



MESA EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE

December 6, 2023

2024 Meeting Dates

- **March 6, 2024**
- **June 5, 2024**
- **September 4, 2024**
- **December 4, 2024**

Governor's Educator Retention Task Force

- In February 2023, Governor Hobbs announced an executive order to establish an Education Retention Task Force in an effort to rebuild and reinvest in our public schools.
- The task force has met regularly since April 2023:
 - Designed, administered and analyzed stakeholder survey taken by almost 10,000 current and former educators state-wide
 - Heard from organizations, programs and resources from across the country to understand and explore best practices
 - Developed recommendations in alignment with each of the focus areas: Working Conditions, Teacher Preparation and Certification, Compensation and Benefits, Retention Innovations and Solutions

East Valley Representatives:

Justin Wing – Mesa Public Schools, Asst. Supt. of Human Resources

Sarah Tolar – City of Mesa, Education and Workforce Administrator



Educator Retention Task Force Update

- Recommendations presented to Governor Hobbs Tuesday, December 5th

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UNIVERSAL LEARNER COURSES AND ACCELERATE ASU

Dr. Audrey Moreno, ASU Senior Director National Bridge Partnerships

FAFSA Initiatives

JULIE SAINZ, DIRECTOR, FAFSA AND COLLEGE ACCESS INITIATIVES

FAFSA Overview

High School Class of 2023



Arizona

- 45% Completion Rate
 - *Current Cycle: 43,444*
 - *Previous Cycle: 41,480*
 - *Difference: 1,964*
- 5% Change compared to the prior FAFSA Cycle
- Ranked 10th in % Change
- Ranked 48th in FAFSA Completion
- 1 in 4 students on FRL completed the FAFSA



National

- 59% Completion Rate
- 3.1 % Change compared to the prior FAFSA Cycle

The Better FAFSA Form

- Expands Pell Eligibility*

State	Increase in Number of Pell Recipients	Increase in Number of Maximum Pell Recipients
Arizona	29,678	62,897

- Simplified Form:

- Reduced barriers for certain student populations and a better user experience.
- Fewer Questions
- Direct Data Exchange

- Parents without a SSN will be able to create an FSA ID

- Expected Launch December 31, 2023

- Plan is to revert to October 1 release in future years

The Better FAFSA Form

- FAFSA Launch Delay: By December 31, 2023
- Multiple siblings in college NO longer considered in new Formula
- Annual child support received is now reported as an asset instead of untaxed income; child support paid is **NOT** reported or counted at all
- College/ University Financial Aid Offices will NOT receive FAFSA data until late January 2023 from the US Department of Education
 - Awarding delays and shortened timeline

FAFSA Strategic Plan Overview



ARIZONA

FAFSA CHALLENGE

Areas of Focus

- Leveraging High School Partnerships
- DACA/Undocumented Students
 - CSS Profile
- Statewide Events and FAFSA Support Resources for Students
- Parent Awareness
 - Cox Communications
- Student Engagement and Incentives for FAFSA Completion
 - Arizona Cactus League
 - Arizona FAFSA Challenge
- Educator Awareness and Professional Development (PD)
 - FAFSA BootCamp
 - AZ FAFSA Kick-off Event

Arizona FAFSA Challenge

2023-2024 FAFSA Completion Goal:

Achieve a 50% FAFSA Completion Rate and challenge high schools to increase their FAFSA completion rate by 5% compared to last year

Statewide FAFSA Resources

Free Expert Help is Available

Making plans for after high school graduation? Put FAFSA – the Free Application for Federal Student Aid – at the top of your list. **Arizona experts are available now** via **text, phone** or **in person** to help Arizona students and families for free!



Text Benji

Benji is Arizona's free digital FAFSA assistant. Text "Hi Benji" to 602.786.8171 to wake Benji up and get your questions about FAFSA and financial aid answered.

[Text Now](#)



Arizona FAFSA Hotline

Students and families can call the Arizona FAFSA Hotline between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for free support with FAFSA completion, college applications and next steps for enrollment.

[Call Now](#)



Schedule an Appointment

Students and families can schedule a one-on-one appointment with a local FAFSA expert. All appointments take place virtually via Zoom, Google Meet or Microsoft Teams.]

[Schedule](#)

Additional FAFSA Resources

Our partners are hosting free events across the state where you can get your questions about FAFSA answered and file it then and there!



Be A Leader Foundation
Schedule a virtual appointments to get assistance with FAFSA, college applications, next steps, and college enrollment.



College Depot
Get personal assistance with financial aid, admissions, and all things college. Students can request a virtual appointment with a College Depot Advisor.



Northern Arizona College Resource Center
Advisors are available to work with students and families individually in-person or virtually. Phone number 928-623-1803.



Metropolitan Education Commission
Resources in Tucson, Arizona serving students, families, and counselors across Southern Arizona.



College Connect Tempe
Virtual advising for students statewide. Get assistance with filling out the FAFSA, financial aid, scholarships, college applications. Spanish available. Make an appointment today.



Pima College FAFSA & Scholarship In-Person Workshops
Financial Aid experts will be available to assist students and parents with questions regarding the 2023-2024 FAFSA and scholarships.



TRI University Events
Attend a session to learn more about admission, financial aid and the college search process at Arizona's public universities.



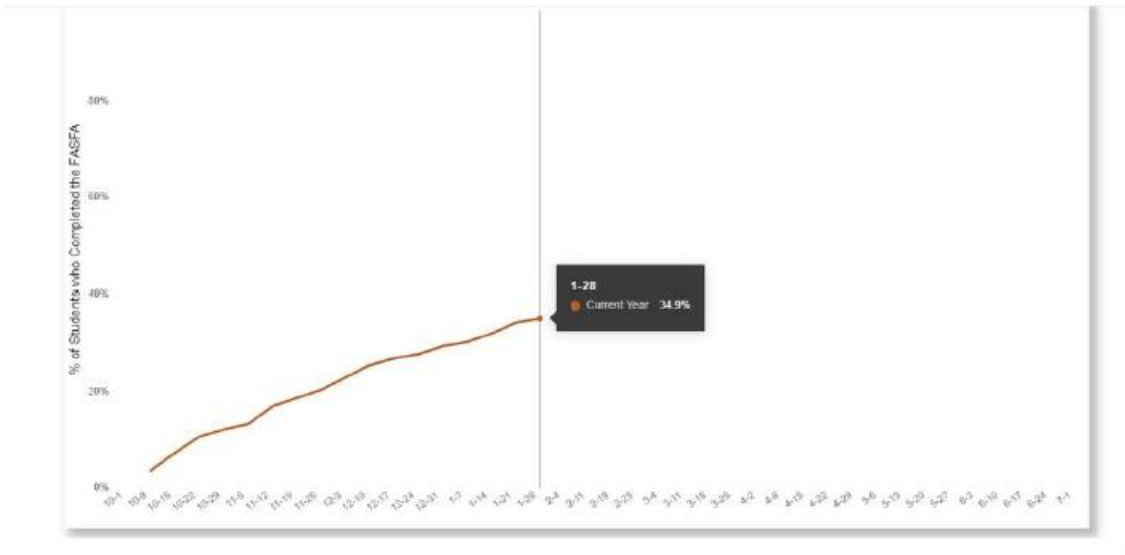
University of Arizona FAFSA Workshops
Register for a virtual workshop to get all your FAFSA-related questions answered and taken care of.



Innovative FAFSA database that provides authorized high school and district personnel with their student-level FAFSA information and other college attainment data.



The new data portal is funded by Helios Education Foundation and developed through a data partnership with the Arizona Department of Education.



Arizona College Connect

- Home
- Reports
- Roster
- FAFSA Resources
- Site Resources
- About Us

Graphs and Charts

Learn more →

Review your prepopulated senior roster
Update partial matches →

Downloaded a Report

Review your school's FAFSA progress

Welcome to Arizona College Connect

Test High School

50%

FAFSA Completion Rate

News and announcements

→ Add →

WHAT IS THE FAFSA?

What is the FAFSA - Student Handout

Learn How in the User Guide

- Review my list of high school seniors
- View & Update WUSA partial matches
- Examine FAFSA progress

Upcoming events [See all](#)

All Students by FAFSA Application Match Status

● Matched ● Partial ● No Match



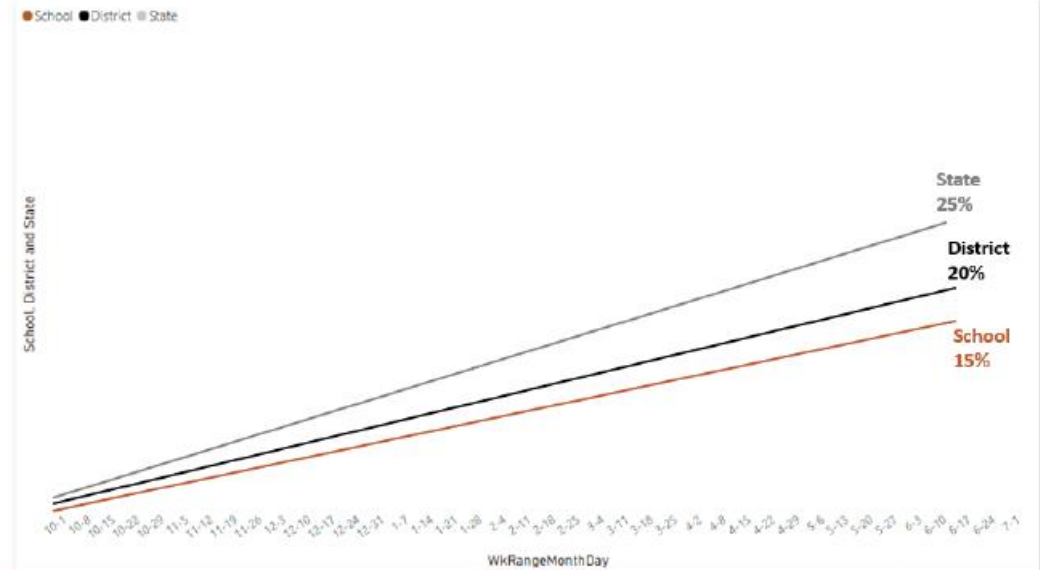
Matched FAFSA Applications by Application Status

