



City Council Report

Date: April 20, 2026
To: City Council
Through: Miranda DeWitt, Government Relations Director
From: Sharon Skinner, Grants Coordinator
Subject: Resolution of support for the submittal of a grant application by Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC) to the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in the amount of \$10,000 for the Mesa Community School and approving the City Manager to accept and administer subsequent awarded funds as a pass-thru grant.

Purpose and Recommendation

This request is seeking a City Council resolution of support for SARRC application to Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation for Proposition 202 funding. If awarded, the grant will provide \$10,000 in funding for the Mesa Community School. A Council Resolution supports this effort to secure a grant and commits the city to receive it on behalf of the non-profit and pass it through in its entirety to them if awarded. As these programs serve the needs of City of Mesa residents, staff recommendation is for Council to adopt this resolution.

Background

SARRC is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance research and provide a lifetime of support for individuals with autism and their families. Their vision is that people with autism meaningfully integrated into inclusive communities.

As part of a multi-campus program across the Valley, the Mesa Community School is an innovative, inclusive preschool program that provides intensive, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) based programming for children with autism, along with high-quality, early childhood education for typically developing children ages 15 months to 5 years. The Community School Program engages more than 220 children each year.

As the Mesa community currently has limited options for young children with autism, SARRC opened our Mesa campus in January 2025, and more classrooms are being added incrementally in 2026 to ensure high-quality, well-supported program delivery. Given this growth, they are projecting to serve 30 children in the 2026-27 school year.

Discussion

A resolution of support for this grant request will complete the necessary documentation for the organization to file their application by the funder's deadline and be considered for funding from Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. Mesa's participation in Proposition 202 Indian Gaming Grants has returned over \$1 billion to Arizona communities since its passage in 2002 from four surrounding tribal governments.

Alternatives

The only alternative to adopting this resolution would be to not adopt. Such an action would deny Mesa sponsorship for this request and require the organization to seek an alternate local government for access to this funding source.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact on the City of Mesa, should this grant be awarded, will be negligible except overhead expenses in accounting to accept and reissue the grant check. The City does not administer the grant and signs an MOU or IGA with each tribe to limit our liability to only the pass-through transaction.