



# EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE MINUTES

December 4, 2024

The Education and Workforce Development Roundtable of the City of Mesa met in The Studios at Mesa City Center, 59 E. 1st St., on December 4, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

## BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Heredia, Chair  
Councilmember Spilsbury, Vice Chair  
Candice Copple  
Dr. Richard Daniel  
Sally Harrison  
Jenny Jackson Robinson  
Jessica Jelinek (Designee for Dr. Joseph Foy)  
Rene Parker (Designee for Dr. Andi Fourlis)  
Sherry Richards  
Kelsy Rowe (Designee for Dr. Chad Wilson)  
Kristin Sorensen  
David Williams  
Dr. Adam Wolfe (Designee for Dr. Perry Berry)

## BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT

Dr. Shane McCord  
Rich Nickel  
Dr. Joe O'Reilly  
Vince Yanez

## STAFF PRESENT

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

## COUNCIL PRESENT

None

## ALSO PRESENT:

Kristin Darr, Facilitator

Chairperson Heredia conducted a roll call.

Chairperson Heredia excused Boardmembers McCord, Nickel, O'Reilly, and Yanez from the entire meeting.

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

Chairperson Heredia called the meeting to order. He welcomed Designee Kelsey Rowe, East Valley Institute of Technology; Designee Dr. Adam Wolfe, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education with Queen Creek Unified School District; Designee Rene Parker, Director of Community Partnerships with Mesa Public Schools; and Designee Jessica Jelinek, Associate Chief of Staff at Benedictine University.

2. Take action to approve the Roundtable Meeting Minutes from September 4, 2024.

It was moved by Boardmember Jackson-Robinson, seconded by Boardmember Williams, that the September 4, 2024, Education and Workforce Development Roundtable (EWDR) meeting minutes be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Heredia–Spilsbury–Copples–Daniel–Harrison–Jackson-Robinson–Jelineck–Parker–Richards–Rowe–Sorensen–Williams–Wolfe

NAYS – None

ABSENT – McCord–Nickel–O’Reilly–Yanez

Chairperson Heredia declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

3. City staff to provide an update on the Roundtable Strategic Framework based on the discussion of the September 2024 meeting. Participate in discussions to review and provide feedback to the updated framework graphic. Take action to approve the updated strategic framework.

Chairperson Heredia introduced Education and Workforce Administrator Sarah Tolar, who displayed a PowerPoint presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Ms. Tolar provided an overview of the strategic framework process. She recalled the facilitation exercise that was conducted at the September 2024 meeting and highlighted the need to update and refresh the existing goals. (See Page 3 of Attachment 1)

Kristin Darr, Central Creative facilitator, discussed the updated strategic plan that was derived from the strategic priority framework exercise and discussions from the September meeting. (See Pages 4 and 5 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Tolar referenced the silo structure of the original strategic priority framework and the previous conversations of the Roundtable which prompted the need for an update.

Ms. Tolar divided the Roundtable members into smaller groups for an exercise to discuss three questions related to the Roundtable priorities, which would be used to move forward with the strategic priority framework. (See Page 6 of Attachment 1)

In response to a question from Ms. Darr, Boardmember Harrison replied that she did not believe that the Mesa Chamber of Commerce was represented in the draft document.

Discussion ensued regarding the role of the Chamber of Commerce and the importance of being a link between the businesses and the education system.

Ms. Darr invited the groups to share their discussions about the proposed questions.

Boardmembers Jelinek, Wolfe, and Parker pointed out that in addition to post-secondary education, industry certifications and industry skills should be added which will enable students to enter the workforce immediately after high school and to begin a career at a higher level.

Boardmembers Harrison, Williams, and Rowe expressed their desire to provide students with a list of opportunities and pathways to careers and suggested that awareness be added to the barrier section.

Boardmember Rowe explained that providing the students and their parents with information about the community workforce needs and how to obtain the skills needed will allow them to think outside of the box when choosing a career path.

Chairperson Heredia and Vice Chairperson Spilsbury voiced their opinions that the categories provided overlap in many ways and that the focus should be specific.

Chairperson Heredia added that obtaining the data to match the strategies will assist with identifying the employment needs of stakeholders.

Boardmembers Daniel, Sorenson, and Richards mentioned the need to expose students to potential career pathways early and added that if students are not introduced to different fields of work, they may never know the options available to them.

Boardmembers Cople and Robinson discussed the need to train the parents to work with their children and pointed out that not all parents have the knowledge or exposure to the many career options available, therefore they look to teachers for help in guiding their child.

