

Washtenaw County
Workforce Development Board
Education Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 18, 2006 **Time:** 3:00 PM

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

Members Present: Sara Aeschbach, Patricia Dahl, James Bunton, Linda King, Rick Leyshock, Diana McKnight-Morton, Bill Miller and Kay Moler.

ETCS Staff Present: Trenda Rusher, Jenny Bivens and Rana Al-Igoe

1. Call to Order

Dr. Miller called the meeting to order at 3:12 PM. He thanked everyone for attending today's meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Bunton moved to approve the meeting agenda. McKnight-Morton supported. Meeting agenda approved.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Moler moved to approve the minutes from the 04/12/06 meeting. Bunton supported. Minutes from the 04/12/06 meeting approved.

4. Report of the Chair – (Miller)

A. Middle College Planning Grant

- A copy of the Middle College Planning Grant Application was included in the meeting packets for members to review. Because of the timing, the application was taken to the Workforce Development Board (WDB) and approved at their September meeting.
- The partners in the grant application include the WISD, Eastern Michigan University (EMU), St. Joseph Mercy Health System, the University of Michigan Health System, the Ypsilanti Area Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Works! and a number of local school districts. The partners put together the grant application in two weeks. The application was the result of a number of local forums and a lot of the information from those forums was put in the application.
- The application is for a planning grant; the planning will take place this year with a pilot program beginning in the fall of 2007. Under the middle college designation, high school students may receive college credits while completing their high school requirements.
- There is a strong foundation for the grant. During the last year, there has been a lot of discussion from at the Superintendents level around the Early College High School Program.

- People have learned a lot from the Washtenaw Technical Middle College. One thing learned is how to bring resources together. The partners do not want this to be a separate system. This initiative will look at connecting high schools with college.
- The health piece works very well in our County because of the need for employees in that sector. It is a great starting point.
- Staff is moving forward with getting people in place to get this work done. The expectation is to have a program of some kind by next fall. The Governor's office has indicated that they know we will need to start small, maybe with 50 students. We will build the program over a number of years.
- There is also a lot of exploring yet to do. Staff will be looking more at the occupational shortages in the medical fields – other ones in addition to the nursing fields, such as pharmacy technicians.
- Rusher added that this couldn't have happened at a better time. Miller added that the WISD will work with EMU and WCC on this. They are going to work on getting students interested and enrolled during the summer.
- Moler added that there was a nice article in the paper (articles about the grant were included in the meeting packets).
- Leyschock recognized Keith Peters for helping in getting the signatures on the grant application.
- Miller noted that this will be one model in health care. We know we need to add technical fields and we are getting started with aeronomics. We want to get ahead, especially with the Aerotropolis coming in. We will need to continue to partner with businesses in addition to colleges.
- Rusher added that ETCS just received a \$20,000 Hospitality Grant as part of the Southeast Michigan region. Moler asked how this aligned with what the state was focusing on. Rusher replied that we have been doing research on the growing industries in our region. We have recognized the growing sectors and note that our County has industries that are unique. Washtenaw County is becoming a hub of innovation.

B. High School Credit Requirements

- There are new credit requirements for high school graduation. Miller noted that staff can share more information with the group if they wish.
- There is some concern as to how Career and Technical Education credits can be used towards high school credits. It will be challenging for students to enroll in career and technical classes without losing other class time.
- They are going to have to offer algebra and foreign language classes in middle school to help students get a head start. There is some concern with this and staff will keep working on this.

C. Services to youth transitioning out of foster care

- The State Department of Human Services recently released a report to members of the Legislature. The report includes a series of recommendations on service to at-risk youth transitioning to adulthood. They State is asking local Workforce Boards to make this a priority in terms of making sure youth aging out of foster care have access to the services.
- As a result, a proposed plan was put together for the WISD's Education Project for Aging-Out Youth. A copy of the plan was included in the meeting packet. Rusher suggested that some outcomes be added to the proposal. Rusher noted that ETCS Staff can provide some performance standards. One idea is to link the population to some of

the existing things that we are already doing at the Michigan Works! Service Center (MWSC). It was agreed that staff would make some additions and work with Leyshock to add the measurement component to the proposal. It was noted that it would be good to pull in both our youth and older youth people at the MWSC to brainstorm. The idea is to work to have this ready by the November 2nd WDB meeting.

