Notes from Regional Planning Forum  
September 23, 2004  
Countryside Bistro

**Education of the Workforce:**

The issue was to openly embrace a collaborative and innovative workforce development plan.

**Action Plan 1 –**

**Issue:** Lifelong learning, character education and work ethic communication.
**Planning Team Members:** Entire Group
**Strategy Category:** Education

**Action Steps:**

1. **Review what is available from existing groups “Best Practices.”**
   **Who is in the lead:** Brad Lau
   **By When:** Brad will set date in October.
   **Resources Needed:** Best practice examples.
   **Evaluation of Success:** Marketing materials, business involvement.

2. **Identify core practices that would be available for communities and businesses.**
   **Resources Needed:** Other resources, individuals, and organizations that need to be involved.
   **Evaluation of Success:** Based on selected core practices.

3. **Coordination of educational resources.**

4. **Discuss general public awareness campaign to be used region wide.**

5. **Identify stakeholders, i.e. community/society, business, education, family.**

6. **Identify other resources/members**

Those that would like to continue involvement with this Action Plan: Beth Wheeler, Becky Steele, Sandi Williams, Maggie Lesnak, Kim Mildward, Bob Bush, Jerry Cooper, and Larry Stobbs.

Additional notes found on a sticky note…………..???

**Data Regional Employers:**

- Businesses by number of employees
- Regional contacts/local contacts, to assist with information gathering.

*Building Career Lattices, posted in breakrooms*
*Website with education resources – career information*
Communication:
Need to talk the language of businesses (education and the workforce).

**Education of the Workforce Flip Chart Notes**

**What is included in this issue? (or not included)**
- Change is key
- Develop training to meet employers needs, existing and potential - those we are not aware of.
- Adapting skills to new technologies.
- Need to build population in region
- Potential to develop ex-offenders
- Need to value lifelong learning
- Small Business Growth
- Training is not end product of education - focus on lifelong learning
- Need to develop soft skills - work ethic, being punctual, etc.
- Change mentality for students to consider a career
- Development of career ladder
- Develop good basic skill base of math, English, science, reading, etc.
- Employers want good work ethic
- Young people need to have aspirations and goals
- Develop talent, utilize technology, tolerance
- Need to realize that management workers have higher level of transferable skills
- Industry needs to be more proactive to educate students/public about possible careers
- Employers don’t want to teach basics - math, reading, etc.
- Career education - communicating what careers are possible
- Communication between employers and educators to prepare youth
- List of skills wanted by prospective employers/industries
- Education is lifelong - need to emphasize this to youth
- Economic development programs need to be proactive - have a plan and goals
- Character education needs to be developed and supported (i.e. Attendance at school and work is critical!)
- Best and brightest leave the region/community
- Project based learning - need to understand careers and understanding link between careers and classroom learning
- Need to be more interactive through mentoring both students and parents
- Adult literacy for the under educated
- Develop a sense of pride in youth - work ethic through real life examples, i.e. run own radio stations where they learn and take responsibilities - empowering youth
- Everyone needs to take responsibility to impact/mentor youth
- Empower adults who are experiencing life/career changes
• Substance abuse - can’t get or keep employment
• Education and government institutions need to be flexible

Root causes/Contributing factors:
• Technology - how quickly it changes
• More diverse economic sectors (Ag, Man, Tech)
• Lack of self motivation and responsibility by general/public complacency
• Aging population - shrinks workforce, declining (1)
• Shrinking resources - both time and money (1)
• Lack of education dollars
• Schools need to be more efficient
• Schools do not always have local control over curriculum
• Competing expectations of education system
• More and more work on schools - higher expectations new programs, less funding
• Visiting businesses, more career days, business partnerships
• Litigation
• Paperwork that interferes - red tape
• Need better Communication between levels of education - schools, tech schools, colleges (12)
• Communication between employers, employment services and industry
• Financial aid - access and understanding
• Value of lifelong learning - awareness (12)
• Values need to be taught at home, parent education
• Education for entire family
• Family involvement (1)
• Character education at industry level (2)
• Work ethic development (10)
• Incumbent workers determining career goals
• Customer “service” skills
• Education needs to be responsive to determine what needs are unmet and address (2)
• Industry needs to commit to participating in what is offered that meets needs, communication, cooperation and commitment
• Resources to test response/build program/take risks
• Do not have local ownership of business/industry

( ) Number of dots placed on each item.

Data/Information
Inventory of jobs and skills required to customize training programs.
Census of school population trends increase/decrease diversity of school enrollment
Inventory of who makes business decisions by specific business