



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

## EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE MINUTES

September 3, 2025

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 3, 2025, at 1:34 p.m.

### BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Spilsbury, Vice Chair  
Dr. Erica Copeland (Designee for Dr. Perry Berry)  
Candice Copple  
Dr. Richard Daniel  
Dr. Joseph Foy  
Marcie Hutchinson  
Renita Miller (Designee for Dr. Shane McCord)  
Bob Nelson (Designee for Sally Harrison)  
Rich Nickel  
Craig Pearson (Designee for David Louzenheiser)  
Jenny Jackson Robinson  
Kelsey Rowe (Designee for Dr. Chad Wilson)  
Dr. Matthew Strom  
David Williams\*  
Vince Yanez

### BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT

COUNCIL PRESENT

None

### STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate  
Lisa Cartwright-Harris  
Lauren Lowe  
Holly Moseley  
Sarah Tolar

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

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury conducted a roll call.

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury excused Chairperson Heredia and Boardmember Sorensen from the entire meeting.

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

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury called the meeting to order. She welcomed Designee Dr. Erica Copeland, Associate Superintendent at Higley Unified School District; Designee Renita Miller,

World Language and College & Career Coordinator with Gilbert Public Schools; Designee Bob Nelson, Director of Communications at the Mesa Chamber of Commerce; Designee Craig Pearson, Assistant Director of Career and Technical Education at Higley Unified School District; and Designee Kelsey Rowe, East Valley Institute of Technology

2. Take action to approve the Roundtable Meeting Minutes from June 4, 2025.

It was moved by Boardmember Daniel, seconded by Boardmember Jackson Robinson, that the June 4, 2025, Education and Workforce Development Roundtable meeting minutes be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Spilsbury–Copeland–Copple–Daniel–Foy–Hutchinson–Miller–Nelson–Nickel–Pearson–Jackson Robinson–Rowe–Strom–Williams–Yanez

NAYS – None

ABSENT – Heredia–Sorensen

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

3. Review scheduling of upcoming meetings and take action to approve proposed 2026 meeting dates.

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury displayed a PowerPoint presentation. (**See Attachment 1**)

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury confirmed that the next meeting will be December 3, 2025. She asked the Education and Workforce Development Roundtable (EWDR) to review the proposed 2026 meeting schedule and to notify staff if there are any conflicts. (See Pages 2 and 3 of Attachment 1)

It was moved by Boardmember Jackson Robinson, seconded by Boardmember Copple, that the proposed 2026 meeting dates be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Spilsbury–Copeland–Copple–Daniel–Foy–Hutchinson–Miller–Nelson–Nickel–Pearson–Jackson Robinson–Rowe–Strom–Williams–Yanez

NAYS – None

ABSENT – Heredia–Sorensen

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

4. Introduction and remarks from City Manager Scott Butler.

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury introduced City Manager Scott Butler. (See Page 4 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Butler recognized the strong partnership between the City of Mesa and local educators in ensuring the community provides quality education to create high paying jobs. He highlighted the importance of strategic partnerships that focus on specific training needs to support local employers and emphasized that without a strong workforce, businesses may look to other cities

to meet their needs.

Mr. Butler expressed appreciation for all contributions made toward these efforts and reaffirmed his commitment to supporting and furthering these partnerships.

5. Introduction of new Superintendents and Roundtable Members. K-12 Superintendent overview and discussion of district priorities, challenges and initiatives.

Vice Chairperson Spilsbury asked the school superintendents to provide an overview of the priorities and challenges faced in each school district. (See Page 5 of Attachment 1)

Dr. Matt Strom, Associate Superintendent of Mesa Public Schools, highlighted the district's commitment to preparing students for both college and career through programs that combine academic learning with real-world experience. He reported steady improvement over the past three years, with 87% of students earning readiness points toward graduation goals. He reaffirmed the district's dedication to supporting all students, despite challenges such as market pressures, declining enrollment, and budget limitations.

Craig Pearson, Assistant Director of Career and Technical Education at Higley Unified School District, provided an overview of the district's growth and development since its founding in 1909. He emphasized the district's focus on workforce readiness through partnerships with colleges, businesses, and community organizations and reported higher student completion rates and industry certifications, with 1,500 students earning at least one certification before graduation. He confirmed that the district has faced challenges such as market-based economy and competition and stressed the district's commitment to creating lasting value and career opportunities for students.