Additional discussion ensued regarding parent involvement when students are choosing a career path.

Ms. Tolar confirmed that she and Ms. Darr would review the information received today and will create a second draft of the strategic priority framework for further discussion.

Chairperson Heredia thanked Ms. Darr and the EWDR for the discussion and stated that another draft of the document will be reviewed at the next meeting.

4. Update and presentation from City staff and discussion on Mesa Education and Workforce Data Dashboard.

Ms. Tolar gave an overview of the Workforce Data Dashboard and explained that the program had been designed because of a suggestion from the Roundtable. She confirmed that she had been working with the City of Mesa (COM) Data and Achievement department to gather and prepare data that would be useful for public viewing. She confirmed that the EWDR members have access to the dashboard and asked them to review the platform and provide feedback at the next meeting. (See Pages 7 through 10 of Attachment 1)

5. Presentation from City staff and discussion on the 2025 Mesa Reads initiative.

Library Director Polly Bonnett announced the kickoff of the 2025 Mesa Reads Initiative and explained the details of the reading program. She emphasized the desired outcome to log 1 million minutes of reading across Mesa and summarized the outline of the program which will begin with a kickoff on January 11, 2025, and end with a celebration in December 2025. (See Pages 11 through 13 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Bonnett identified the Mesa Reads initiative partners and asked the EWDR to participate in

the program. She outlined ways to get involved such as starting a classroom goal or organizing a company reading challenge. She reported that the reading minutes will be logged into a tracking application called Beanstack Tracker and described how the application works. She gave an overview of the next steps and shared a QR code to sign up to join the challenge. (See Pages 14 through 19 of Attachment 1)

Chairperson Heredia thanked staff for the presentation.

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

Boardmember Jelinek encouraged the group to attend the Journeys in Leadership event at Benedictine University featuring Mayor Giles on Wednesday, December 8, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Boardmember Parker remarked that the selection process for the Mesa Public Schools superintendent has concluded and that a decision should be announced soon. She confirmed that Dr. Andi Fournalis will be fully retired by June 30, 2025.

Boardmember Richards announced that Higley Unified School District is currently accepting applications, and a new superintendent will be named at the March 2025 School Board Meeting.

Chairperson Heredia shared that the City of Mesa approved the installation of two electronic billboards, and that the proceeds will be used to fund the Mesa College Promise program.

7. Call to the public.

There were no public comments.

8. Call for future agenda items.

There were no future agenda items discussed.

9. Recognition and celebration for Mayor Giles.

Chairperson Heredia introduced Mayor Giles.

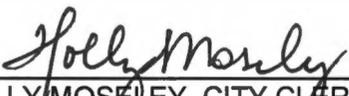
Chairperson Heredia and Vice Chairperson Spilsbury recognized Mayor Giles for his efforts to improve the education system in Mesa, which included establishing the EWDR.

Mayor Giles expressed his appreciation for the EWDR and stated that he anticipates ongoing success in the work being done to improve the education opportunities for students in Mesa.

10. Adjourn.

Without objection, the Education and Workforce Development Roundtable meeting adjourned at 2:59 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 4<sup>th</sup> day of December 2024. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
HOLLY MOSELEY, CITY CLERK

sr  
(Attachments – 1)

# **MESA**

# **EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE**

# **DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE**

**December 4, 2024**

## 2025 Meeting Dates

- **March 5, 2025**
- **June 4, 2025**
- **September 3, 2025**
- **December 3, 2025**

**9/4 Meeting Objective:** Conduct intentional conversation focused on accomplishments to date to refresh Mesa Education and Workforce Development Roundtable **Collaborative Objective, Strategic Focus Areas, and Performance Metrics.**



# Strategic Priority Framework

**Collaborative Objective:** We 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 (early learning through post-secondary) and its workforce needs.

