



Arizona Student  
Opportunity Collaborative

Leveraging Assets In Place  
to Serve Rural Students

**Education Leaders Call**

August 2022

Glen Lineberry

# Let's start with two things we all know...

After two years of distance learning, hybrid schedules and quarantined students, we know there is **absolutely no substitute** for a highly qualified teacher in the room with the student.

# Let's start with two things we all know...

After two years of distance learning, hybrid schedules and quarantined students, we know there is **absolutely no substitute** for a highly qualified teacher in the room with the student.

As rural educators tasked with recruiting and retaining teachers, we know that those highly qualified teachers are **simply not available** in sufficient quantity to staff our classrooms.

# What's the impact?

- Rural schools unable to offer **courses** students need to compete at university or in the job market (Jameson et al., 2020, and White & Downey, 2019)
- Existing programs encourage departure rather than enabling students to **bring skills & training back home** (Azano & Bidde, 2019; Mette et al., 2016; Scott et al., 2016)
- Students & families believe they must choose between **leaving** rural communities or **scaling back** goals & expectations (Bright, 2018 and Sprowles et al., 2019)
- The resulting **vicious cycle** widens the gap facing rural students, a situation exacerbated during the pandemic (Eppley et al., 2018; Pardini, 2020; Zuckerman, 2016)

# So we looked at the overall situation and we realized three things...

- Rural communities have **always** fixed their problems by working collaboratively.
- While every school faces challenges providing the courses and instruction students need, every school **also** has a great teacher who is underutilized.
- The key is to leverage the assets already in our schools and ignore the limitations of geography.



A grassroots network leveraging highly qualified teachers already serving in rural schools by paying them to teach students who need their courses to graduate and go to college, all at no cost to the students, their families, or their schools



Arizona Student  
Opportunity Collaborative

Where are we?

Entering our 5<sup>th</sup> semester of full operation

Signing up our 4000<sup>th</sup> student

Just under 1100 students currently taking 31 courses

Major funding from ESSER III Set-Aside, the Thoma Foundation, and the Helios Education Foundation



# Courses Offered

<b>English</b>	English 6-12; College English 101-102 & 201-202; Novels & Film; YA Literature; Fantasy Literature
<b>Math</b>	Math 6-8; Algebra I & II; Geometry; PreCalculus & Trig; Calculus I & II; Accounting; Advanced Quantitative Reasoning; Statistics
<b>Science</b>	Science 6-8; Earth Science; Physics 9; Biology; Physics; Chemistry; Anatomy & Physiology; College Physics; College Chemistry; Health
<b>Social Studies</b>	History 6-8; World History; US History; Government; Economics; Psychology; Sociology; Apache History
<b>Languages</b>	Spanish; College Spanish; Japanese; French & German on the way
<b>CTE</b>	Journalism; Graphic Design; Software & App Design; Architectural Drafting; Education Professions; more in the works
<b>Counseling</b>	FAFSA; Applying to College; Entering the Workforce; SEL





Arizona Student  
Opportunity Collaborative

## What have we learned?

Distance learning is difficult, and virtual teaching is even harder.