● Complete ● Incomplete ● None



FAFSA Applications by FAFSA Year

● 2023-2024 FAFSA ● None



SITE ANALYTICS

Over 13,000 site visits

Over the Last 90 Days

311

Unique viewers

TESTIMONIAL

"Working with ABOR has provided a sense of security for our school data. If I have any issues, they are always a phone call away for helping us. They listen, and work to help resolve any issues with Arizona College Connect. I love collaborating with the ABOR team. The data we receive is valuable and has many reports we can request for our school and district data."

*Zulema Fragoso, High School Counselor,
Nogales High School.
2023 Arizona Counselor of the Year*

ANALYTICS

257

Active Data-Sharing Agreements

377

Individual Users Set-up
Since Launch (Oct 2022)

An increase of 28 data-sharing
agreements when compared the
previous system

82%

Usage Rate

Captures over 50% of the Arizona
high school senior population

Data as of May 2023

TESTIMONIAL

"As a Career Specialist, I use the Arizona College Connect System to provide weekly updates on our FAFSA applications progress, and I appreciate how the database is effective, efficient, and a very useful tool."

-Danielle Padia, Career Specialist,
Ironwood High School



THANK
YOU!

Discussion and next steps:

- Proclamation: **January FAFSA Awareness Month**
- City Council Meeting: **Monday, January 8th**

Mesa FAFSA Proclamation DRAFT verbiage:

WHEREAS, Obtaining a postsecondary degree is linked to increased employment opportunities, higher income, better health, increased community involvement and contributes to a prospering local economy,

WHEREAS, The Mesa Education and Workforce Development Roundtable serves as a centralizing body reporting to City Council to streamline and coordinate efforts to advance Mesa's education and workforce development goals, including achieving higher educational attainment, including increased attainment of professional certifications and licenses and post-secondary degrees.

WHEREAS, One of the best predictors of postsecondary enrollment and persistence is the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The first step in providing students with opportunities to access federal and possibly state and/or institutional resources to pay for college and career training programs;

WHEREAS, Arizona currently ranks 49th in FAFSA completion. Nationally, the high school class of 2022 left an estimated \$3.58 billion on the table in the form of unclaimed Pell Grant funds.

WHEREAS, More than a dozen states have either adopted or are considering universal FAFSA policies that expand access to financial aid and help make college more affordable for students. These policies aim to provide support and options for students; include waivers, opt-out and no-harm provisions; and obligate local education agencies to oversee implementation;

- The year after the state mandated financial aid planning for high school graduation, Louisiana's FAFSA completion rate increased 26% ([National College Attainment Network](#)).

WHEREAS, Students who complete the FAFSA are more likely to attend and afford college.

- 92% of seniors who completed the FAFSA enrolled by the November following graduation vs. 51% who did not complete a FAFSA ([National College Attainment Network](#)).
- Increasing college enrollment rates by 20% would lead to social gains that exceed \$5 billion per cohort ([Helios Education Foundation](#)).

WHEREAS, The City of Mesa is committed to supporting FAFSA awareness and completion in partnership with our local school districts to improve economic mobility and better health outcomes.

Given the evidence and growing trend to require FAFSA completion for high school seniors, the City of Mesa proclaims January as FAFSA awareness month and to support the following:

- a. Raise awareness about the significance of FAFSA completion and discuss FAFSA data throughout the City of Mesa and among local business and education [leaders](#);
- b. Promote the Mesa College Promise Program, FAFSA completion resources (e.g., Ask Benji Chatbot, FAFSA Campaign, FAFSA Challenge, FAFSA Dashboard, and FAFSA Hotline);
- c. Support school districts to increase FAFSA completion and promote FAFSA completion events and workshops in the Mesa community; and
- d. *Explore approaches for incentivizing FAFSA completion and the potential of making FAFSA completion a high school graduation requirement in accordance with recommendations from the National College Attainment Network.*

Project Status and Updates:



- **City of Mesa – Read On Mesa Early Literacy Workshop**
 - Nov. 14th
 - Provided through Wellness Department – employees received 50 Wellness Program incentive points
- **AARP Experience Corps Program Implementation**
 - January 2024
 - 6 Title 1 MPS Elementary Schools
 - Gov’s Grant Collaboration (Read On Arizona, AARP, Tempe, Pinal County)
- **Business Engagement Toolkit**



Roundtable Share-outs

- Workforce Center @ Mesa Events
 - Resume Workshops – Every Tuesday