



Winter Convening | 27 January 2021
1:00 to 3:00 PM

PARTICIPANTS

City/Town	Mayor	Team Members
Casa Grande	Craig H. McFarland	Jo Etta Gonzales, Superintendent, Casa Grande Elementary School District
Flagstaff	Paul Deasy	
Gilbert		Valerie Shaffer, Mayor’s Aide
Goodyear	Georgia Lord	
Mesa	John Giles	Melissa Randazzo, Chief of Staff Amy Trethaway, Education Policy Advisor
Miami	Sammy Gonzales	
Phoenix	Kate Gallego	Willa Altman-Kaough, Policy Advisor Tim Valencia, Youth & Education Office Manager
Sahuarita	Tom Murphy	Kara Egbert, Vice Mayor Manny Valenzuela, Superintendent
Tempe	Corey Woods	Marie Raymond, Human Services Manager Leslie Totten, Tempe PRE Supervisor
ACF	Glenn Wike, Senior Director, Strategy and Public Policy	
Helios	Janice Palmer, Vice President – Public Policy and Government Affairs	
Guests	Rich Nickel, President and CEO, College Success Arizona Joe O’Reilly, Director, Decision Center for Educational Excellence	
Presenters	Eric Ban, Managing Director, Dallas County Promise Kathy Hoffman, Superintendent of Public Instruction Aaron Lieberman, State Representative Mary Rauner, Senior Research Associate, WestEd Brooke White, Education Advisor to State Senator Boyer	
WestEd	Sheila Arredondo, Senior Program Associate Paul Koehler, Director of Leadership and Outreach Kris Kurtenbach, Founding Partner, Collaborative Communications	

NOTES

ADE Update

Kathy Hoffman, Superintendent, Kathy.Hoffman@azed.gov

Successes & Resource Links

- ADE COVID-19 Resource page: <https://www.azed.gov/covid-19-guidance>
- School learning models at <https://www.azed.gov/covid-19/learning-model-tracker>
- Family engagement tools developed and available at <https://www.azed.gov/covid-19/family-engagement-amid-covid-19>
- Arizona Virtual Teacher Institute information at <https://www.asuprepdigital.org/training/>
- University of Arizona Center for Recruitment and Retention of Mathematics Educators (more than 1,000 participants): <https://crr.math.arizona.edu/>
- CARES Act funding used to support community organizations, including Boys & Girls Club and YMCA, provide safe learning spaces and extended hours
- Bridging the Digital Divide is a priority in both rural and urban areas. Cox Connect2Compete Program helps with affordability and improved speed: <https://www.cox.com/residential/internet/connect2compete.html>
- Technology Task Force – partnership for parent resource toolkit and long-term plans to serve students and schools
- Mental health and trauma – Adopted SEL competencies to be integrated into daily school schedule: <https://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/standards-and-competencies>
- School Safety Task Force work began one year ago; includes student voice; available in Spanish. Report and model school safety plan: <https://www.azed.gov/wellness/school-safety-task-force>

Second Round of CARES Act Funding

Please send ideas to the Superintendent.

- Casa Grande – Better statewide internet access for students and teachers.
- Flagstaff – Wastewater testing on NAU campus is expanding to schools; is this a possibility to create an early warning system for reopening? Need to reach out to ADHS. They have more funds; ADE can help make connections.
- Phoenix – Agree, digital connectivity. City has a pilot with Phoenix Union and feeder schools. We could also partner on making sure students are aware of the great resources through our libraries and then enhance digital resources.
- Sahuarita – Agree with digital connectivity especially with one time funding; a perfect use.

Testing

- Will move forward with state testing
- Provide maximum flexibility
- Extended testing window
- Must be done in person; exceptions granted (e.g., Navajo Nation)
- Collect good data to reset baseline and target resources
- Pause A-F grades and accountability system

PRESENTATIONS

Arizona Promise Legislation

Representative Aaron Lieberman & Senate Majority Advisor on Education Brooke White

- Attractive idea; takes everybody working together on this issue; up to all of us to do our part
- Challenge with increasing postsecondary attainment rate (at 44%, goal is 60%)
- Colorado has higher rate and twice per capita GDP
- Arizona has more jobs that require postsecondary credentials and degrees than applicants
- Community college enrollment down 20%, students did not matriculate
- Mirror versions to be introduced in house (HB2527) and senate (anticipate 2/3); HB language provides for public-private partnerships, which can amplify current work.
- Talent pipeline – move the needle in how many students continue their educations; state needs to play a role in making this happen
- Community College Promise Board – in place by fall 2021
- Scholarships – 2020 and 2021 graduates with 2.5 GPA could receive \$3,000 scholarships toward cost of attainment; goal is to provide last dollar support
- Intermediary – to select recipients and provide supports; 10% reserved for mentoring administration
- \$10 million proposed
- Helpful for legislators to hear from mayors
- Also championing ABOR’s promise scholarship effort (\$50M appropriation for community colleges and four-year institutions; need-based)
- Central Arizona College Promise for the Future – legislation won’t affect this program; this layers on top of other support
- Mesa College Promise Program – announced January 2020; fully funded for Mesa high school graduates; last dollar program; must complete FAFSA; prompted by Achieve60 presentation
- Rich Nickel, President and CEO, College Success Arizona, is available as a thought partner on promise, funding, access, attainment, and success issues. Bringing a continuum approach to this work and adding capacity to the system. College Success Arizona advocates and provides services. Contact: rich.nickel@collegesuccessarizona.org and 602.300.1139