## Strategic Focus Areas

### #1 Early Learning through High School

#### Priorities

- Equitable access to quality early learning
- Increase graduation rates
- Teacher recruitment & retention
- Clear post-secondary career path for all graduating seniors

### #2 Post-Secondary

#### Priorities

- Graduate workforce-ready students & adults
- Increase post-secondary enrollment through marketing of opportunities
- Help students/families seek technical & financial assistance
- Support Mesa's adults to compete for immediate placement in the workforce

### #3 Workforce Development

#### Priorities

- Affordable & equitable access to upskill, train and educate Mesa's residents
- Improve link between ed pathways & industry needs
- Leverage partnerships, engage residents, business & industry to understand need, provide access & training

## Highlighted Performance Metrics

- # of students enrolled in preschool & equitable distribution across programs
- Diversity & equity of early learning staff
- % of on-time HS grad rates
- Drop-out rates for HS serving Mesa families
- Annual averages in Mesa teacher pay/compensation

- Post-secondary enrollment statistics
- Completion percentages in post-secondary degree/certification programs
- Mesa College Promise data
- % of Mesa adults with post-secondary credential

- # of Mesa businesses partnering with HS and post-secondary education
- % of post-secondary grad job placement
- Mesa unemployment rates
- Mesa job demand by industry

# City of Mesa Education and Workforce Roundtable

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.



Strategic Plan: December 2024

## EARLY LEARNING

## K — 12TH GRADE

**WORKFORCE PREPARATION**  
 (COLLEGE, COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CTE, CERTIFICATIONS, ETC.)

**Awareness:**  
 Amplify available resources for students, educators, businesses, families and community

- Equitable access to quality early learning

- Enhance promotion of Dual Enrollment, Mesa College Promise

**Identify Barriers:**  
 Identifying and addressing financial and other barriers that impact access to educational resources for students and families

- FAFSA promotion, awareness and assistance

**Link Education and Industry:**  
 Communication, identifying skills, opportunities and experiences

- Increase graduation rates
- Clear post-secondary career path for all graduating seniors
- Increase work-based learning experiences

- Graduate workforce-ready students and adults
- Identify growing and in-demand industries

**Post-Secondary Attainment:**  
 advocate for post-secondary training, education, certification, opportunities and benefits

- Early introduction and exposure to STEM

**Data:**  
 Measure outcomes by tracking community and city-wide data

- # of students enrolled in preschool

- 3rd grade Reading
- 8th grade Math
- % of on-time HS grad rates
- Drop-out rates
- Incorporate student voice

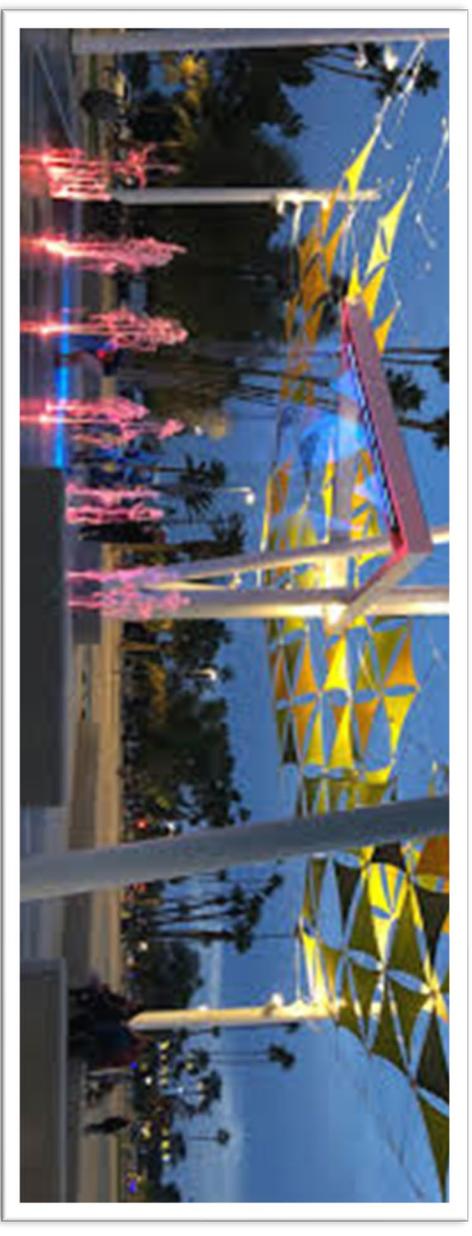
- Post-secondary enrollment rates
- Completion percentages in post-secondary degree
- Mesa College Promise data
- % of Mesa adults with post-secondary credential
- Mesa unemployment rates
- Mesa job demand by industry

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**CONTINUE TO BRING INDUSTRY TO THE TABLE • IDENTIFY CTE PATHWAYS • PIVOT TO PROMOTION AND AWARENESS**

# Discussion:

- Do you see the mission/work of your organization reflected in the strategic framework?
- Are there priorities, outcomes or areas of focus absent from the framework?
- Is the framework representative of the needs of our community in regard to education and workforce development? If not, why?



