



EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE MINUTES

September 4, 2024

The Education and Workforce Development Roundtable of the City of Mesa met in The Studios at Mesa City Center, 59 E. 1st St., on September 4, 2024, at 1:31 p.m.

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT	BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT	STAFF PRESENT
Councilmember Heredia, Chair Councilmember Spilsbury, Vice Chair* Dr. Erica Copeland (Designee for Dr. Perry Berry) Candice Copple Dr. Andi Furlis Dr. Joseph Foy Sally Harrison Jenny Jackson Robinson David Loutzenheiser (Designee for Sherry Richards) Dr. Shane McCord Rich Nickel Dr. Joe O'Reilly Kelsy Rowe (Designee for Dr. Chad Wilson) Kristin Sorensen David Williams Vince Yanez	None COUNCIL PRESENT None	Andrea Alicoate Lisa Anderson Lisa Cartwright-Harris Jaye O'Donnell Sarah Tolar Alfred Smith* ALSO PRESENT: Kristin Darr, Facilitator Dr. Richard Daniel

(*Participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

1. Call meeting to order, welcome announcements and reminders from the Chair.

Chairperson Heredia called the meeting to order. He introduced Dr. Richard Daniel, Mesa Community College President, and outlined his professional background. He welcomed Designee Kelsey Rowe, East Valley Institute of Technology; Designee Erica Copeland, Associate Superintendent of Queen Creek Unified School District; and Designee David Loutzenheiser, Executive Director of Secondary Education with Higley Unified School District.

2. Take action to approve the Roundtable Meeting Minutes from June 18, 2024.

It was moved by Boardmember Jackson-Robinson, seconded by Boardmember Williams, that the June 18, 2024, Education and Workforce Development Roundtable meeting minutes be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Heredia–Spilsbury–Copeland–Copples–Foy–Harrison–Jackson-Robinson–Loutzenheiser–McCord–Nickel–O’Reilly–Rowe–Sorensen–Williams–Yanez
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

3. Review scheduling of upcoming meetings and take action to approve proposed 2025 meeting dates.

Chairperson Heredia introduced Education and Workforce Administrator Sarah Tolar, who displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Chairperson Heredia said the next meeting will be held in December and noted the proposed 2025 meeting dates. He asked the Boardmembers to inform Ms. Tolar if there are any conflicts with the dates. (See Page 2 of Attachment 1)

It was moved by Boardmember Nickel, seconded by Boardmember Williams, to approve the proposed 2025 meeting dates.

AYES – Heredia–Spilsbury–Copeland–Copples–Foy–Harrison–Jackson-Robinson–Loutzenheiser–McCord–Nickel–O’Reilly–Rowe–Sorensen–Williams–Yanez
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

4. Update from Chair on purpose of meeting.

Chairperson Heredia summarized the existing purpose and objectives of the Education and Workforce Development Roundtable (EWDR) and requested Boardmember collaboration and discussion on possible updates to the existing objectives and goals to ensure alignment with the current and future needs of the community. He expressed the importance of positioning ourselves with work and discussions that are meaningful and intentional. (See Page 3 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Tolar recalled a facilitation exercise that was conducted over two years ago to develop the current framework for the Roundtable and explained the importance of reviewing the existing goals and objectives for the EWDR based on changes in Boardmembers and community needs. She introduced Kristin Darr, Central Creative Facilitator.

5. Discuss and provide feedback on the Roundtable Strategic Framework established in March 2022. Participate in discussions to review and propose modifications to the listed Collaborative Objective, Goal Statements, Identified Priorities and Highlighted Performance Metrics in each of the following Strategic Focus Area goals:

Ms. Darr invited the Boardmembers to share their goals for the meeting today and how their organization contributes or benefits from the EWDR. (See Page 4 of Attachment 1)

The following feedback was received:

- The information obtained at the EWDR assists with guiding students when planning for their future and supports youth in post-secondary opportunities which provide career opportunities.
- Workforce preparation and career awareness for students is a great way to retain a strong workforce in Mesa.
- Creating valuable partnerships and collaboration and striving to provide equal access to education for all Arizonans.
- The Roundtable brings industry and government together and supports and invests in initiatives that support the community.
- Providing messaging and data that assist with decision making and creating effective strategies to provide adequate resources for the community.

Ms. Darr gave a brief overview of the information that was shared during the discussion and highlighted several comments that may be utilized to determine new objectives.

