



**JOINT MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SCOTTSDALE
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, AND SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE JOINT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION MINUTES**

Wednesday, September 8, 2021

Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Rd.
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

PRESENT:

City Council Subcommittee on Education:

Mayor David D. Ortega
Councilwoman Tammy Caputi
Councilwoman Solange Whitehead

Scottsdale Unified School District Joint Advisory Committee on Education:

Dr. Scott Menzel, SUSD Superintendent
Julie Cieniawski, SUSD Board Vice President
Patty Beckman, SUSD Board Member

Scottsdale Community College Joint Advisory Committee on Education:

Chris Haines, SCC Interim President
Dr. Eddie Lamperez, SCC Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs
Melanie Burm, SCC Director of External Affairs

GUEST:

Donna Davis, Senior Community Impact Manager, Arizona Education Forward

STAFF:

Brent Stockwell
Bethany Schilling
Kira Peters

Call to Order

Mayor Ortega called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present as noted above.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves and spoke of their education related successes and celebrations as well as their thoughts and goals relating to education in Scottsdale.

2. Education Forward Arizona

Donna Davis, Senior Community Impact Manager, presented a brief history and the mission of Education Arizona Forward, statewide and Scottsdale specific data regarding the Arizona education progress meter, and discuss successful education initiatives from around the state. She noted that with the goal of advancing P-20 education, Expect More Arizona, College Success Arizona, and Achieve 60 AZ officially came together to form Education Forward Arizona as of August 5, 2021. The organization's mission is to advocate for and act on education improvements that advance the quality of life for all Arizonans. The organization operates statewide to build public and political will, create a shared voice for P-20 education, implement innovative programs that serve students, and advance bold policies and funding.

Ms. Davis presented Arizona and Scottsdale statistics dating back to 2016 as determined by the Arizona Education Progress Meter. Statewide statistics shown included quality early learning experiences for three and four-year-olds; third-grade reading proficiency; eighth-grade math proficiency; percentage of students graduating from high school; opportunity youth (students 16-24 who do not attend school and do not work); percent of students enrolled in a secondary education opportunity after graduation; and median elementary teacher salaries. Scottsdale specific statistics included third-grade reading proficiency, which is 67 percent; eighth-grade math proficiency, which is 61 percent; and high school graduation rate, which is 94 percent. Each of these statistics rank higher than the statewide numbers.

Ms. Davis gave examples of local education goal setting taking place across the state. Efforts include programs for all ages, including adult education opportunities. She reviewed strategies that are part of the City of Tempe's Achieve 65 Tempe program. She mentioned efforts that are being made by the City of Mesa and the Town of Superior, and the Promise Program, which benefits Pinal County students.

Committee members were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Davis said that the Tempe pre-school program is free, based on income.

Julie Cieniawski, SUSD Board Vice President, said that she supports high quality internships; however she feels that the internships are often free labor to the company. She would like to see internship programs that pay for the job so that young adults are not in a position of having to maintain an internship, a job, and attending school. If paid internships were available, students would have the opportunity to learn advanced work skills while going to school. She

opined that although the Scottsdale statistics are higher than the Arizona average, the city aspires to be better.

Councilwoman Solange Whitehead said that she is interested in advancing apprenticeships as a way to eliminate school debt and provide a workforce.

Patty Beckman, SUSD Board Member, commented that there are a lot of education initiatives across the Valley and it would be beneficial if there could be a synergy between the various efforts, bringing the communities together for a common goal.

Ms. Davis said that Education Arizona Forward focuses on equity and believes the state has a problem with more affluent students doing well and low income and minority students having a hard time. She said that programs such as Project Rocket, which failed in the Legislature, that would provide resources to support tutoring and expanded learning opportunities for minorities and under-performing students, are critical.

Ms. Cieniawski commented that one of the reasons Project Rocket did not pass legislatively was because it tied success to test scores. She opined that many factors besides test scores are relevant to determining whether a student is successful. She suggested that Scottsdale can do better in determining what individual student success will look like.

Mayor David Ortega said that he has been approached by a couple of corporations that are interested in offering scholarships. He suggested that a positive step would be to create a central referral system that would list scholarship, job, and intern opportunities that are available through the City, schools, corporations, and Scottsdale Community College. He said that a good alternative to “career days” could be “career camps” that would offer opportunities at different levels, such as health care, construction, or tech camps. He suggested that Scottsdale Stadium would be a good location for trade companies to offer camps.

3. College Promise Program

Chris Haines, Interim President of Scottsdale Community College (SCC), provided information on efforts to increase the post-secondary education rate. Topics included the history and success of a Mesa Promise effort that provides scholarships to qualifying graduate residents of Mesa to attend Maricopa Community Colleges and the interest in pursuing something similar in Scottsdale. Maricopa Community Colleges Promise is a new community college tuition and student success program, that would be made possible through partnerships with different philanthropic entities, businesses, and Maricopa County cities that is focused on new high school graduates. Ms. Haines noted that the qualification for Mesa’s program is a GPA of 2.0 or higher. If Scottsdale elects to participate, qualifications for student participation would be determined by the College Promise Program. Students who qualify would receive tuition, access to counselors, bus passes, and emergency rent assistance.

Ms. Haines noted that Scottsdale Community College, Chandler/Gilbert Community College, and Rio Salado Community College have each applied for the Kresge Foundation Grant. If the grant is awarded, it will enable the program to begin moving forward.

Committee members were given an opportunity to ask questions.

Councilwoman Tammy Caputi said that in conversations with City Manager Thompson she has learned that Scottsdale has constraints on its ability to gift public money. She suggested that consideration be given to creating an internship program that would offer youth compensation in the form of a scholarship.