Dr. Erica Copeland, Associate Superintendent at Queen Creek Unified School District, highlighted the efforts being made toward college and career readiness, particularly through building business partnerships to support workforce development. She emphasized that although there are challenges due to rapid growth and budget constraints, the commitment to meeting the needs of the community remains a high priority.

Renita Miller, World Language and College & Career Coordinator at Gilbert Public Schools, reported the district's ongoing focus on safety, including the rapid installation of weapon detectors and implementation of the new state-mandated cell phone policy. She noted financial challenges such as expensive HVAC repairs and a major pump house leak that caused temporary school closures but pointed out that the district remains committed to its improvement goals in literacy, math, science, and college and career readiness, guided by a strong data and research team.

6. Hear a presentation from Dr. Chad Gestson, founding Executive Director of the Arizona Institute for Education and the Economy. Discuss priorities, work and opportunities for engagement with City of Mesa.

Dr. Chad Gestson, Founder and Executive Director of the Arizona Institute for Education (AIEE), explained that the AIEE is building a statewide, non-partisan coalition of leaders with the goal to reimagine education in Arizona by aligning schools more closely with workforce needs to create a future-ready Arizona. He pointed out the challenges faced by school districts across Arizona such as teacher shortages, funding deficits, chronic absenteeism, and the debate about school choices. He pointed out that while society and jobs have changed, schools have mostly stayed the same.

He noted that AIEE research showed high school graduation requirements have changed very little since the 1930s, with only minor updates made to elective courses. He stated that this old system doesn't fully prepare students for today's jobs and is calling for bold, technology-based solutions that get students ready for a modern economy shaped by AI and fast-changing industries. (See Pages 8 through 17 of Attachment 1)

Dr. Gestson explained that AIEE's goal is to completely reimagine education to be more flexible and adaptable to technology and AI, focusing on bold, system-wide changes instead of small adjustments to the current system. He emphasized that meaningful progress in education requires collaboration among schools, businesses, government, and the community to shape its future. He noted that the coalition's momentum is growing across all 15 Arizona counties and aims to gather input from every region of the state. (See Pages 18 through 23 of Attachment 1)

In response to a question from Vice Chairperson Spilsbury, Mr. Gestson agreed with the concern about how to get communities on board, and the resistance to changes to traditional high school models and a fear for parents of how these changes might affect college admissions. He shared that AIEE is working with five community colleges and several universities, including Northern Arizona University (NAU), which are already testing new admission models to align with high school redesign efforts.

Boardmember Strom discussed the importance of creating multiple diploma pathways, including college, career, or military, so every student can pursue their individual goals. He reported that the state legislature is studying this idea, gathering feedback from many stakeholders.

Dr. Gestson emphasized that successful reform must include both top-down leadership and bottom-up community involvement. He reported that the coalition aims to empower local ecosystems while addressing state-level policies that stand in the way of innovation and pointed out that Mesa Public Schools was highlighted as an example of how local collaboration can drive meaningful change. (See Page 24 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Gestson explained that AIEE's first major priority is to recenter education around the student by developing a statewide Profile of a Graduate, which will define essential skills and knowledge for real-world readiness and guide schools in preparing students for success in life and work. He identified the second priority to develop the State 48 Graduate Profile that recognizes that there is no single path to success and includes four possible futures known as the 4 E's: Enrollment (college), Employment, Enlistment (military or service), and Entrepreneurship, and highlights eight essential life and workforce skills. He reviewed the third priority to create a statewide playbook in partnership with the Center for the Future of Arizona that will guide high schools in applying these new ideas while staying compliant with existing policies and funding requirements. (See Pages 25 through 30 of Attachment 1)

Dr. Gestson compared this effort to Arizona's regulatory sandbox model, which lets industries test new ideas before they become official policy. He explained that this approach allows schools and communities to pilot new graduation pathways and learn designs before statewide adoption. He encouraged participants to stay engaged and collaborate, stressing that meaningful change requires educators, parents, and community leaders to work together to modernize education and prepare students for the future. (See Pages 31 through 35 of Attachment 1)

Responding to a question from Boardmember Nelson regarding support for students if experimental approaches do not lead to the desired outcomes, Mr. Gestson explained that the initiative builds on

the schools' existing efforts, making bold, evolutionary changes without disrupting the students' opportunities. He commented that coalition will provide guidelines to allow schools to innovate safely while keeping students on track for success.