Ms. Darr explained Strategic Priority Framework and reminded the group of the current collaborative objective of the EWDR. She pointed out the current strategic focus areas and highlighted the performance metrics which were set when the Roundtable was established in 2021. (See Pages 5 through 8 of Attachment 1)

(Boardmember Nickel was excused from the remainder of the meeting at 1:57 p.m.)

5-a. Early Learning through High School

Ms. Tolar highlighted the accomplishments made by EWDR for the early learning through high school focus area. She gave a brief explanation of the Read On Mesa and Mesa K-Ready projects and reported the contributions and impact that both programs have made on the community. (See Page 9 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Darr prompted the Boardmembers to discuss the Read On Mesa program and to share the accomplishments of the program related to the Strategic Priority Framework.

The following feedback was received:

- The City of Mesa has been able to utilize the Read On Mesa program, which can be overwhelming due to the large number of organizations that offer literacy programs; however, having multiple resources to meet the needs of the students is beneficial.

(Video conference communication was temporarily lost from 2:04 p.m. to 2:24 p.m.)

- Schools need to do a better job promoting the programs being offered and strategize to create interest and momentum at the start to keep the program going.

Ms. Darr prompted the Boardmembers to discuss the accomplishments related to the Strategic Priority Framework that had been made since 2021 for early learning through high school students.

The following feedback was received:

- The priority of quality early learning is an important piece of literacy and there are opportunities for cities and the business community to improve the quality of systems and services.
- Early college credit in high school addresses the affordability of post-secondary education. Would like to see an alignment to allow students to clearly see the pathways to industries all through school into a career.

Ms. Darr summarized the discussion, stating that there is more to early learning than literacy and there could be a better connection between the early learning system and the K-12 system.

5-b. Post-Secondary Education

Ms. Tolar highlighted the accomplishments made by EWDR for the post-secondary education focus area, pointing out that the Mesa College Promise was recently expanded to include adult learners. She mentioned there were 320 Mesa College Promise scholarships awarded in the previous year. She commented on the success of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion awareness campaign. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Darr asked the Boardmembers to share what the accomplishments in post-secondary education have meant to their organization.

The following feedback was received:

- The establishment of associate programs has given students who are not college bound the opportunity to obtain trade certifications.
- Student college trade education and university enrollment has increased.
- Industry partners appreciate the programs being offered because the opportunities assist in establishing a strong future workforce.

5-c. Workforce Development

Ms. Tolar provided the accomplishments that the EWDR has made toward the Workforce Development priority, highlighting the Workforce Center, quarterly higher education meetings, and Job Connect Mesa. She explained that the EWDR is a platform to help improve the connection between businesses and the workforce. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Darr invited the Boardmembers to contribute to the discussion of how the accomplishments have affected their organization.

The following feedback was received:

- Partnerships and early learning programs have enabled students to have the opportunity and exposure to careers that were never an option for them.
- Helped bridge the gap in the workforce by repivoting and expanding the education programs to meet the community's business employment needs.

Ms. Darr provided an overview of the discussion and requested that the Boardmembers reflect on what has changed over the past three years and where the Board would like to go from here. (See Pages 12 and 13 of Attachment 1)

The following feedback was received:

- Focus on increasing the scale of the programs being provided and strategic promotion of what is being offered to students.
- Obtain input from the students to learn what they need to move forward in the workforce.

Ms. Darr referred to the Strategic Priority Framework and requested feedback on possible changes to the focus of priorities. (See Pages 14 and 15 of Attachment 1)

The following feedback was received:

- Youth participation on the EWDR.
- Separate post-secondary education and workforce development.
- Open the door by creating an equitable landscape to connect with individuals where they are.
- Programs to support mental health, childcare, and language.

Ms. Darr asked the Boardmembers to talk about specific initiatives or items that the Roundtable would like to see covered.

The following feedback was received:

- Implementation of a system to share the datapoints for public and community use.

6. Roundtable members share out information regarding their involvement in recent and upcoming education or workforce-related events or programs.

Boardmember Williams shared that beginning Monday, September 9, 2024, Meta will be accepting applications for the Data Center Community Action Grant program. He said applications will be accepted until October 18, 2024, and the award will be granted in the spring of 2025.

Ms. Tolar reminded the Boardmembers that the Mesa Family Resource Center located in the lower level of the library will start programing on Monday, September 9, 2024. She confirmed that

all Boardmembers are invited to the grand opening celebration to be held on Thursday, September 26, 2024.

Boardmember Sorensen stated that the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academy at East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) is hosting an open house on September 16, 2024, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

7. Call to the public.

There were no public comments.

8. Call for future agenda items.

There were no future agenda items discussed.

9. Adjourn.

Without objection, the Education and Workforce Development Roundtable meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Education and Workforce Development Roundtable meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 4th day of September 2024. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

sr
(Attachments – 1)

MESA

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE

September 4, 2024

June 18th Minutes and 2025 Proposed Meeting Dates

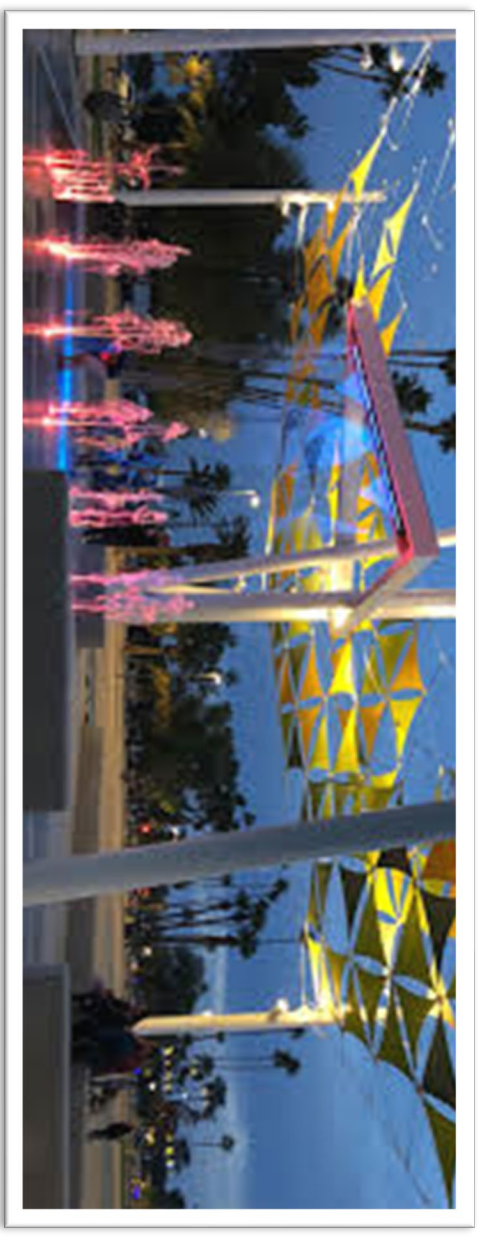
- **March 5, 2025**
- **June 4, 2025**
- **September 3, 2025**
- **December 3, 2025**

Meeting Objective: Conduct intentional conversation focused on accomplishments to date to refresh Mesa Education and Workforce Development Roundtable **Collaborative Objective, Strategic Focus Areas, and Performance Metrics.**



Introductions and Reflections

- What do you hope to get out of today?
- How do you see your organization contributing to and/or benefiting from the work of the Mesa Education and Workforce Development Roundtable?



Strategic Priority Framework

Collaborative Objective: We share expertise to coordinate goals, amplify resources, track data and advise the City Council on the highest priorities that will strengthen, streamline and align Mesa's education (early learning through post-secondary) and its workforce needs.

#1 Early Learning through High School

Priorities

- Equitable access to quality early learning
- Increase graduation rates
- Teacher recruitment & retention
- Clear post-secondary career path for all graduating seniors

#2 Post-Secondary

Strategic Focus Areas

Priorities

- Graduate workforce-ready students & adults
- Increase post-secondary enrollment through marketing of opportunities
- Help students/families seek technical & financial assistance
- Support Mesa's adults to compete for immediate placement in the workforce

#3 Workforce Development

Priorities

- Affordable & equitable access to upskill, train and educate Mesa's residents
- Improve link between ed pathways & industry needs
- Leverage partnerships, engage residents, business & industry to understand need, provide access & training