# Education and Workforce Data Dashboard

## Early Learning

## K-12 Education

## Workforce Preparation

Preschool Enrollment

On-time Graduation Rates

Post-secondary enrollment

Licensed Preschools by  
location and capacity

Drop-out Rate

Post-secondary completion

Teacher Salary Averages

Mesa College Promise

Community Partnerships

Post-secondary attainment

Post-secondary grad job  
placement

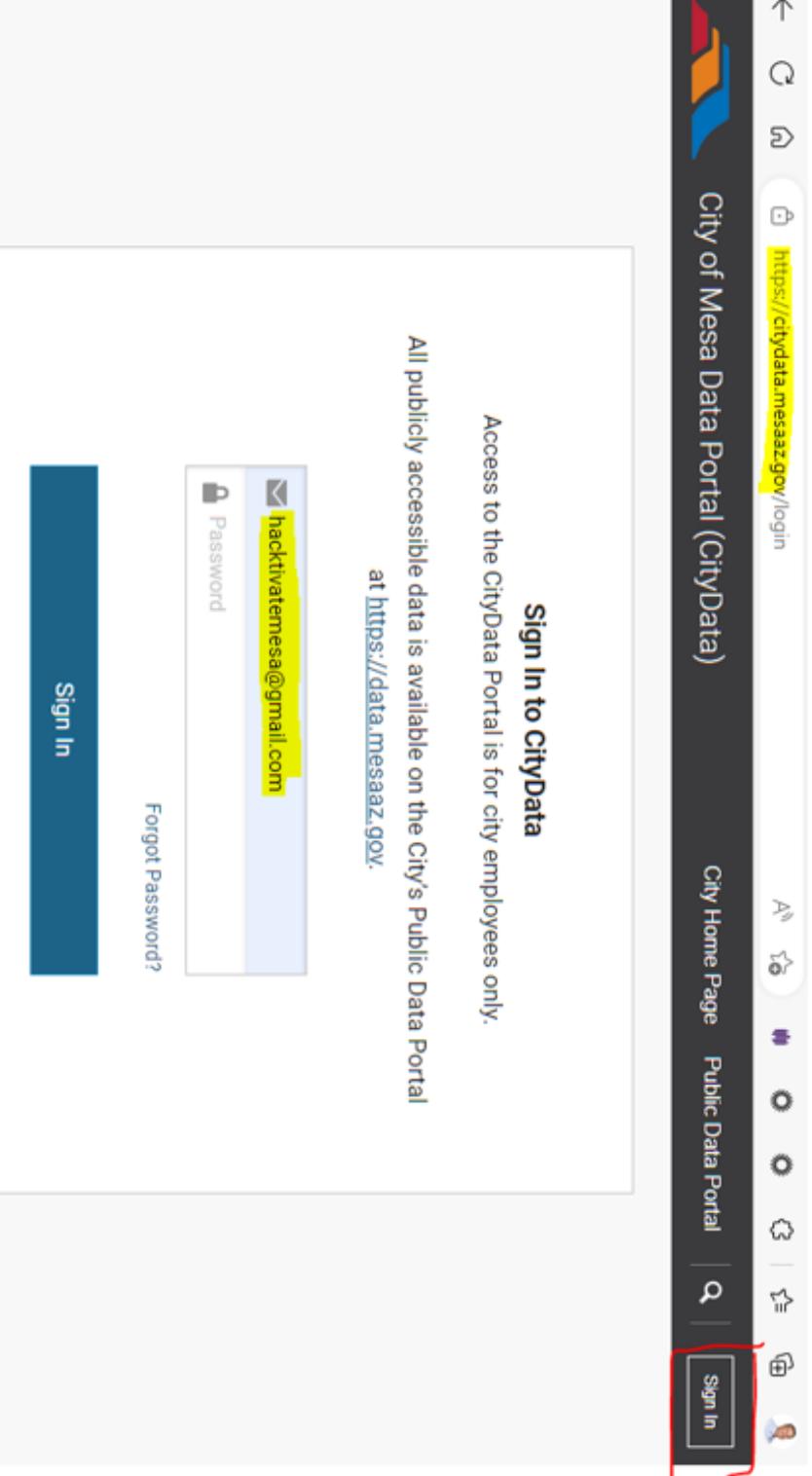
Unemployment Rate

Job demand by industry

# Data Sources

- **American Community Survey, 1-year estimates:** preschool enrollment, post-secondary enrollment and attainment
- **Arizona Department of Education:** graduation rates, drop-out rates
- **Arizona Department of Health Services:** licensed preschools
- **ESRI Community Analyst:** employment distribution by industry
- **US Bureau of Labor Statistics:** unemployment rate
- **Arizona Auditor General:** Average Teacher Salaries
- **National Student Clearinghouse:** Student enrollment after graduation