College Promise: History and Program Design

Mary Rauner, Senior Research Associate, WestEd, mrauner@wested.org

- College Promise Project at WestEd – Six years of research, evaluation, professional development, and technical assistance
- Guidebook available in Google folder
- What is College Promise? – incentives to enroll, persist, and complete
- Why College Promise?
 - 70% of Arizona jobs require postsecondary education or training
 - statewide attainment goal of 60% by 2030
 - better outcomes for college graduates
- Barriers to access and completion – cost, economic and racial inequities
- Impact of the pandemic and recession
 - Enrollment has declined
 - 75% of students changed their college plans
- Program growth and current status
 - Started in 2006, steady growth for 15 years

- National College Promise Campaign
- High visibility programs, 400 programs today, most are local, 30 state level
- Proposed federal legislation (similar to that proposed in 2015)
- Program landscape
 - Varied designs, tend to be bipartisan, most are local through community colleges
 - Growing research base, WestEd to publish articles in six months
- Characteristics and features
 - Cross-sector partnerships
 - Eligibility requirements – increasing number of bifurcated programs
 - Program benefits – financial, academic, and student supports
 - Communication – message clearly, early, and often; an entire section in the Guidebook is devoted to communication
 - Design – goals and data should lead decisionmaking to ensure target populations are not excluded; carefully considers requirements, which may become costly and cumbersome to administer
 - Sustainable financial plan – start slow, braid funds, ideal to build an endowment like Tennessee, keep the promise; Ventura College funded with flea market profits; other colleges use income from leased lands; state appropriations; Oregon provides a cautionary tale.

Dallas County Promise

Eric Ban, EdD, Managing Director, Dallas County Promise, eric.ban@dallascountypromise.org

- Commit Partnership (501c3) – External partner to manage and operate the initiative; four years of running city-based program.
- Dallas Thrives (context) – advisory board of business, community, and education leaders; educate 10% of Texans and 1% of the US population; goal is to double living wage attainment in a single generation and close equity gaps
 - Big Moves – workforce pipeline alignment, career exploration and guidance, readiness/attainment/placement, connections to workforce, employer investment
 - Co-chaired by chamber
- The Promise – A Community Commitment
 - Challenge and mission – 65% of jobs require college but only 37% of adults have degrees; rely upon influx of talent; economic impact strategy
 - Data – 75% of students in Dallas County are disadvantaged; 8th grade cohort studies; earnings by graduates by attainment level for each school district; demonstrate inequities and openly discuss data
 - Partners – county community college, about 12 universities, 11 districts, funders, workforce partners, intermediaries; complex ecosystem
 - Strategic framework – work with McKinsey & Company and Boston Consulting to outline outcomes (60x30 TX with Equity); key pillars (dream, prepare, enroll, complete, earn); and foundational enablers (leadership, funding, infrastructure)
 - Strategies – built on the Tennessee model, last dollar; tuition free college; success coaching and career mentoring; career pathways and IT system; must build culture, momentum, and excitement
 - CollegeWorks Campaign – collegeworks.org allows students to explore jobs and identify pathways to make a match
 - Simple and powerful message – “College is covered for everyone.”