Ms. Haines said that the City of Mesa put \$500,000 towards the first five years of Mesa Community College's program. She feels that there would be enough interest from Scottsdale organizations and businesses to fund the program.

Ms. Beckman commented that the Charros Foundation has been discussing the possibility of enhancing the Coronado Foundation. Part of the broader discussion had by the Charros was providing multi-tiered support mechanisms to ensure that students not only get to college but are ready and successful once they get there.

Mayor David Ortega said that he sent a letter to the Kresge Foundation in support of Mesa's application and also pledged that Scottsdale would participate with any necessary follow-through. He commented that when community neighbors are healthy, our city is healthy. He has been on the Coronado Foundation for nine years and has participated on the selection committee. The Coronado Foundation is a 501(c)3, which aids in the channeling of funds.

4. City Programs and Educational Benefits

Kira Peters, Community Services Administrator, discussed research regarding the educational benefits of parks and recreation, libraries, and other community programs. She said that Parks and Recreation has a robust relationship with Scottsdale Unified School District and offers many enrichment opportunities for students, including six after-school program locations. Scottsdale public library offers a free informal community place and free programs for all ages. Library staff have been working with ASU to research the correlation between early learning programming and interactions with parents and caregivers and how that helps a child, family and the community be more successful. Studies are showing that there is a positive correlation between getting parents involved at an early stage.

Committee members were given an opportunity to ask questions.

Councilwoman Solange Whitehead commented that the City offers numerous paid positions for youth, starting at age 15. She highlighted the lifeguard training program that offers students an opportunity to be trained and work in a paid lifeguarding position. She stressed the importance of working together to expand partnerships to continue to improve youth opportunities.

Melanie Burm, SCC Director of External Affairs, commented that parks and libraries enrich the learning experience. Oftentimes educational settings such as college campuses can be intimidating and offering a starting point can encourage people to want to learn more. Ms. Peters added that it's not just the programs, it's the people working in the programs that can give a person the extra push.

Ms. Cieniawski stressed the importance of sharing with the public what types of free learning opportunities are available through parks and recreation and libraries.

Councilwoman Tammy Caputi said she would like to have a conversation about how to

transport kids from school to the library and parks and recreational activities.

Ms. Peters agreed that in some instances transportation is a challenge. She said that she has had conversations about doing more to connect kids in summer reading programs. They have discussed creative ways to meet people where they are and other opportunities such as using the trolley to transport youth to Civic Center Library.

Mayor David Ortega commented that Scottsdale has designated over \$320 million to parks, transportation, annexes, and buildings for services that will offer a good return on investment towards education. He suggested finding a way to make information about the many programs available to the public.

Dr. Scott Menzel, SUSD Superintendent, noted that Scottsdale Community College has been working with WestWorld to locate an equine facility on a city-owned property. The equine program at SCC has contracted with various landowners throughout the Valley for the past 40 years. Through the process, he has learned that there is a lot more opportunity for collaboration with Parks and Recreation for many areas of community education.

Ms. Beckman said she would like to see SUSD's new marketing and communications committee partner with the City to find a way to get messages to the kids about available resources.

5. Alternative Paths to Workforce Readiness

Melanie Burm, SCC Director of External Affairs, discussed certificate programs and other innovative programming that would respond timely to the workforce training needs of local employers. She talked about alternative options available at Scottsdale Community College geared toward helping the workforce upskill or be successful in a new career path, including micro-certificate programs and certificates of completion. SCC is focusing on getting to know what various industries want for their employees and helping those businesses get comfortable working with a community college to provide employee opportunities. Ms. Burm noted that SCC recently worked with an employer to develop an apprenticeship program and hopes to replicate that program with more employers. They are working to develop work and learn models specific to individual employers and have entered into partnerships with several local organizations.

Committee members were given an opportunity to ask questions.

Dr. Menzel underscored the power of certificates. He talked about the benefits of students coming out of high school being having stackable credits available to them so that they can go into a field and have the ability to continue their education later.

Ms. Cieniawski asked if there is a way to work better to create a workforce for the district. Ms. Burm said that the idea of career exploration camps starting in middle school would introduce young people to possibilities and help them to develop an affinity of affection for their career choice.

Councilwoman Caputi said she likes the idea of connecting employers with students and giving them the ability to think through their education and career choices. She expressed support for

dual enrollment opportunities and stressed the importance of getting information about dual enrollment out to students and parents at a young age.

Ms. Beckman commented that educators that are able to teach dual enrollment need to be supported and the availability of dual enrollment programs needs to be communicated to families.

Dr. Eddie Lamperez noted that a Step Program offering those with a bachelor's degree the opportunity to become certified as a teacher is available online statewide. He noted that there are many options for two plus two programs, which offer the opportunity to obtain a four-year degree at the community college locations.

6. Future Agenda Items and Meeting Dates

Mayor Ortega thanked committee members and staff for helping to formalize the discussion.

Tentative future meeting dates include:

- November 10, 2021
- February 2, 2022
- April 6, 2022

Mayor Ortega said that he recently had the pleasure of attending the Saguaro High School graduation and meeting the SRO officers and learning about the City's diversion program. He introduced the officers to the group.

Dr. Scott Menzel requested that a future agenda include discussion about SUSD's strategic planning and action steps to ensure that every student within SUSD is able to achieve success in school, college, and career and about post-secondary educational opportunities. He suggested that a presentation outlining Scottsdale's available assets and where gaps are would help in focusing the committees work. It will be important to the discussion moving forward to have input from various groups within the community.

Patty Beckman asked that the subcommittee plan to identify a list of goals.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

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