In response to a question from Boardmember Jackson Robinson, Dr. Gestson explained that teachers are directly involved in the coalition, so their input helps shape the vision for future schools and added that the effort is focused on giving schools flexibility while following state guidance.

Mr. Gestson responded to a comment from Boardmember Hutchinson regarding the lack of support for significant advances due to limited funding and legislative limitations in Arizona. He emphasized that teachers and communities need support to implement changes and adapt to society's evolving needs, and noted that incentivizing innovation is important, though funding and declining enrollment remain challenges.

Responding to a question from Vice Chairperson Spilsbury, Dr. Gestson explained that the initiative is primarily district-focused, but that charter schools are also showing interest. He emphasized that meaningful progress comes from willing communities rather than top-down mandates, noting that the current system was never designed to meet every learner's needs.

(At 2:42 p.m. Vice Chairperson Spilsbury excused Boardmember Yanez from the remainder of the meeting.)

Boardmember Pearson noted that charter schools have fewer requirements, which can influence skill development, and emphasized the need for schools to teach practical professional skills such as communication, teamwork, and real-world problem-solving beyond traditional academic subjects.

Boardmember Daniel stressed the importance of cross-sector collaboration, early career pathway planning, and adapting to evolving workforce needs, highlighting partnerships, accountability, and community responsiveness, with the goal of serving all students effectively.

(At 2:47 p.m. Vice Chairperson Spilsbury excused Boardmember Williams from the remainder of the meeting.)

Boardmember Foy emphasized prioritizing student needs and understanding their broader learning ecosystem, noting that teachers and administrators need support to address challenges like mental health and technology, and encouraged engaging students directly to inform solutions.

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

Boardmember Copple introduced Dr. Quintin Boyce, Associate Vice President of Outreach with Educational Outreach and Student Services at Arizona State University (ASU), and Vanessa Fonseca-Chávez, Associate Professor of English and Assistant Vice Provost of the ASU Polytechnic campus. She invited the EWDR members to attend the grand opening celebration for new school facilities at the Polytechnic campus on October 24, 2025. She highlighted the success of ASU Preparatory Academy's inaugural MicroSpark Microelectronics & Semiconductor K-12 Teacher Conference, held on March 24, 2025, which focused on micro-sparks, micro-electives, and technology, with participation from teachers across multiple districts.

Boardmember Nelson shared information about the Maricopa Institute of Technology Conference, which he attended virtually on September 18, 2025. He noted that events such as this are also posted on the Mesa Chamber of Commerce calendar for public access.

Boardmember Nickel reported that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) system was set to open successfully this year and declared that the new FAFSA form can now be completed in under 15 minutes. He reported that the House and Senate have agreed to level funding for next year's grants, pending budget approval and pointed out the continued support for rural Arizona high schools and a shift in scholarship funding toward workforce partnerships with major employers.

Boardmember Daniel emphasized the recent lighting celebration for the Mesa College Promise billboards, located at U.S. 60 at Dobson and Alma School Roads, held August 13, 2025, to promote the Mesa College Promise program. He recognized former Mayor Giles, Mayor Freeman, and the City Council for their continued support for this program, noting that the program provides up to \$100,000 per year in scholarships for Mesa residents, including adult learners.

Boardmember Strom expressed his enthusiasm regarding the efforts to strengthen the collaboration between educators and industry partners across multiple career pathways and added that these partnerships help align classroom instruction with real-world needs, particularly in healthcare and other emerging fields.

8. Call to the public.

There were no public comments.

9. Call for future agenda items.

There were no future agenda items discussed.

