



May 14, 2010

The Honorable Jan Brewer  
Governor of Arizona  
1700 West Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Jan Brewer:

On behalf of the Center for the Future of Arizona, I am pleased to provide this formal letter of support for Arizona's Race to the Top Phase II grant application. As a nonprofit organization focused on addressing issues critical to the state, the Center recognizes the future success of Arizona is directly linked to the future success of our young people and the steps we take now to transform our education system.

Arizona is poised to make fundamental changes to our public education system to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their postsecondary education and career. Although bold, this is absolutely a critical goal for Arizona as we approach our centennial celebration and begin to define our next 100 years. It is important to recognize that our state has many assets upon which we can build as we move forward in implementing Arizona's education reform plan. Arizona has an innovative, entrepreneurial history of education reform. We are culturally diverse. We have experience with what does and what doesn't work in education. And perhaps most important, we have leadership and true partnerships among the State of Arizona, district and school leaders, teachers, the business community, parents and students that our state can draw upon to realize this change.

Arizona knows that in order to accomplish our goals we will need to focus on the single strategy that we have learned is most important to improving educational outcomes for young people which is ensuring all students have access to and benefit from effective instruction at every step in their educational career. The Center for the Future of Arizona is committed to realizing this strategy in our state. This is evidenced by the work of our Beat the Odds Institute which provides training, assistance and support to Arizona K-12 principals in over 85 schools across the state to implement research-based principles aimed at providing effective instruction and improving student achievement.

As a signal of Arizona's continued commitment to education innovation, the Center was actively engaged in the passage of the legislation you just recently signed into law establishing a "move on when ready" education model designed to increase academic achievement to national and international standards, preparing students for college and careers. The legislation provides for an alternative high school diploma available to students who demonstrate readiness for college

level work without remediation, enabling students to move forward in their educational career based on demonstrated academic achievement as opposed to seat time in class. Like the Beat the Odds Institute, this major education reform effort focuses on providing effective instruction for all students. The Center is positioned to lead the development and implementation of the move on when ready model which is part of our state's larger reform plan. We are pleased to support Arizona's educational innovation agenda and look forward to continuing this work.

Governor Brewer, we admire and respect the resolve and commitment you have demonstrated in protecting Arizona's educational enterprise even as we continue to face difficult budgetary circumstances. The Center is prepared to lend our support to your efforts to advance Arizona's educational innovation agenda and we fully support Arizona's Race to the Top Phase II Application. We look forward to working with you and educational stakeholders across the state put in place what we know is a very solid and comprehensive plan to transform our education system to benefit all Arizona children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sybil Francis', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sybil Francis, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, Center for the Future of Arizona