Aeschbach moved to support the Proposed Plan for the WISD's Education Project for Aging-Out Youth. McKnight-Morton supported. Proposal passes.

5. **Report of the Director** – (Rusher)

A. Local/State/Federal Updates

Local

- We have been involved in a number of great things. Washtenaw County has become the hub for economic activities. At the same time, we have a number of companies that are experiencing buy outs. This is a tremendous workforce development issue for us and we need to reevaluate how we do business. At the same time, we have received phone calls from ACH (Automotive Components Holdings). They want us to immediately conduct testing of applicants, as they will be hiring 400 employees at \$14 an hour. These are temporary jobs, because ACH does not know about the stability of those jobs.
- Another issue that we are facing in the County is the literacy rate. Washtenaw County is the second most affluent County in the state, yet we have a number of citizens who are in trouble. This presents a real challenge for us. Besides workforce development and education specialists, we need to really do some different things. Rusher noted that even staff can use some development to be able to talk candidly with people and be able to help them.
- Another initiative that we are working on is the Commitment to Change (C2C) Partnership. ETCS is working with faith and community based organizations committed to working with literacy, affordable housing and the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI). Access Points have been established throughout the County at participating organizations. Through a partnership with ETCS, Access Points receive a computer with access to Michigan Works! Services.
- A Leadership Summit was organized last Saturday with a great turnout.
- Bunton commented that faith based initiatives have been proven to work well in the past in terms of the impact that they have. Bunton added that connecting with the faith based community is a great way to accomplish tasks, especially in dealing with the prisoners.
- McKnight-Morton asked how many churches have agreed to doing the program. Rusher replied that about 100 have shown interest. Rusher added that it is nice to have the places of worship serve as Access Points; these places will offer more access since they are open during hours when we are closed.

State

- Rusher gave some background information on MEGA P, a workforce development and economic development partnership. A work group of the MEGA P partnership has been meeting called Business Solutions; they work on workforce development and economic development projects in the County. The Feds are doing this on a National level, through WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) Grants. There are 13 WIRED areas in the nation, and Michigan has three of these. At the State level, the initiative is called the 21st Century Grant. The State gave us \$50,000 for the 21st Century grant. State staff from the Department of Labor and Economic Growth

(DLEG) came to a meeting last week to talk about the grant with the WDB Executive Committee and members of Business Solutions.

Federal

- WIA Reauthorization will probably not happen until next year. Funding will continue at the same level.
- Rusher talked with David Bradley, our National expert, on Monday. We will probably invite Bradley to our Joint Annual Meeting in January.

B. Teen Biz

- Rusher would like to invite Patricia Dahl to the next Teen Biz meeting. Rusher gave some background information on the program, run by EMU. The program targets young people interested in the arts.

6. Other Business

A. Literacy Initiative

- There are early childhood programs that work really well, one of those is called Success by Six. The idea is that we need to start when children are young. Rusher asked Aeschbach to talk about the new preschool that is opening. Aeschbach invited members to the open house for the new preschool next week. She added that it is a phenomenal building. They expect really amazing outcomes for kids by the time they get to kindergarten. Aeschbach commented how great it is to have a new state-of-the-art center for the program. The plans are to include a general education pre-school and to expand the program. Right now, programming is for special education students or those that meet the income and risk qualifications are in the Ann Arbor School District.
- Rusher noted that we will add literacy software to all of the computers at the MWSC where people can learn at their own pace. We will have people trained as well and classes will be offered at the MWSC in partnership with Washtenaw Literacy. Rusher added that all MWSC and ETCS staff underwent literacy sensitivity training. Staff is trying to work something out so that literacy software can be loaded on the computers that will be given to the Access Points.

7. Set Next Meeting Date(s)

The next meetings of the EAG will be on the following dates at the WISD from 3 – 4:30 PM

- Wednesday, January 17, 2007
- Wednesday, April 18, 2007

8. Adjourn

Miller adjourned the meeting at 4:15 PM