



Dr. Lattie F. Coor
Chairman and CEO



Dr. Sybil Francis
Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 9: Cochise County STEM Summit
“Think Globally – Act Locally”
(Sierra Vista)**

Dr. Sybil Francis will discuss the importance of student career pathways in the context of the Arizona “Tough Choices or Tough Times” initiative.

**April 24: Beat the Odds Superintendents
Breakfast (Phoenix)**

Overview of the Beat the Odds School Partners Program for prospective new partners.

EDUCATION LEADERS ANNOUNCE MAJOR STEP IN STATE EDUCATION REFORM

Arizona has joined a national consortium of six states committed to significantly improving student achievement through a dramatic overhaul of the state education system. Over the next year, the Center for the Future of Arizona will partner with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) to put pilot projects in place that incorporate elements of the world’s most successful education systems.

“In Arizona, we’re ready to be the change that we need to be, and that our leaders are asking us to be,” commented Sybil Francis, executive director of the Center for the Future of Arizona, in her remarks at a March 10 “Tough Choices or Tough Times” press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The center is leading a group of private education stakeholders who are participating in the Arizona “Tough Choices” consortium.

The “Tough Choices or Tough Times” framework is based on the key recommendations of a research study of the same name released in 2006 by the *New* Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. The primary goal of the reform agenda is to prepare 95 percent of American students for college without remediation by the time they leave high school, meeting the highest international standards as they do so.



The center is reaching out to stakeholders throughout the state for their input and seeking volunteer schools and districts who want to participate in the pilot projects. The five-year pilots are expected to involve 5 percent or as many as 50,000 Arizona K-12 students.

The Arizona Community Foundation has offered a challenge grant to support the initiative. The Rodell Charitable Foundation of Arizona has also pledged its support. In addition, the initiative will seek federal funds, including federal stimulus funds, to support the pilot projects.

Arizona State University Foundation and a grant from Helios Education Foundation currently support the Center for the Future of Arizona’s work on the initiative.

For more information, visit www.arizonafuture.org and www.skillscommission.org.