10. Adjourn.

Without objection, the Education and Workforce Development Roundtable meeting adjourned at 3:01 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 3<sup>rd</sup> day of September 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

sr  
(Attachments – 1)

# **MESA**

# **EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE**

# **DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE**

September 3, 2025

➤ **2025 Meeting Dates**

**December 3, 2025**

# June 4<sup>th</sup> Minutes and 2026 Proposed Meeting Dates

- February 11, 2026
- May 6, 2026
- August 19, 2026
- November 4, 2026

# Welcome, City Manager Scott Butler



# K-12 District Superintendent Updates

- Mesa Public Schools, Dr. Matthew Strom
- Queen Creek Unified School District, Dr. Perry Berry
- Higley Unified School District, David Loutzenheiser
- Gilbert Public Schools, Dr. Shane McCord

## of Mesa cation and rkforce ndtable

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 and workforce needs.

## Eliminate Barriers:

**Identify and address common barriers, including awareness, financial, and other challenges that impact access to resources, opportunities and experiences for students, educators, businesses, families, and community.**

**Link Education and Industry:** Deliberate communication between industry and education partners. Facilitate a common understanding of skills, opportunities and challenges.

unlike the living cell, cannot propagate viruses and experiences.

## Post-Secondary:

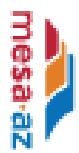
Communicate the importance of post-secondary training, education, certification, opportunities and benefits.

Data Informed:

Measure outcomes, identify patterns and guide discussion by tracking community and city-wide data.

## Workforce Development:

- Continue to bring industry to connect directly with education partners.
- Identify CTE pathways that align with high growth and in-demand industries
- Prioritize promotion and awareness of opportunities.



# ARIZONA INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION & THE ECONOMY

NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

*Future of School. Future of Work. Future of Arizona.*

*“I am not in charge of electricity in my city. But when it goes out, it impacts my residents. So, yes, I feel ownership of the grid in my city. Why would I not approach education the same way?”*

# Statewide Non-Partisan *Solutions* Institute

- Positioned at the *intersection* of PK-12, higher education, and business, industry, and workforce
- Designed to *do* and driven by *Big Bets*
- Relentlessly non-partisan and committed to every Arizonan
- Powered by *partnership* - “*Do nothing alone*”
- Preparing Arizona education for the *future* and the *AI revolution*

*After two years and thousands of conversations, meetings, and convenings with Arizonans from every corner, hearing their unique perspectives , learning from their unique experiences , researching our previous collective efforts - both successful and unsuccessful - and studying the challenges and opportunities we face within education and our economy , both today and tomorrow ...*

es. And ...



# Our Challenge

*The world is changing rapidly - technology, work, and society are evolving daily. But education is at a near standstill. The gap between life outside of school and what happens inside it is growing. In Arizona, that gap is especially wide. The impact is clear - nearly every industry is facing a workforce crisis and parents, students, and educators are walking away from traditional models of education.*



# irtrually Everything Has hanged About Society



airbnb



# Virtually Everything Has Changed



# et Almost Nothing Has Changed About School

# We Are Not One Elective Away from 2025



# Our Stance

*We must stop trying to incrementally fix our current system. From its origin, it was never designed to serve all learners well. Instead, we must completely re-envision the future of school and then evolve into a more agile, future-focused, learner-centered, and tech-enabled P-20 education system - sparked by Big Bets, driven by community, and designed to ensure every graduate is future proof and ready to live, work, and thrive in Arizona and beyond.*

# Our Belief

*Schools cannot reform themselves. This level of transformation is only possible with an education and economic ecosystem owning change together. Business and industry, higher education, government at all levels, philanthropy, and the nonprofit sector - in partnership with PK-12 - must co-design the future of school and drive change together.*

*Individuals alone, no matter how competent or charismatic, never have all the assets needed to overcome tradition and inertia.*

*- John Kotter*

# Our Coalition

*One of our nation's largest and most ambitious coalitions (H5) to reimagine school, leveraging AI and emerging technologies, has already formed and is expanding rapidly. Now with representation from every county and corner of State 48, this cross-sector alliance is co-designing the future of school in Arizona, beginning with high school.*

# Our Blueprint, Driven by Big Bets

*We must urgently move beyond **incrementalism** . We must channel our energy and resources into a new **blueprint** driven by **Big Bets** - ambitious, action-oriented, co-owned initiatives that reflect the entrepreneurial spirit of Arizona . By taking bold, informed, and well-resourced risks aligned to a transformative blueprint, we move beyond incremental growth and open the door to innovation, creativity, and forward-thinking ideas that drive toward our collective mission.*

