

## Minutes Ad Hoc Council Committee Education as a Priority January 3, 2012

Minutes of the Ad Hoc Council Committee Education as a Priority meeting held on Tuesday, January 3, 2012, at 8:30 a.m., in the Tempe City Hall – Council Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 31 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Tempe, Arizona.

### **Committee Members Present:**

Vice Mayor Navarro  
Councilmember Arredondo-Savage

### **City Staff Present:**

Charlie Meyer, City Manager  
Amber Wakeman, Assistant to the City Council  
Shelley Hearn, Community Relations Administrator

Jeff Kulaga, Deputy City Manager  
Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk

***The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m.***

**Education as a Priority:** *Consistent commitment to our schools and our districts with a clear priority on education for our youth.*

Charlie Meyer, City Manager, stated that the Strategic Priority titled “Education as a Priority” now reads: “Consistent commitment to our schools and our districts with a clear priority on education for our youth”. This group previously agreed on the following items:

- Tempe understands what a good education system brings to the community
- Tempeans achieve their highest educational attainment level
- Pull it all together; linkage for all the parts
- Tempe is sought after because it has a rich educational environment and we strive to enhance what is already happening
- There is a seamless transition from early education through adulthood
- Tempe has the reputation for having an outstanding education system and a lifelong learning environment
- A strategy approach to better engage our community partners

Charlie Meyer referenced an item noted in a previous meeting: “Tempe has the reputation for having an outstanding education system and a lifelong learning environment.” He stated that this statement comes close to covering the array of items listed above.

**Agenda Item 1 – Rewording of the strategic priority language – Education as a Priority: Consistent commitment to our schools and our districts with a clear priority on education for our youth.**

Councilmember Arredondo-Savage and Vice Mayor Navarro discussed the “Education as a Priority” strategic priority language as follows:

- Tempe embraces and realizes the importance of education and how it resonates with all segments of the community. Tempe embraces and promotes quality education, incorporating a lifelong learning environment.

- Tempe should support education and actively engage.
- Having education as a strategic priority that is relevant to City staff is important.
- Every City department has something to gain from having a well-educated community. Education is an economic driver. Every department also has something to contribute to a quality education environment.
- Tempe partners with the Tempe Community Council and provides services to the community through the schools.
- Tempe should promote its lifelong education system, its high quality workforce, and that Tempe is a great place to raise children because of the education system.
- Getting all the stakeholders together has been beneficial.
- Economic development impacts education.
- There has been little communication between the Community Development Department, the business community and the schools.
- It is important to facilitate communication between the business community and the education community.
- Arizona is known for having one of the worst education systems in the country. Tempe needs to rise above that status.
- There are no resources to put towards education, but education can be incorporated into what Tempe does.
- A quality education system may exist, not based on the best test scores, but because there are some great programs keeping kids in school or perhaps because the dropout rate is less than 1%.
- Keeping kids in school and involved in constructive activities is important.
- The Community Services Department and the Police Department can play key roles in ensuring that kids have appropriate behaviors as opposed to inappropriate behaviors. This can result in higher test scores.
- There is a need to evaluate how to make things better; education is different than it used to be ten years ago.
- Factoring in an aging community, schools have closed and there is the potential of fewer students in schools; how can schools bring value to the community?
- From a strategic standpoint, what are the kids coming into this community going to look like in the future? If this was a community with no kids, what would Tempe be? If the only kids that came into Tempe schools were kids from low income families, what would it look like? If the kids in Tempe, regardless of their income levels, are able to operate successfully, would that be a good thing? Do we want to import children into Tempe?
- Pittsburgh Project is a grant to promote education and focus on getting kids to go to school.
- 7,000 out of 12,000 students attending Tempe Elementary are Tempe residents.
- If Tempe as a whole promoted the importance of education, it would encourage families to want their kids to attend school in Tempe, it would want that aging community to stay committed to a community that has education.
- Data collection is underway to see how many Tempe residents are attending schools outside of Tempe and how many Tempe residents are attending Tempe schools.
- How many kids attend a private school, charter school, or a Catholic school?
- Choice has been a positive thing for education.
- What opportunities are there to help promote schools?
- A professor at ASU brings his/her kids to Tempe schools; other parents that work in Tempe also bring their kids to Tempe schools.
- The amount of interest invested in an education system can make a community more attractive.
- 74% of Tempe Elementary School students are on a free or reduced lunch program.
- Middle schools are trying to promote college.
- New businesses are looking to employ individuals that are educated.
- A longitudinal study measured the difference between kids that stayed in a school district vs. kids that move in and out of the district. There was a correlation; the kids that stayed in the same district ended up performing better than those who left the district.
- Tempe has a very limited ability to control what goes on with students who live outside Tempe.
- In order to keep schools open, a minimum number of students must be enrolled.

- Schools are concerned about the number of students enrolled for funding purposes, not so much where the students come from.
- The Police Department can help the youth with preventive type behaviors; currently it is more reactive vs. preventive.
- Preventive steps will help to ensure positive outcomes.
- Having the presence of School Resource Officers (SROs) on campus makes a big difference; SROs build relationships with students.
- City of Tempe staff cannot affect/teach curriculum, however, Tempe staff can affect kids. There are opportunities through the Kid Zone preschool program and other opportunities for mothers and their children.
- Grant program funding is an opportunity.
- Middle School is an important point in time; Tempe officials can work with schools to make a difference in kids' behaviors.
- The question to staff is "what can staff do without having any money?"
- Need to be proactive not just reactive; make differences where possible.
- It is important for Tempe to communicate that education is a priority; that Tempe will do whatever it can to ensure a quality education system. Tempe can help create outstanding educational outcomes.
- Stronger kids will improve the reputation of the school system; it will produce educational outcomes.
- Engage kids in programs; they have a better mindset understanding the importance of good grades; they will be more willing to apply themselves. Programs may include sports and after school programs.
- Kids need adults, other than their parents, as a positive influence.
- Continue programs, continue tackling the things that the City can do to help impact education; focus on achievement.
- Schools could have field trips in Tempe.
- City days at schools expose youth to the work of the various City departments; kids learn about different career opportunities.
- Maximize educational and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Promote and engage partnerships.
- Foster a rich educational environment.
- Keep seniors engaged in lifelong learning.
- Tempe fosters an environment for maximizing outstanding educational outcomes and lifelong learning.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.**

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Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk