

Arizona Community College Presidents' Council

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May 15, 2010

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

Dear Governor Brewer:

On behalf of the Arizona Community College Presidents' Council, a statewide organization of the chief executive officers of each of the ten accredited community college districts in the state, I am writing to express our support of the Arizona Race to the Top (RTTT) Phase II Application. The community colleges wholeheartedly support its goal 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.

As members of the higher education community in Arizona, we have long recognized the need to align and strengthen the P-12 system with post-secondary education and training if Arizona is going to have the skilled and trained workforce it needs to compete in the 21st century. The higher education system must have students who are prepared to successfully enter into and complete college level credit bearing coursework.

For the past few years, Arizona has started to gain momentum in its desire to improve and strengthen the entire P-20 education continuum and has set a goal of doubling baccalaureate degrees by 2020. Working together through the Governor's P-20 Coordinating Council, great strides have been made to raise graduation requirements, strengthen mathematics standards, improve the data warehouse, support struggling schools with needed interventions, and attract, train and retain highly effective teachers and principals in our elementary and secondary schools. Additionally, unprecedented communication has been fostered between the P-12 and higher education systems aligning efforts through the State Board of Education, the Arizona Community College President's Council, the Governor's Arizona Community College Council, the Arizona Board of Regents, and through initiatives such as the Lumina Foundation Making Opportunity Affordable Grant. But there is still much work to do.

The RTTT Phase II Application is a roadmap for continued reform for Arizona's education systems. With RTTT funding, we can jump start and accelerate our efforts to plan, coordinate and implement reform along the entire education continuum. This plan includes reform strategies, timeframes for implementation, metrics for measuring success, and identifies responsible parties that will be held accountable for the successful implementation of the plan. The plan will position Arizona for reforms that can be sustained after RTTT funds have been exhausted.

The community colleges stand ready and committed to work shoulder-to-shoulder with the P-12 system, policy makers, business and community leaders, parents and students to ensure the success of Arizona's RTTT reform plan.

Sincerely,



Rufus Glasper, Ph. D., CPA
Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges