an income-tax credit for families to send their children to another school, public or private. Also supports private-sector donations to scholarship funds for low-income students. Wants to set up a statewide authority for charter schools, removing that responsibility from school districts.

SOUTH DAKOTA

■ **Dr. Jack Billion (D):** Party official and former surgeon calls for more state funding for K-12 education based on a 2006 adequacy study commissioned by state education groups and school districts. Would raise salaries for public school teachers to the average of surrounding states. Proposes instituting public preschool.

■ **Gov. Michael Rounds (R):** Running on his record of overseeing a \$475-per-student increase in the state’s formula aid to schools, while improving the state’s finances. Led the state to provide \$5,000, in-state college scholarships over four years to high school graduates with an overall B average.

TENNESSEE

■ **Gov. Phil Bredesen (D):** Proposes raising teacher pay and continuing an expansion of the state’s voluntary prekindergarten program for all 4-year-olds. Would fully finance the state’s basic education program. Supports reading initiatives that help provide books to children in their homes.

■ **State Sen. Jim Bryson (R):** Wants to establish a \$100 million grant program for schools to devise strategies to improve high school graduation rates. Would appoint an advisory council of educational leaders to help identify problems associated with dropout rates and propose solutions. Wants to expand charter school options to include high schools.

TEXAS

■ **Former U.S. Rep. Chris Bell (D):** Critical of the state’s high-stakes testing and merit-pay system. Vows to raise teacher salaries.

■ **Gov. Rick Perry (R):** Supports the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, or TAKS, and the state’s teacher-incentive-pay system. Issued an executive order for schools to spend 65 percent of their budgets on classroom instruction. Would support vouchers.

■ **Richard “Kinky” Friedman (Independent):** Musician and writer. Supports legalizing casinos to support education and outsourcing athletic funding to sports companies and retailers. Suggests a 1 percent tax on oil and gas produced in Texas to support teacher raises. Wants to eliminate the TAKS.

■ **State Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn (Independent):** Former teacher proposes state testing in the fall so that teachers can use the test results as a diagnostic tool. Advocates an immediate \$4,000 raise for all teachers and automatic pay increases every two years. Endorsed by the Texas State Teachers Association and the Texas Federation of Teachers.

VERMONT

■ **Scudder Parker (D):** Former state senator and director of energy-efficiency division of state department of public service. Supports expanding prekindergarten programs at public expense. Envisions “reinvention” of secondary education using such means as community-based learning and apprenticeships. Opposes cap on state property tax. Promises to increase training for child-care providers and help parents pay for high-quality child care.

■ **Gov. Jim Douglas (R):** Favors expanding public school choice to all schools. Advocates cap on state property tax, the main source of school funding. Proposes a 15-year, \$175 million program to provide scholarships to state institutions of higher education in exchange for students’ staying in state after graduation. Wants limited state funding of prekindergarten.

WISCONSIN

■ **Gov. James E. Doyle (D):** Proposes a “Wisconsin Covenant” that would guarantee admission and financial aid to a public or private state university to any student who signed up in 8th grade, maintained a B average in the core high school curriculum, and applied for state and federal financial aid. Wants to put more money into a state initiative to lower class sizes in grades K-3.

■ **U.S. Rep. Mark Green (R):** Intends to set up a task force to study a statewide pay-for-performance salary structure for teachers. Wants to generate more charter schools and eliminate the cap on how many children can participate in the Milwaukee voucher program. Proposes requiring school districts to spend at least 70 percent of their funding on instruction-related costs. Wants to require three years of high school math and science.

WYOMING

■ **Gov. Dave Freudenthal (D):** Promotes a constitutional amendment that would ensure funding for a need- and merit-based scholarship program, the Hathaway Scholarships, in perpetuity. Would help with the development of a rigorous “success” high school curriculum that would prepare students for college academics. Plans to ensure the smooth completion of hundreds of school facility improvement projects, with input from local officials and residents.

■ **Ray Hunkins (R):** Lawyer and rancher running for the second time; he did not receive the GOP nomination in 2002. Would implement character education in schools as part of a plan to fight methamphetamine use. Favors a constitutional amendment to provide perpetual funding for Hathaway Scholarships for college. Supports returning local control to elected school district leaders.