

# *Be a Catholic in the Public Square for our School Children*

Maggie Gillespie (Chair), Rudy Garcia (Vice Chair)  
Ron Johnson & Tim Burns  
Diocese of Phoenix School Board  
Arizona Catholic Parent Advocacy Committee

# Topics for Today

## Maggie Gillespie

- Significance of Topics: *Maggie Gillespie*
- The Need for School Choice Advocacy: *Maggie Gillespie & Tim Burns*
- Catholics in the Public Square & School Choice: *Ron Johnson*
- School Choice Advocacy Around the Nation: *Rudy Garcia*
- The Arizona Experience: *Panel*
- What You Can Do: *Maggie Gillespie*

# The Need for School Choice Advocacy

Tim Burns

- The Objective: *Giving All Children a Chance at Success*
- Constitutional Bias: *The Blaine Amendment*
- Status Quo: *Zip Code dictates educational opportunity*
- Initial Response: Open Districting

# Arizona Constitution:

## *The Blaine Amendments*

- **“No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise, or instruction, or to the support of any religious establishment.”**  
Arizona Const. Art. II, Section 12
- **“No tax shall be laid or appropriation of public money made in aid of any church, or private or sectarian school, or any public service corporation.”**  
Arizona Const. Art IX, Section 10
- **Arizona Courts have not interpreted Blaine Amendments expansively.**

# Why We Must be Advocates?

- Parental School Choice: *A Civil Rights & Economics Issue*
- Choice beyond public schools requires funding
- Ron Johnson: Catholics in the Public Square
  - Advocacy impacts school choice
  - Legislative Update
  - Election Guide

# The National Perspective

## *Building Coalitions to Give All Children a Chance*

*Rudy Garcia*

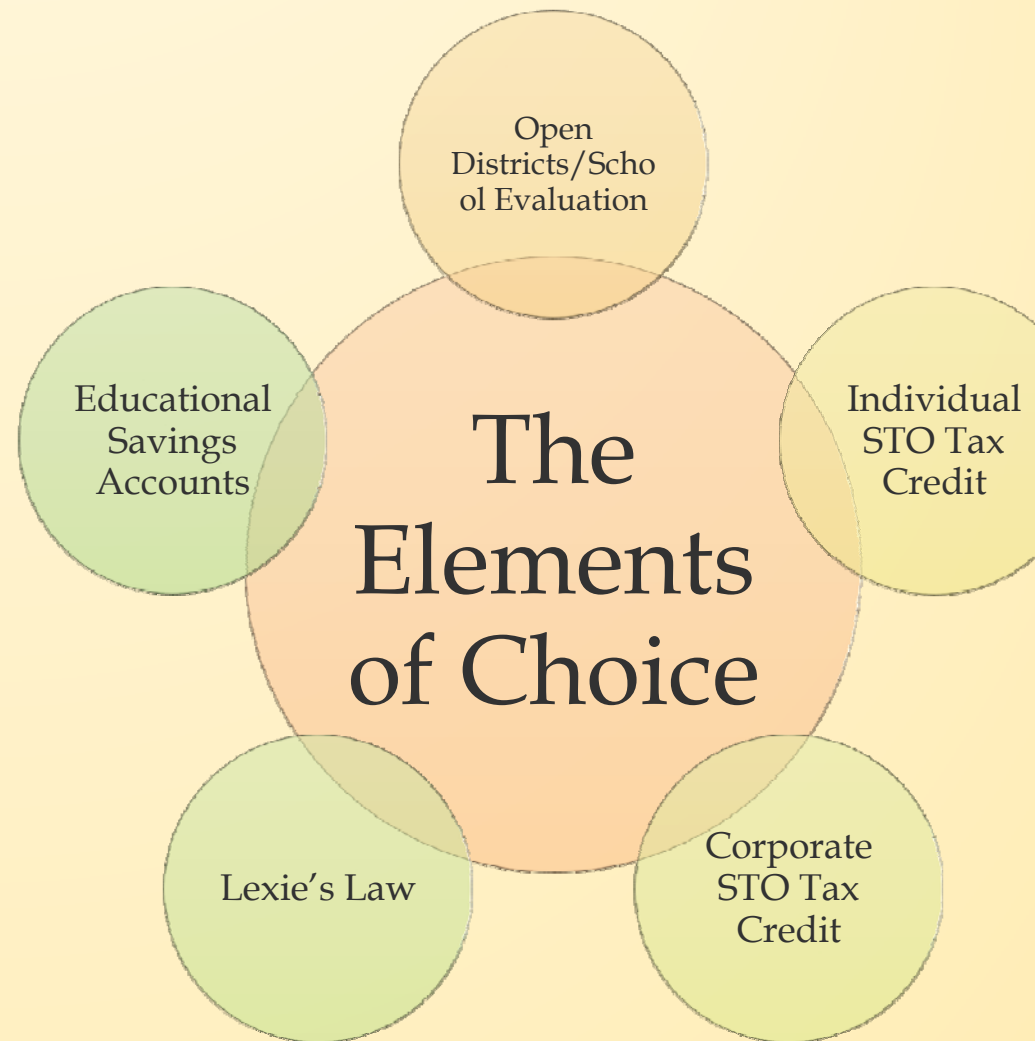
- **The Politics**

- Even people of different political persuasions can agree that all children should have an education that gives them a good chance at success
- The Devil lies in the details
  - The reality of opponents working together
  - The economics of scarcity vs. abundance
  - Protection of power and influence

- **Opportunity for Change Exists**

# The Arizona Experience: *At the Cutting Edge* Panel

- Legislative Framework gives choices
- Three major Parent options
  - Individual Tax Credit
  - Corporate Tax Credit
  - Educational Savings Accounts
- Catholic Education Arizona
  - \$100MM paid out, 72K Awarded
  - 99% Grad/97% College Rate
  - Chris Tawney: 602-218-6542



# Parental Advocacy Projects

*Maggie Gillespie*

- Parental Choice in Schools & Funding
- Religious Liberty Education
  - Developing Classroom Curriculum
  - Training students as advocates
- Legislative Advocacy
- Local School Boards Liaisons



# **Parent Advocacy & Choice**

**Building Coalitions that Work**

**Empowering Parents with Achievable Choices**

**Giving Kids “Transformational Education”**

# *Thank You For Coming!*

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