# Our Mission

*Building a more agile, future-focused, learner-centered, and tech-enabled P-20 education system, sparked by Big Bets, driven by community and designed to ensure every graduate is future proof and ready to live, work, and thrive in Arizona and beyond.*

# Our Theory of Change

## *Arizona needs:*

- *A guiding coalition*
- *A new North Star for education*
- *Policy flexibilities, including accountability, that enable and encourage change*
- *Statewide and local innovation networks, with playbooks and technical assistance, to accelerate transformation*
- *Intentional integration of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence*
- *Strategic investments that incentivize and reward innovation and risk-taking*
- *A plan to R&D innovations to drive future policy change and system coherence - legislation, rules, accountability*
- *Simultaneous top-down and bottom-up efforts that leverage and engage students, families, and educators*
- *Strong statewide and local ecosystems*

# Our H5\*/Future of School Coalition

## *\*High School, Higher Ed, High Skill, High Demand, High Wage Workforce*

Now with nearly 200 organizations from all 15 counties spanning the entire P-20 continuum including:

- Early childhood education, such as First Things First
- PK-12 (district, CTED, charter, private) representing 11 counties
- Majority of AZ's community colleges, ASU, NAU, UA, & several private universities
- Chambers & business councils, such as AZ Chamber, AZ Hispanic Chamber, AZ Tech Council, Local First Arizona
- Economic and workforce development councils, such as ACA, GPEC, and ECoNA
- CEO groups, such as Greater Phoenix Leadership and SALC
- Government (state, county, city), such as SBE, ADE, AZ Charter Board
- Philanthropy - locally and nationally
- Local and national nonprofit partners, such as EFA, CFA, ASA, AZK12, AEF, VL locally as well as XQ Institute, Carnegie, Transcend, KnowledgeWorks, Stanford Hoover nationally

# Our Theory of Change in Action

## Initial Big Bets

*With the State 48 Graduate Profile as Arizona's new north star, the Innovation Playbook and Education and Workforce Innovation Sandbox will provide statewide and local ecosystems the tools, policy flexibilities, and inspiration to help schools modernize, experiment responsibly, and accelerate real change, ensuring every graduate is future proof - fully equipped to live, work, and thrive in Arizona and beyond.*

# Our System, Recentered

*Apple produces iPhones. Lucid builds EVs. TSMC manufactures microchips. These companies ensure full coherence of their systems - training, infrastructure, investments - to drive the quality of their products and services.*

*Education must do the same. Our graduates are our purpose. We must recenter education on the graduate and ask ourselves two fundamental questions:*

- *What are we preparing our students to do post-high school?*
- *What are the knowledge, literacies, skills, and dispositions students need as they walk across an Arizona stage?*

# The State 48 Graduate Profile

## *Prepared for 4 Futures*

**Enrollment** : continue formal education in a college, university, or technical/trade school, including STEM, Arts and Humanities, Healthcare, Education, and more

**Employment** : work in a high-wage career with an industry credential, license, certificate, or degree

**Enlistment & Service** : serve in the United States armed forces or engage in a local, national, or international season of service

**Entrepreneurship** : launch a business, nonprofit, or creative venture

# The State 48 Graduate Profile

## Equipped with Life's 8 Essentials

**Knowledge & Literacy:** Strong academic foundation in a variety of content areas

**Digital Literacy:** Skilled in using technology responsibly, creatively, effectively

**Critical Thinking & Problem Solving:** Ability to analyze, evaluate, solve complex challenges

**Creative & Innovative Thinking:** Ability to generate new, unique, innovative thoughts, ideas, and solutions

**Self-Awareness & Management:** Guides choices and relationships with responsibility, empathy, integrity, and personal values

**Resilience, Adaptability, & Lifelong Learning:** Embraces change, persists through challenges, and seeks lifelong growth in knowledge and skills