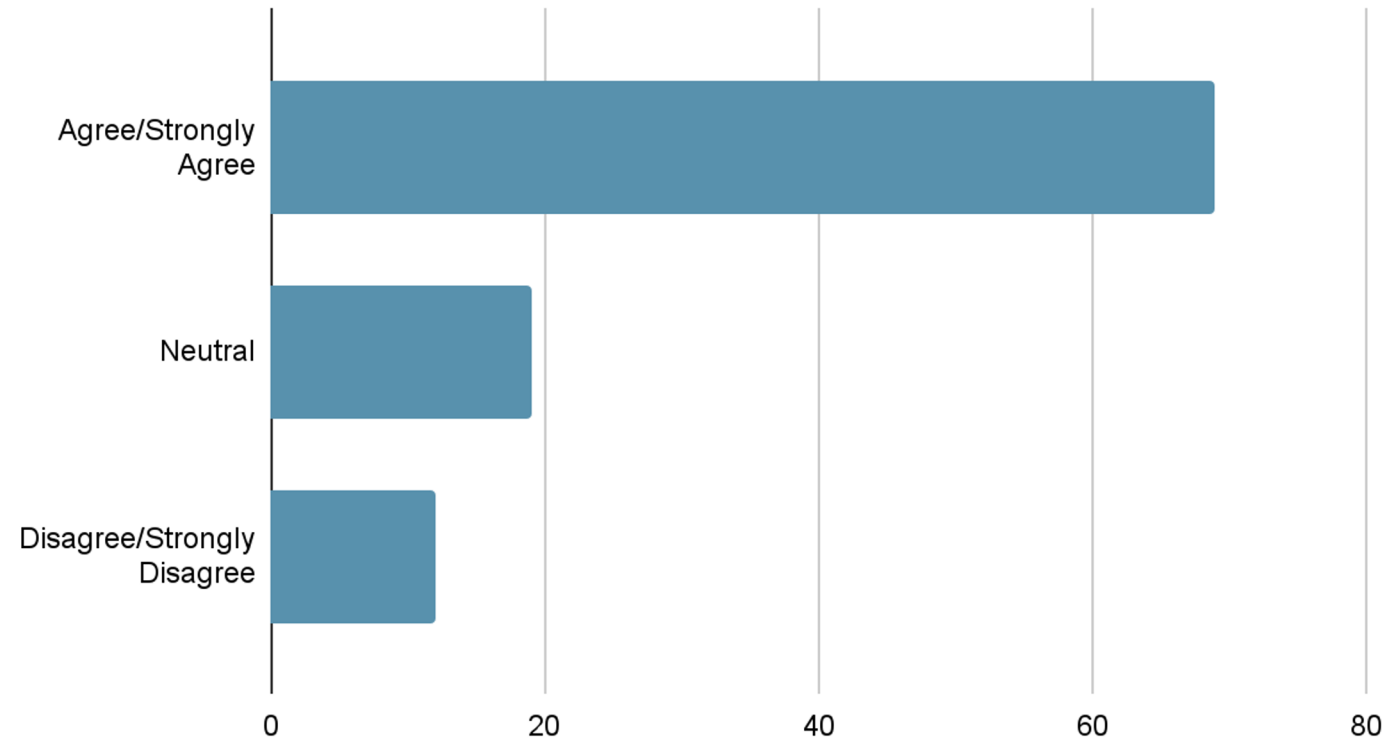
With the right training and support, the teachers we need are scattered around the state.

We were right about the need in areas like upper level math and science, but totally missed similar deficiencies in grades 6-10.

The needs & challenges are both universal & locally specific.

