

Washtenaw County
Workforce Development Board (WDB)
Education Advisory Group (EAG)
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 16, 2013

Meeting Location: Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD), 1819 S. Wagner Rd., Ann Arbor, MI

Members Present: Scott Menzel, Scott Trossen for Donna Doleman, Sean Duval, Scot Graden, John Haberthy, Carla Jablonski, Marissa Smith, Kevin Upton, and Rita Vershum.

Guest(s) Present: Dr. Barbara Bolin and Kuhu Saha

Staff Present: Rana Al-Igoe and Shamar Herron

1. Call to Order

Menzel called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of the Minutes

As there was not a quorum for official business, approval of the 05/15/13 and 08/21/13 meeting minutes will be moved to the next meeting.

4. Report of the Chair

None

5. Report of the Workforce Development Manger

- Herron asked EAG members to provide feedback on electronic communications as it is a great means for all to stay engaged during the months when there is not an EAG meeting.
- Herron thanked Barbara Bolin for attending the meeting and introduced her for the presentation on Michigan's STEM Initiative.

6. Presentation

A. Michigan STEM Initiative

- STEM stands for Science Technology Engineering and Math. Some schools and districts are adding their own letters, such as "m" for manufacturing or music, "a" for arts, and "h" for healthcare so Dr. Bolin prefers to use the term "STEM-X" where the "x" is for extra.
- STEM supports nationally recognized curriculum in a culture of applied learning that is hands-on, cross-disciplinary and project-based. It is designed to nurture the development of skills required in the workplace.
- Dr. Bolin shared the website <http://mistempartnership.com/> and invited EAG members to sign up for their newsletters. One of the features in the newsletter is a showcase of exemplary students and programs and Dr. Bolin invited us to email her anytime we had something we'd like to share.
- October has been declared STEM Awareness Month by the Governor. They are currently hosting competitions on their website with cash prizes to raise awareness and interest.

- The Governor put \$3M on First Robotics including everything from age 6 to 15. This is mainly volunteer-driven and not in schools so there is no school follow up. Also, it seems that only certain areas are actively participating in such opportunities.
- The dropout rate in Michigan is between 20-25%. Dr. Bolin suggested that perhaps one reason for this is because we have kids in the 21st century learning in a 19th century classroom setting. The problem is in engaging students.
- One goal of STEM is to create a culture shift focused on the classroom through project-based learning. New Tech High Schools that have a unique approach to teaching include part time teaching in classroom settings and the rest of the time working in teams on resolving problems.
- Dr. Bolin recognized the partnership between the Milan Center for Innovative Studies and WCC; and suggested that it is a good model. She added that such opportunities should be extended to others and that the EAG continues to support such efforts.
- There are a couple of upcoming funding opportunities. There is an MEDC grant whose outcome is to increase internships on a regional level. Another is an NSF grant.

7. Business/Discussion

- A. EAG Goals
- B. Next Steps

Discussion:

- EAG members focused their discussion on goals and next steps. The question of how to engage kids and expose them to employers was a reoccurring theme.
- To what extent does a career assessment help with career exploration? Sometimes it doesn't; what helps is real life exposure. A good assessment would be to help kids understand their learning style – whether they are auditory or kinetic learners. Then sharing that information with teachers and parents so that they can use that knowledge to engage kids effectively. Identification of personality types is also helpful in learning the different styles and using the knowledge to form work-groups and teams.
- Something to think about is that people don't always stay in the same career. It would be helpful to do an interest inventory to identify an area of interest instead of a specific occupation.
- For kids, a lot of times a “wow” factor or “gross” factor helps peek interest in learning.
- There was discussion about the STEM initiative and focusing on projects that the EAG can sink its teeth in to.
- It was suggested that the EAG start with Milan Schools since they are participating on the EAG and use it as a model.
- Some ideas for next steps that were discussed included:
 - Hosting a Family Engineering Night to get teachers, parents and students together. It would be great to get an employer to sponsor this event, perhaps by donating food or providing some other support.
 - Getting involved in the [2014 World ITS](#) (Intelligent Transportation Systems) congress in Detroit.
- Priority was given to the following projects:
 - Learn more about Project Lead the Way and support an elementary school version.
 - Exploring Toyota's Engineering Day or World in Motion.

8. Other Business/Items for Future Agenda Consideration

- The EAG decided to explore EMU's [Project Lead the Way](#) as well other projects such as Stockbridge Schools.

9. Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at 3 pm the WISD.

10. Adjourn

Menzel adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.