**Communication & Collaboration:** Shares ideas clearly and works well on teams

**Ethical, Civic, and Global Engagement:** Acts with integrity, contributes to the community, and seeks the common good

# State 48 Graduate

*Future Proof*

*and Ready for What's Next*

*In partnership with SciTech  
Institute & the Arizona  
Education Foundation*

School 1.0	School 2.0	School 3.0
<p>Time (money &amp; progress), compliance, &amp; system-driven</p> <p>Siloed subjects &amp; content areas</p> <p>Factory model; facts &amp; knowledge without critical thinking</p> <p>Driven by legacy structures (COE, pay, governance, calendar, etc.)</p>	<p>Still within the traditional time &amp; money structure, but more student-centered:</p> <p>More rigorous, research-based with effective models &amp; practices</p> <p>More personalized with AI/technology</p> <p>Interdisciplinary &amp; integrated curriculum and technology; focus on critical thinking, collaboration, creativity</p> <p>More authentic learning experiences (project-based, studios, learning portfolios, internships, etc.)</p>	<p>The future of school must look very different. This is bigger than reform. This is risk-taking and reinvention.</p> <p><i>Wanted: Bold ideas, disruptive innovations, never-before-seen partnerships, and new tech-enabled models that drive learner outcomes, create future proof graduates, meet workforce demands.</i></p>
<h2>Traditional</h2>	<h2>Playbook</h2>	<h2>Sandbox</h2>

# Innovation Playbook: A Guide for Arizona Schools and School Systems

The *Innovation Playbook\** is designed to unlock the creative potential already present in our state's schools. Arizona has led the nation in adopting forward-thinking policies that create space for innovation - the Instructional Time Model and Competency-Based Education as examples. Yet many schools and systems may not fully realize the flexibilities they already have to personalize learning, rethink time, or design new models of success.

In a partnership between the Institute and the **Center for the Future of Arizona**, with support of national partner **KnowledgeWorks**, the Playbook will include a policy primer and an implementation guide with practical guidance, policy clarity, and inspirational examples to help school and system leaders confidently navigate and leverage Arizona's unique policy landscape.

**In short: Permission has already been granted. The Playbook shows you how to use it.**

School 1.0	School 2.0	School 3.0
<p>Time (money &amp; progress), compliance, &amp; system-driven</p> <p>Siloed subjects &amp; content areas</p> <p>Factory model; facts &amp; knowledge without critical thinking</p> <p>Driven by legacy structures (COE, pay, governance, calendar, etc.)</p>	<p>Still within the traditional time &amp; money structure, but more student-centered:</p> <p>More rigorous, research-based with effective models &amp; practices</p> <p>More personalized with AI/technology</p> <p>Interdisciplinary &amp; integrated curriculum and technology; focus on critical thinking, collaboration, creativity</p> <p>More authentic learning experiences (project-based, studios, learning portfolios, internships, etc.)</p>	<p><i>The future of school must look very different. This is bigger than reform. This is risk-taking and reinvention.</i></p> <p><i>Wanted: Bold ideas, disruptive innovations, never-before-seen partnerships, and new tech-enabled models that drive learner outcomes, create future proof graduates, meet workforce demands.</i></p>
<p>Traditional</p>	<p>Playbook</p>	<p>Sandbox</p>

# An Education and Workforce Innovation Sandbox *Accelerating Local and Statewide Systems Transformation*

Arizona is advancing a bold new approach to systems innovation through an education and workforce sandbox concept - flexible, time-bound regulatory zones that allow schools, districts, post-secondary institutions, and cross-sector partnerships to pilot new models without being constrained by outdated rules. Developed by a collaborative of statewide leaders and organizations, sandboxes will drive achievement and spark innovation across AZ's learning continuum. *By granting local ecosystems the protected space to design, test, and evaluate transformative solutions, Arizona will build a dynamic infrastructure for policy modernization and system redesign.* Modeled after successful innovation frameworks in other sectors, the sandbox concept aims to unlock the next generation of high-impact solutions to drive learner outcomes, readiness, attainment, and economic mobility.

## Artificial Intelligence *The Future of School and the Future of Work*

AI is reshaping everything - school, work, society. We must get it right for sake of education today and for the workforce tomorrow.

In order to ensure safe, effective, and ethical implementation of AI, the Institute publishes statewide guidance on the use of Generative AI in schools and school systems. In addition, to ensure alignment of all statewide AI efforts - policy, practice, professional development, tool development, etc. - the Institute helped form and now co-leads the *Arizona AI Alliance*, a collaborative of 15 statewide organizations committed to getting AI right.

The Alliance now officially engages with the the Coalition, working to ensure intentional integration of emerging technologies into all future of school efforts, intentionally aligning new models of school with new models of work.

# Roundtable Share outs