# Students tell us it's working...

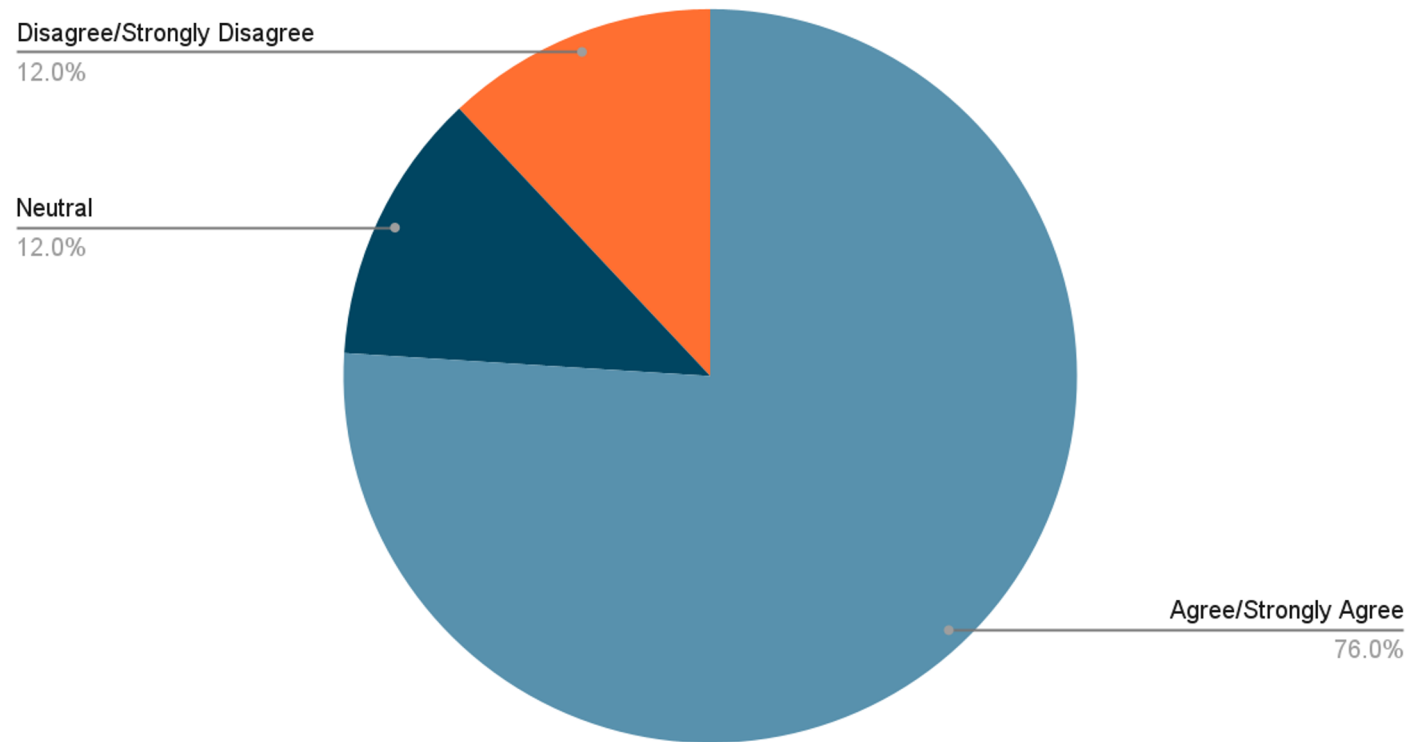
The course content challenged my thinking



