

City and County Mayors' Workforce Development Forum 2013 Goals and Actions Report

Thursday, January 3, 2013

Rose Center, Prater Hall

100 Plus community leaders met on December 18th to learn about and discuss new education requirements and essential workforce needs and skills; and to engage community leadership on collaborating and aligning methodology and actions for ensuring high school and post-secondary graduates are prepared for workforce entry and growth. The following goals and actions were identified.

Goal: Broaden educators' knowledge of Lakeway Area business & industry needs and concerns through increased communication and relationship strengthening. (Bridge building)

Actions

1. Identify options for opening and encouraging better lines of communication and dialog between Business & Industry, community and Lakeway Area School Systems;
2. Develop opportunities to review and discuss Lakeway Area Basic Skills for High School Graduate Workforce Entry document with P-12 and postsecondary education counselors, administrators and teachers;
3. Brainstorm options for aligning workforce skills needed to align with common core standards;
4. Explore possibilities for including designated ACT WorkKeys component options with ACT assessments. Explore ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery);
5. Research Externships and Internships educator options for students and educators:
 - **Externships** are short-term (one to two days), offer no pay or academic credit, and are hosted by volunteers in various organization to help teachers/students gain an insider's view of available career options.
 - **Internships** are longer term (a semester or summer), may involve pay and academic credit, and support an organizations work function.
 - a. Convene meeting with LHRMA, MACC, School representatives and community leaders to review, explore and expand collaborative options in broadening student/educator/administrative plant tours, summer job experiences, internships and externships.
6. Bring industry and business representation together with educators to develop real-life work problems for students to solve.

Goal: Expand opportunities for student real-life work-readiness skill development.

Programming in place:

- Elementary fifth grade JA Biztown experience
- High School Leadership Classes,
- Alcoa Howmet apprenticeship program
- tnAchieves mentoring & scholarship program

Actions

1. Targeted funding – student incentives for high school and post-secondary opportunities i.e., dual enrollment, drop-out prevention, AP testing, Career Technical Education, pre-K classes, Careers in teaching;
2. Explore aligning school dress codes with workforce appropriate dress; (start on soft skills, attendance requirements, etc.)

3. Business and industry mentorships and presentations to elementary, middle and high school students on requirements for entering the workforce and for specific vocation skills;
4. Cultivate expanded opportunities for student mentorships, job shadowing, internships/externships and summer job opportunities to associate classroom learning with practical job skills;
5. Foster student involvement through electronic communication with business and industry leaders;
6. Explore possibility of creating a regional training and apprenticeship program;
7. Investigate methods of assisting students in identifying career opportunities through post-secondary options beginning in elementary schools;
8. Implement programming to develop critical thinking and inventive problem solving.

Goal: Define community's educational needs and what quality of education community is willing to support. (Do we want education to be our community's #1 priority?) Encourage and promote the community as an active learning environment and a community of excellence.

Actions

1. Investigate best practices used by state's top performing school systems and determine what it takes to ensure high achievement for all students;
2. Review regional collaborative opportunities and options;
3. Explore civic responsibility and community options for increased investment for per pupil expenditure, effective teachers and high standards and expectations in every classroom, i.e. meeting or exceeding state per pupil average (cultural shift);
4. Consider increasing educational excellence recognition and rewards, especially for those working with most at risk populations;
5. Explore options for including industry input and solutions into school funding (Return on Investment ROI);
6. Consider collaborative partnerships with programs that provide funding and training options such as Five Rivers Career Center, Registered Apprenticeships, state, and federal;
7. Develop initiatives to promote better understanding of the importance and value of technical careers as well as professional; Work is a good word! ;
8. Increase preschool options, especially for inner city/most rural children EX: Pre-K in every elementary school;
9. Increase utilization of post-secondary resources. (WSCC, Tennessee Technology Center);
10. Involve community in annual Teacher Recruitment Fair;
11. Identify and expand opportunities for business leaders to visit and observe schools in action;
12. Develop community advisory council to ensure Forum action progress.

Goal: Increase parent understanding and engagement in student achievement.

Actions

1. Increase parent understanding of the role they play and their child plays in student achievement;
2. Provide opportunities for business and industry presentations to parents on requirements for entering the workforce and for specific vocation skills;
3. Expand education for parents on Common Core Standards, why they were implemented and how we align standards with work-force skills;
4. Possible internships and/or workforce tours for parents (like United Way for social services);
5. Identify options for supporting parents through training, education and incentives.