

Monthly Business and Education Outreach Committee

April 13, 2021

Attendees:

Dave Kilgore
Sarah Morton
Stephanie McNamara
Deborah Harms
Annette Hyde
Laura Amdusky

Carol Coffey
Candace Spence
Bo Bundrick
Becky Gartner
ThermaJean Cossette
Allyn Gutauskas

Meeting called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Business and Education Outreach Committee and Business Services

Business Services – Current State

- Current Business Services responsibility is handled by Goodwill.
 - PD9 and PD10 have separate meetings with mandated partners.
 - Economic Development staff is not included.
 - Follows a round table approach – updates given by team members are often not related to Business Services.
- Previous VCW-P attempts to manage Business Services have had limited success.

Business Services - Sector Approach

- Businesses create the jobs – they need to be the center of focus. Split up the workload and focus according to the segments and common needs. Sectors include: Health Services, IT, Manufacturing and Distribution, Business and Financial Services, Agribusiness – Food and Beverage Production. We may add Hospitality.
- Missing IT and Agribusiness - Food and Beverage Production on the Committee.

Candace Spence has agreed to co-chair this Committee. It is important for Economic Development to be a bigger part of the workforce efforts. We need a co-chair from industry. Dave Kilgore will continue to take lead until the August Committee Meeting as Candace will be tied up with prior projects. She is willing to co-chair because of her immersion in GO Virginia Project Recovery. IT, Light Manufacturing, Business and Financial Services, and Food and Beverage Production are her sector strategy foci.

Business Services - Proposal - Combine the PWDB Committee and the existing Business Services Team. Expand the Committee to include all ED staff members in the 11 localities. The goal is to line next steps up with the Local Plan and Strategic Plan.

- Consensus among Committee members and Board staff is that a merger of the Business and Education Outreach Committee and Business Services Team is beneficial and will foster a streamlined effort.
- This will align efforts with the needs of employers. We need to target the right skills.
- Align the future training needs pull it under one umbrella. Specifically in adult education - how do we build out post high school or GED? Grow literacy and numeracy across the region.

Next Steps:

- Per practices in the Central Region, Tim Saunders shared that within their quarterly meeting, they highlight 3 businesses and bring in the partners. They give the businesses 10 minutes to present what they need regarding workforce. Partners have time to present what they need or offer. Perhaps Piedmont can adopt the same?
 - Majority of Committee Members see this is a viable option to ensure engagement with businesses as well as highlighting what they need to succeed in hiring the right workers.
- We will start with the Healthcare Segment at our May meeting.

Career Readiness/Soft Skills

- Bo Bundrick shared the following links as resources in evaluating job readiness:
 - <http://www.cteresource.org/wrs/index.html> (Workplace Readiness Skills assessment)
 - <http://www.cteresource.org/curriculum/High%20School%20CTE%20Tasks%201-38.pdf> (Across the board tasks -HS CTE Courses)
- Discussions with businesses will begin to re-evaluate hiring pre-requisites (i.e., Diploma or GED, certification) and establish a baseline for employers across the region.

Employer Toolkit

- Employer Toolkit - Piloting with Farmington Country Club
 - Objective is to encourage employers - job vacancies to be bundled under Segments. The toolkit will help build resources and tools necessary to stay on a singular career pathway. When you just hire for filling a position it increases the turnover.
 - As an example, we should encourage businesses to evaluate their non-negotiables and postings.
 - The Toolkit being developed now is for Hospitality but also will ultimately be created to be transferrable with any employer.
 - The Toolkit will be available for feedback for the Board Meeting in June.
 - We need to lean into the data already collected - Bo (insight for youth population), Candace (employer and sector data), et. al.

Adjourned at 2:40 p.m.