# How do the students feel?

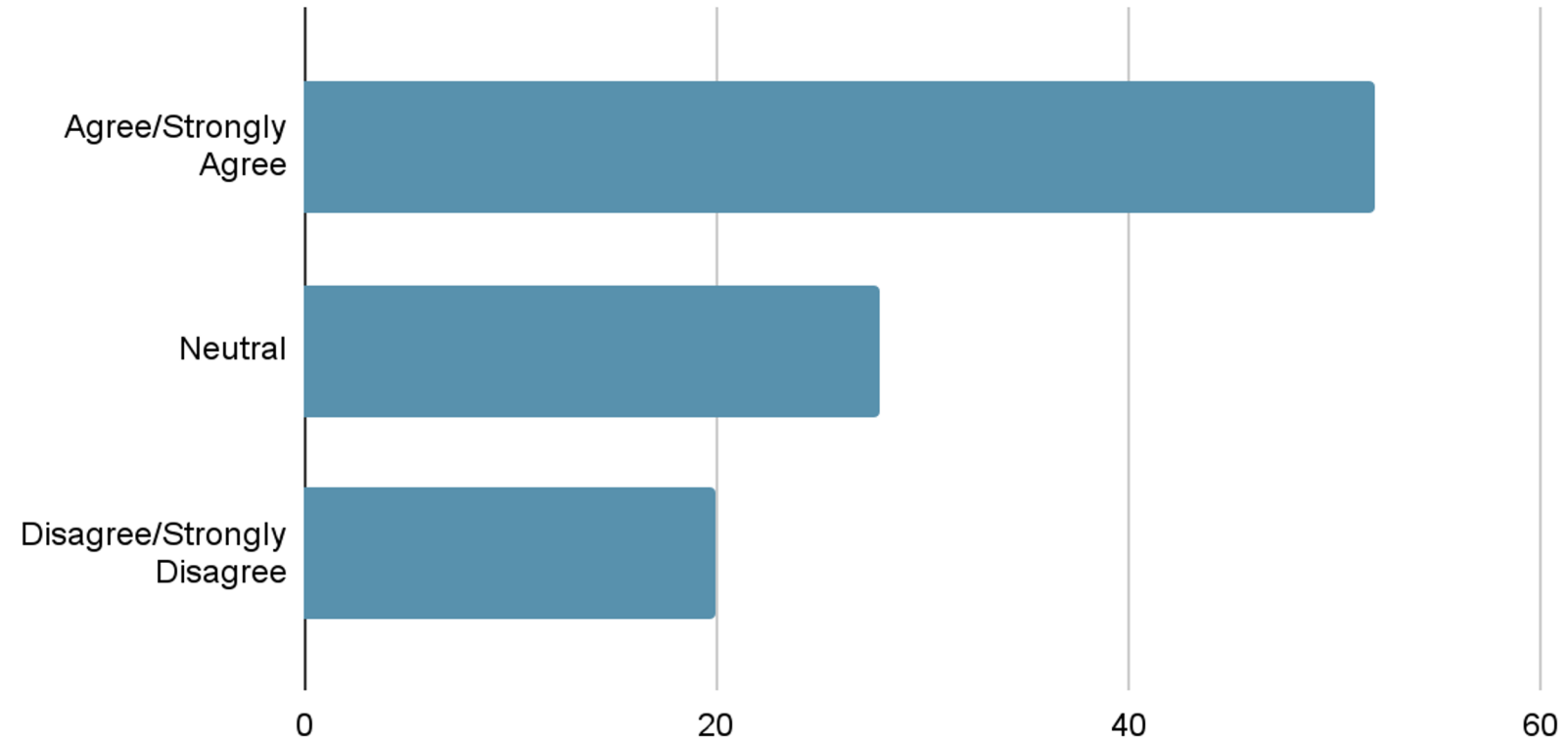
---

The instructor was knowledgeable about the course content



# How do the students feel?

Online courses through AZSOC help me pursue my educational goals



We got this far for one reason...



**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**



**YAVAPAI COUNTY  
EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY**  
Listen • Innovate • Serve



**Helios®**  
Education Foundation

# And partners are key to the next stage...



**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**



NATIONAL  
MATH + SCIENCE  
INITIATIVE



**YAVAPAI COUNTY  
EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY**  
Listen • Innovate • Serve





# 2022-2025

Expand Core Course Offerings

CTE Programs

Dual Enrollment

Teacher & TA Onboarding

The School Counselor

Strong Partnerships

Core courses 6-14

WestED review to build rigor

Establish best-practice Canvas modules

External curricular partners

Regular student surveys



# 2022-2025

Expand Core Course Offerings

CTE Programs

Dual Enrollment

Teacher & TA Onboarding

The School Counselor

Strong Partnerships

**AzSOC can provide a complete solution:**

*Accounting, Business, Digital, Drafting, ECE, Ed Profs, Engineering, Graphic Design, Law & Public Safety, Network Security, Software Design*

**AzSOC can provide instruction, with the student or school filling lab requirement:**

*BioScience, Culinary, Electronics, Fashion, Film & TV, Hospitality, Interior Design, Lab Assisting, Music & Audio, Sports Med, Stagecraft*

**Local schools provide CTSOs & collect CTE funding**





# 2022-2025

Expand Core Course Offerings

CTE Programs

Dual Enrollment

Teacher & TA Onboarding

The School Counselor

Strong Partnerships

Prescott College

Accredited by Higher Learning Commission

Long committed to dual enrollment

Credentialing process

Course approval

\$110 tuition for four credits

Student- or school-paid



# 2022-2025

Expand Core Course Offerings

CTE Programs

Dual Enrollment

Teacher & TA Onboarding

The School Counselor

Strong Partnerships

Recruit & support a cadre of highly qualified teachers skilled at distance instruction

PD in virtual & distance instruction, Canvas, & supporting students you've never met