- Promise Results – early indicators with each of three cohorts
 - 99% sign the pledge
 - Increased financial aid
 - Increased enrollment and retention
 - Still a long way to go
- Equity Platform Solutions
 - Continuous intelligence – mapped households without broadband; pulling data to understand needs
 - Talent infrastructure – blockchain learner record and customer relationship management to empower students and institutions; Greenlight and Salesforce are “equity platforms” that help students set and track goals and access opportunities
 - EnrollTX APP – one set of steps for students to follow on APP and enroll themselves; simplifies the process
 - Texas College Bridge – personalized math and English to help students succeed in college; passing at 20% higher rates; badge on blockchain indicates readiness; students empowered with their data
 - San Antonio launched the Greenlight Internship Manager to equitably match students to opportunities
 - Salesforce is the second tool used to case manage; pull from blockchain and push from higher education back to high school counselor; case roster of students with steps that each needs to take; helps solve real and specific problems for students
 - Alumni and tracking tools to watch progress in real time
- Texas Promise Learning Network – Funding to help regions set up tools; sharing and working together to build talent driven marketplaces
- National Talent Equity Network – equity in college access; working with Detroit, Indianapolis, Nashville, Washington DC, and other cities to build a community of practice around tool implementation
- Question: In some of these communities you work directly with the cities and in others the community college system?
- Answer: Usually both with designated roles. San Antonio has a community college which will implement Salesforce and the [UP Partnership](#), an intermediary, works to connect high schools and colleges. Each implementation looks different but uses the same tools. Fort Worth and Houston look like Dallas. Also doing small market support (e.g., Tyler, TX). Working with Rural Community College Alliance to build a repeatable model to help smaller markets stand up tools and manage them with limited resources.
- Question: Is the Dallas initiative part of the [Strive](#) Cradle to Career Partnership?
- Answer: Yes, we are modeled after the Cincinnati work and are the largest Strive organization in the country. We have the same tenants and several working groups: early childhood high quality seats and third grade reading, teacher quality and educator effectiveness, postsecondary, and advocacy.
- Question: Discuss the funding mechanisms.
- Answer: Very localized, blessed in Dallas to have a large community college foundation endowment. Universities are using scholarship dollars; doing it together. Most universities have an income requirement of less than \$50k. Provide a portfolio of higher education partners.

SHARING AND UPDATES

Casa Grande

- Shout out to Dr. Jo Etta Gonzalez, Superintendent, Casa Grande Elementary School District, who joined us today. We have great relationships with the elementary district, high school district, and Central Arizona College.
- Promise for the Future – partnership with Central Arizona College that has been in existence for 25 years, maybe longer, to send high school graduates to community college; business community has rallied around the program; sign up students in 8th grade; covers two years of community college through a foundation; endowment established through fundraising and personal giving.
- [AARP Foundation Experience Corps](#) – Grade 3 reading program is up and running; model for Pinal County; 60 volunteer tutors; first small rural community; conducted online with observer and trainer helping the student; identified students needing most help; local donations, city and district funding
- Learning Centers – used CARES Act funds to create several safe spaces where teachers help students
- Digital divide – 2,500 students lack internet access; working with schools to address this issue; lack high speed but Pinal County initiative in place
- [Careertopia](#) – used in high schools; filming and posting jobs; helps students understand the education and experience needed to pursue jobs; part of Achieve Pinal
- Achieve Pinal – Adopted Achieve60AZ goals, partnering with Arizona at Work, CAC, and both districts; making strides over the past four years

Mesa

- Mesa Promise Rollout – finalizing details
- FAFSA Completion – first time drive-in event, partnered with Be a Leader, College Success Arizona, Mesa Public Schools; 243 students attended the event
- Education and workforce are priorities

Miami

- Town of Miami helps out with many aspects in the schools and will continue to do so.
- [Future City](#) – project-based learning program where 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students imagine, research, design, and build cities of the future. Current project is to create a city 100 years in the future. Town resources (e.g., sewage treatment and other engineers) used to help students plan this future city.

Phoenix

- Joined by Will and Tim today; all three were also together on January 20 for a great event with [School Connect](#) and partners at Scottsdale Bible Church. Using City of Phoenix CARES Act dollars and a generous \$1M donation, we provided 10,000 laptops to students to bridge digital divide.
- Tracy Beal, Executive Director, Schools Connect, is also on the Youth and Education Commission and we appreciate their partnership that builds on the 150 tablets we did with Experience Corp volunteers as part of the Read On literacy program; literacy a strong focus.
- Mayor's Birthday Book Club – providing books to students on their birthdays; Scholastic provides discounted books; chance for adults to read with kids at home.
- Library – curbside service, online ordering, book bundles by age

Sahuarita

Vaccines – We work closely together with our district. They have been generous in helping with the vaccine rollout for our 75 plus year-old residents. They graciously, along with other sites, allowed us to use their parking lots. Working together in several small ways to meet the needs of the community during the pandemic.

Tempe

No updates to share at this time

NEXT CONVENINGS

- March 2021 – Anticipate a special meeting in March to discuss Mesa’s early learning/PreK financial analysis and a proposal from the Arizona PreK Alignment Team (members include Flagstaff, Mesa, Phoenix, Tempe, and Tucson) for a statewide early childhood scan.
- Spring 2021 – WestEd to reach out to members to identify a date.
- Topic – Increasing FAFSA completion
- Initiatives and Speakers
 - *Increasing FAFSA Completion in Arizona: A Playbook for Success*, Helios College Knowing & Going Initiative, Paul Perrault, Helios Education Foundation
 - *Arizona FAFSA Challenge*, Julie Sainz, Project Director

Thank You!