Highlighted Performance Metrics

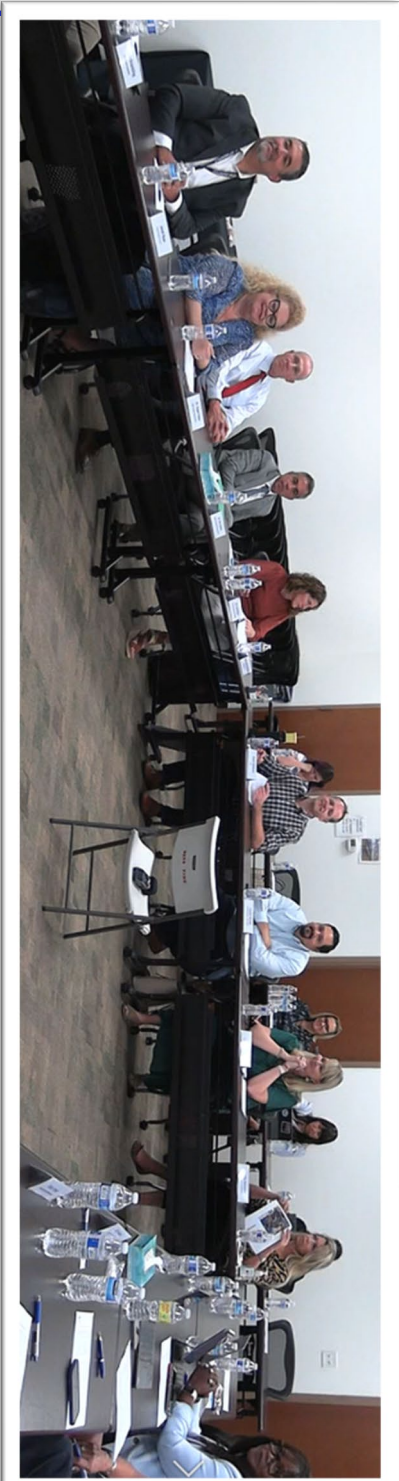
- # of students enrolled in preschool & equitable distribution across programs
- Diversity & equity of early learning staff
- % of on-time HS grad rates
- Drop-out rates for HS serving Mesa families
- Annual averages in Mesa teacher pay/compensation

- Post-secondary enrollment statistics
- Completion percentages in post-secondary degree/certification programs
- Mesa College Promise data
- % of Mesa adults with post-secondary credential

- # of Mesa businesses partnering with HS and post-secondary education
- % of post-secondary grad job placement
- Mesa unemployment rates
- Mesa job demand by industry

Roundtable Accomplishments

- August 2021 Roundtable Established
- March 2022 Roundtable Strategic Framework Developed



Roundtable Accomplishments

Early Learning through High School

- Development and re-launch of Read On Mesa
 - Launch of AARP Experience Corps Program in partnership with Mesa Public Schools
- Mesa K-Ready program awareness and support

Post-Secondary

- Strengthening and expansion of Mesa College Promise program to include adult learners
- Awareness, campaign and promotion of resources, including Mayoral Proclamation of FAFSA Completion Awareness

Workforce Development

- Workforce Center @ Mesa awareness, connection and promotion
- Mesa Higher Ed Convening: quarterly convening of higher ed partners to share Econ Dev data and landscape, employer/industry engagement needs, messaging and awareness around benefit of higher ed.
- Supporting launch of Job Connect Mesa to strengthen connection between education, businesses and job seekers in Mesa

Roundtable Accomplishments

Reflection:

- *What have these accomplishments meant to you and your organization?*
- *How do you see your organization contributing to and/or benefiting from the work of this group?*

Roundtable Accomplishments

Early Learning through High School

- Development and re-launch of Read On Mesa
 - Launch of AARP Experience Corps Program in partnership with Mesa Public Schools
- Mesa K-Ready program awareness and support

Reflection: What have these accomplishments meant to you and your organization?

How do you see your organization contributing to and/or benefiting from the work of this group?



Roundtable Accomplishments

Post-Secondary

- Strengthening and expansion of Mesa College Promise program to include adult learners
- Awareness, campaign and promotion of resources, including Mayoral Proclamation of FAFSA Completion Awareness

Reflection: What have these accomplishments meant to you and your organization?

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Roundtable Accomplishments

Workforce Development

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Reflection: What have these accomplishments meant to you and your organization?

How do you see your organization contributing to and/or benefiting from the work of this group?

Reflection: What has changed over the last three years?

- Big picture – educational landscape in Arizona
- City of Mesa – Education and Workforce Development Roundtable
- Your organization

Looking ahead...

- Where do we go from here?



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Closing Remarks

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” ~ Henry Ford

Roundtable Share-outs