# City Data Portal Guest Access



Username =

hacktivatemesa@gmail.com

Password = CityOfMes@

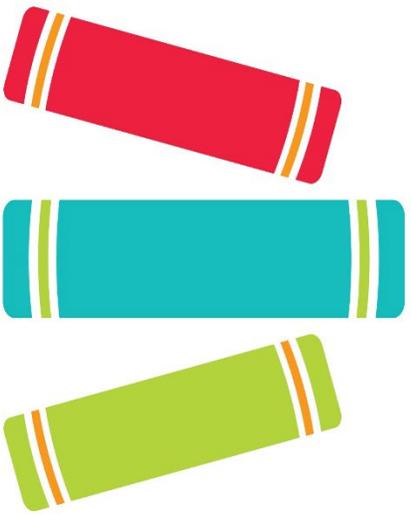
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# Education and Workforce Dashboard

Table of Contents: Select a topic to jump:

- [Preschool Enrollment](#)
- [On-Time High School Graduation](#)
- [High School Drop-Out Rate](#)
- [Teacher Salary Averages](#)
- [Post-secondary Enrollment](#)
- [Post-secondary Completion](#)
- [Mesa College Promise](#)
- [Post-secondary Attainment](#)
- [Community Partnerships](#)
- [Post-secondary Grad Job Placement](#)
- [Unemployment Rate](#)
- [Mesa Job Demand by Industry](#)
- [Preschool Appendix](#)



# mesa READS

**A City That Reads, Succeeds!**

# Mission Statement/Goals



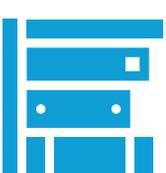
## Goal:

Read 15 minutes/Day



## Vision:

Raise awareness of literacy  
efforts and resources in Mesa  
Strengthen community



## Outcomes:

Increase reading proficiency  
and foster lifelong learning  
Increased use of library and  
other City resources  
Reach 1 million minutes read  
in Mesa!

# Outline of Program

January, 2025 – December, 2025

- January 11<sup>th</sup>, Kick-off at Mesa Public Library
- Monthly Reading Challenges
- Anchor Events
  - Winter and Summer Reading Programs
  - I Love Mesa Day, Author events, special programming
- Month long Community Read: One Book, One Mesa
- December celebration!

