

Topic: Workforce Development - Preparing Youth

The Delta Strategy Community Work Session

February 12, 2007

Driving Forces that help us...

- Understanding Poverty (Ruby Payne's work)
- GRPS focus on reading
- Diversity training models (Cascade Engineering)
- Career Readiness Certificates
- The SOURCE
- Science and Medical institutions
- Improving Neighborhoods
- Volunteer movement
- More collaborations
- Infrastructure
- Technology
- WMCAT
- GRCC
- Children's Commission
- Integrating health and human services into schools
- Prisoners program
- Churches involved in schools
- Basic need addressing organizations
- Private organizations adapting schools
- Academic service learning programs
- Academic booster club
- Education for parents
- 8th grade small school focus
- Early college experience
- The creation of community schools

Restraining Forces that hinder us...

- Disconnect between the issue and those taking responsibility
- Life long education is not instilled in culture
- Lack of soft skills
- Poverty and Racism
- Parental involvement in urban schools is poor
- Need to measure Emotional Intelligence
- Organizing an innovative enough team
- Exposing youth to career options early
- Lack of vision for young people – myth of good manufacturing jobs
- Lack of early childhood education
- Michigan mindset is different than the world
- Michigan invented moving up the ladder, now it is more like rock-climbing
- Lack of big picture and vision – strategic vision
- Entry level employment
- Parents are out of the loop
- Kids need to read
- Educator training
- Lack of civic engagement opportunities for youth
- School funding, allocation, resources
- Not a mechanism to involve parents
- Need to educate parents about the need for college education

Restraining forces (continued)

- Welcoming community to give all students an opportunity
- Drop outs
- Silos – disjointed systems
- Isolation
- Community Wide Mentoring
- We aren't engaging those that are the focus of the work
- Structure of educational delivery – isn't working
- Early childhood priority – 95% reading at grade level
- Community engagement
- Accountability (student, teacher, certification, systems levels)
- Fear of failure
- Lack of consensus
- Every one looking for single answer
- Not inclusive culture in Michigan
- Apathy
- Lack of a coordinated community guide program
- Too many messages – need clear message
- People don't believe “we are in this together”
- No flexibility in the system
- Union issues
- No community engagement in schools
- Lack of business involvement

Next Steps and Solutions:

- PSA – unified message
- Personal commitment
- Market research
- WMSA – drill down to key issues
- Provide incentives for employers
- 6th grade intern
- Early childhood efforts – more investment
- Bring in models of success
- VISION
- Benchmarking

Topic: Workforce Development - retraining displaced or underemployed workers

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Driving Forces that help us...

- Community literacy & early childhood initiatives
- Grand Rapids READS
- Work Keys-employer recognized skills
- Career Readiness Certificates
- Mayor is “education mayor” values public education
- Redesign of jobs programs to address literacy
- We have a lot of resources but need to connect them
- Coordination of resource pots
- Regional collaboratives
- The SOURCE
- Flexible Community College
- Michigan Works!
- Involvement of churches
- Community Forums
- Great Collaboration
- Proactive business community
- Variety of programs and trainings
- Accessing 211 system
- Best Learning takes place on job

Restraining Forces that hinder us...

- Territorialism
- Duplication
- No way to coordinate all of the efforts around literacy
- Lack of coordination of resources
- Overhead costs of duplication
- Need to get all people involved in the problem solving process
- Companies need to increase and continue community service
- Unlocking stored potential
- Lack of vision
- Thinking these issues are just urban core problems
- Transportation
- Soft skill training – working as teams
- Doing the same old thing
- Not sharing with groups our experiences, progress and knowledge
- Community knowledge management
- Over analyzing
- Prejudice, discrimination, segregation
- Long term solutions
- Families behind the scenes are struggling
- Need to convince people they need the training

Next Step and Solutions:

- Soft and Hard Skill Trainings
- Address Barriers before getting jobs
- Marketing campaign to get the word out about the message and how to get involved
- Early childhood development and parental support
- Eliminate unwarranted duplication – measures to remove duplication
- Protocols and case management – streamline
- Community reinvestment
- Data base for programs and resources
- Regional consortium with regional mission statement
- Investment in Public Education