TA guides & training

Building observation & evaluation protocols



# 2022-2025

Expand Core Course Offerings

CTE Programs

Dual Enrollment

Teacher & TA Onboarding

The School Counselor

Strong Partnerships

## Generation Schools Network Curriculum

- Building full courses
- Relevant modules across network
- Regional training for rural districts
- Provide curriculum for local facilitation

## College & Career Advising

- Career Exploration 7-8
- ACT Preparation 9-10
- Job, college & aid applications 11-12
- American Dream Academy
- College Knowing & Going
- FAFSA preparation



# 2022-2025

Expand Core Course Offerings

CTE Programs

Dual Enrollment

Teacher & TA Onboarding

The School Counselor

**Strong Partnerships**

**Organizational**

*YCESA, WestED, Prescott College, Helios, ADE, Future Design School*

**Content**

*Generation Schools Network, Az CTE Curriculum Consortium, NASA Rural Action Group, TechSmart, EYPC (University of Illinois)*

**Support**

*ARSA, NREA, NMS+I, NORC (University of Chicago), CELL (Indiana)*



# Core Concepts

## **We do not have a demand problem**

- Rural students need access that empowers parity with their urban/suburban peers
- Robust academic knowledge, which means robust courses & HQ teachers
- Technical competencies in everything from writing skills to CTE
- Professional skills, including “soft skills” and SEL fluency

## **We are focusing on the supply side**

- Recruit, train, support & empower the very best teachers we can find
- Build strong & engaging courses
- Fill the School Counselor gap

## **And building for the long term & stressing ease of access**

- Online registration by students or schools
- Zero cost for secondary credits
- Provide curriculum, instruction & counseling services



# Challenges

**Rapid Scaling**

**Reaching a Size that Guarantees Programming**

**Rigor & Creativity**

**Expansion & Sustainability**

# References

- Azano, A., & Biddle, C. (2019). Disrupting dichotomous traps and rethinking problem formation for rural education. *The Rural Educator*, 40(2), 4-11. <https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v40i2.845>
- Bright, D.J. (2018). The rural gap: The need or exploration and intervention. *Journal of School Counseling*, 16(21), 27 pages. <https://jsc.montana.edu>
- Eppley, K., Shannon, P., Azano, A.P. & Brenner, D. (2018, Summer). What counts as evidence in rural schools? Evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence for diverse settings. *The Rural Educator*, 39(2), 33-37. <https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v39i2.208>
- Jameson, J.M., Stegenga, S.M., Ryan, J., & Green, A. (2020). Free appropriate public education in the time of COVID-19. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 39(4), 181-192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/8756870520959659>
- Mette, I.M., Biddle, C., Mackenzie, S.V., & Harris-Smedberg, K. (2016). Poverty, privilege, and political dynamics within rural school reform: Unraveling educational leadership in the invisible America. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 19(3), 62-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1555458916657126>
- Pardini, D. (2020). Arizona families: Coping with COVID surveys preliminary technical report. *Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System*. <https://ccj.asu.edu/content/press>
- Scott, S., Miller, M.T., & Morris, A.A. (2016). Rural community college student perceptions of barriers to college enrollment. *Academic Leadership Journal in Student Research*, 4, 11 pages. <https://scholars.fhsu.edu/aljsr/vol4/iss1/7/>
- Sprowles, A., Goldenberg, K., Goley, P.D., Ladwig, S., & Shaughnessy, F.J. (2019). Place-based learning communities on a rural campus: Turning challenges into assets. *Learning Communities Research and Practice*, 7(1), 1-12. <https://washingtoncenter.evergreen.edu/lcrjournal/vol7/iss1/6>
- Thomas, A. R., Lowe, B. M., Fulkerson, G. M., & Smith, P. J. (2011). *Critical rural theory: Structure, space, culture*. Lexington Books.
- White, S., & Downey, J. (2019). Strengthening rural education: Gathering research from around the globe. *The Rural Educator*, 40(2), 1-3. <https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v40i2.846>
- Zuckerman, S. J. (2016). Mobilization and adaptation of a rural cradle-to-career network. *Education Sciences*, 6(34). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci6040034>



[glen.lineberry@azsoc.org](mailto:glen.lineberry@azsoc.org)

480.329.3677