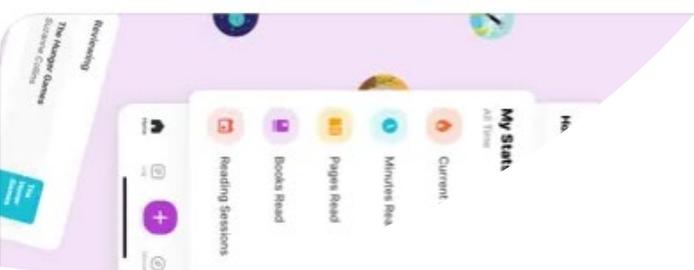
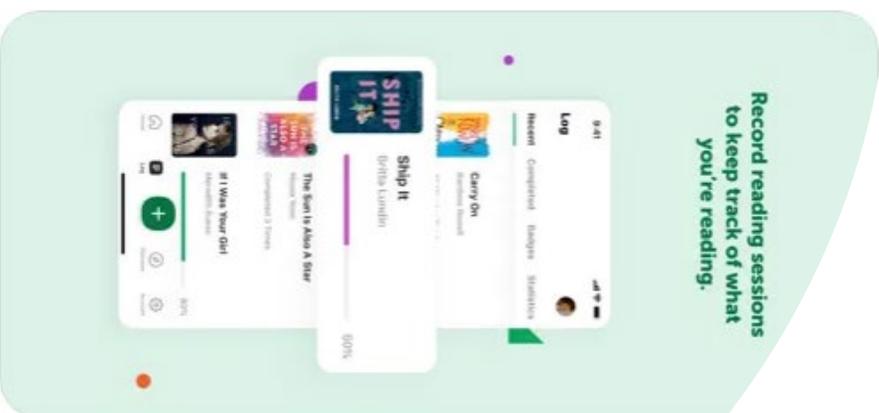
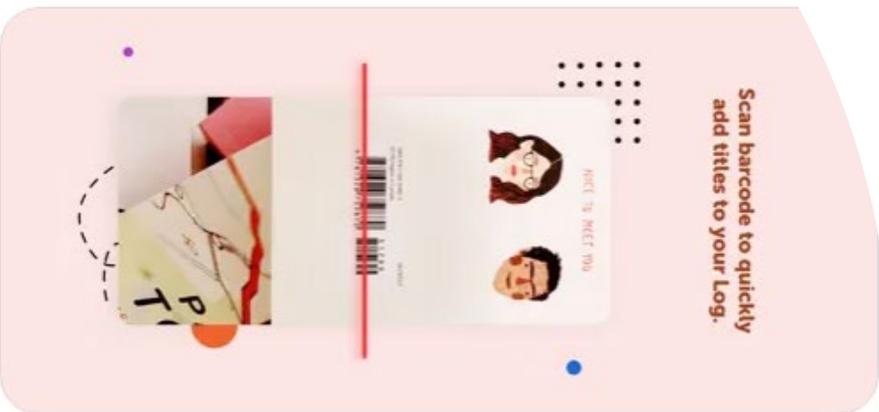
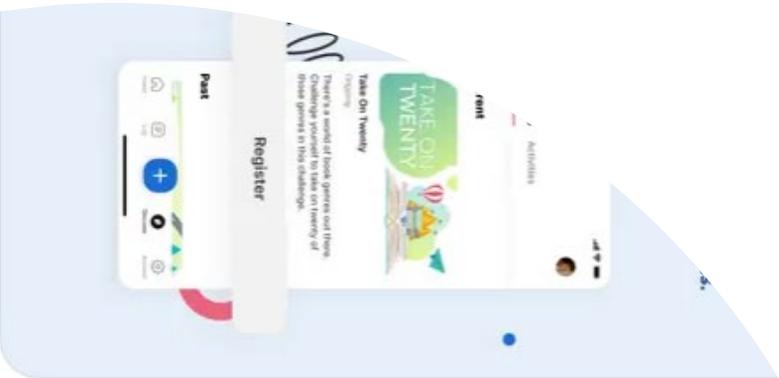
# Mesa Reads Partners

- Mayor and City Council
- Mesa Public Library and City of Mesa
  - Education and Workforce, Read on Mesa
  - Arts & Culture, i.d.e.a. Museum
- Mesa Public Schools
- 'One Book, One Mesa' Committee
- You!

# How can you get involved?

- Connect with MPL
- Join Beanstack
- Promote on your internal channels/libraries
- Challenge your teachers/classrooms
- Create a 'company challenge'
- Request a presentation or promotional material
- Host programs and read-a-thons
- #MesaReads on socials
- Share the word out!







The graphic features a teal background with a white circular area on the left containing illustrations of diverse people reading. A woman with long dark hair and a yellow polka-dot shirt sits on a stool reading. A man with a mustache and a black and white shirt sits on a bench reading. A woman with curly hair and a red top sits on a bench reading. A black cat sits on a stack of books. A woman with long dark hair and a blue star-patterned shirt holds up a book. The text 'A City That Reads, Succeeds!' is written in a white, curved font across the bottom of the teal area. On the right, the 'mesa READS' logo is displayed, with 'mesa' in orange and 'READS' in white. Below the logo, the text 'Join Mesa Reads in 2025!' is followed by 'A year-long celebration of books and reading for all ages.' Three key features are listed: 'Reading Challenge' (Read 15 minutes every day to build a small but mighty habit!), 'Track Your Progress' (Use the Beanstack app to track your reading and help us reach a collective community goal.), and 'Monthly Prize Drawings' (Log your reading each month for a chance to win exciting prizes).

**mesa READS**

**Join Mesa Reads in 2025!**  
A year-long celebration of books and reading for all ages.

**Reading Challenge**  
Read 15 minutes every day to build a small but mighty habit!

**Track Your Progress**  
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Log your reading each month for a chance to win exciting prizes

**A City That Reads, Succeeds!**

For details, visit  
[mesalibrary.org/mesareads](https://mesalibrary.org/mesareads)

**MESA PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**mesa PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**mesa-az** **Read On!**

# Next Steps



LAUNCH ON  
JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>



MAYORAL  
PROCLAMATION,  
JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>



ENCOURAGE  
PARTICIPATION!



PROMOTE  
READING  
CHALLENGES



READ 15 MINUTES  
A DAY!



Polly Bonnett, Mesa Public Library Director

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602-509-2144 (text)