

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

103rd ARIZONA TOWN HALL

STRONG START - EARLY EDUCATION IN ARIZONA.

SESSION I - MONDAY MORNING – NOVEMBER 4

SETTING THE STAGE

1. Describe the current state of early childhood care and education in Arizona. How effectively does Arizona educate young children? What does Arizona do well and what could it do better?
2. How does the quality and availability of early education affect Arizona? Consider long-term and short-term effects on children, families, schools and the community, including the economy, businesses, social services, government and health care.
3. To what extent do attributes of children and their families affect their ability to benefit from early education programs, institutions and activities? Consider physical and behavioral health and socioeconomic status. How well does early childhood care and education in Arizona address the impact of these attributes? Which areas or programs, if any, could use improvement?
4. How should we measure the success of Arizona's early childhood care and education programs and institutions? Consider outcomes, research and other metrics. To what extent is information available about the best ways to achieve desired outcomes ("best practices")? How can such information be disseminated most effectively?

SESSION II - MONDAY AFTERNOON – NOVEMBER 4

CONTENT, CAREGIVERS, AND THE CLASSROOM

1. Many young children are cared for in a home by family members, friends, neighbors, or hired caregivers. What factors affect the ability of these persons to provide optimal early learning experiences?
2. Many young children are cared for outside the home by childcare providers, for instance professional daycare, preschools and nursery schools. What factors affect the ability of these organizations to provide quality early education? To what extent are quality childcare providers available and accessible to all of Arizona's children?
3. To what extent do Arizona schools provide quality early education? What factors affect the ability of Arizona schools to provide optimal early learning experiences? How do measurements of individual student success affect the delivery of early education in schools? Consider geographic and economic differences in public school districts as well as private and charter schools, and any other relevant factors.

SESSION III - TUESDAY MORNING – NOVEMBER 5

COLLABORATION AND RESOURCES

1. What resources are important to make quality early childhood care and education accessible? To what extent are these resources available in Arizona? Do we devote the right resources to early childhood care and education? Consider public and private (for-profit and non-profit) resources.
2. With the exception of funding, which is addressed in question 3 of this session, describe the current role of government in early childhood care and education. What is the ideal role of government? Consider all levels and branches of government including federal, state, local and tribal.
3. Describe the current *funding* role of government in early childhood care and education. How can the impact of government funding be optimized and the available resources best utilized? Consider partnerships, consolidation, and incentives relating to current funding mechanisms.
4. In what specific ways, if any, should private enterprise, private philanthropy, and others finance or otherwise support early childcare and education in Arizona?
5. What specific actions would encourage and improve coordination, collaboration and partnership between and among Arizona's families, early childhood care and education providers, and other relevant organizations?

SESSION IV – TUESDAY AFTERNOON – NOVEMBER 5

SETTING PRIORITIES AND TAKING ACTION

1. Considering the discussions from the previous sessions, what actions should be taken with respect to early childhood care and education that would have the most beneficial impact and how should they be prioritized? When prioritizing actions, consider which recommended actions are most likely to be accomplished. Consider actions that do not require funding.
2. Who should take ownership of the actions identified in Question 1, including any necessary resources?

Consider the impact that can be made by:

- individuals
- parents and other family members
- neighborhood and faith-based organizations
- teachers
- educational institutions and systems
- businesses
- non-profit organizations
- civic institutions
- local, regional, state, federal and tribal governments
- others.

3. What specific actions should individuals take, including each of us?

Consider:

- providing opportunities for young children
- mentoring
- coaching
- volunteering
- teaching classes
- tutoring
- communicating with elected leaders
- writing letters to the editor
- using social media
- partnering with educational and other institutions,
- talking with neighbors and friends
- making private donations.