



VISTA 2025 Goal 2:

Position Chester County as a magnet for attracting talent and a model for developing an employer ready workforce.

VISTA 2025 Goal 2 Team Meeting

June 29, 2018

Meeting Notes

Team Members Attending: Kathi Cozzone, Joe O'Brien, Ralf Weiser

Also Attending: Pat Bokovitz, Marybeth DiVincenzo, Demetrious Roberts (by video conference), David Sciocchetti, Andrea Vaughn, Patti Van Cleave

Kathi Cozzone

Welcomed those in attendance and asked if there were any comments on the meeting notes from the previous meeting. None were presented.

David Sciocchetti

Noted that the Ascend program presentation at the previous Goal 2 team meeting touched on changes in the Pennsylvania Department of Education requirements that will require school districts to enhance and track student interactions with work experience program and activities. Provided team members with PDE documents that describe the Future Ready PA Index and described some of the On Track Measures that school districts will have to take related to student work experience. Noted chart from Johnstown school district described the specific requirements of 2 experiences per year per grade level from 3rd to 12th grade for a total of 20 documented pieces of evidence in a student's career portfolio.

Pat Bokovitz

Described \$150,000 grant to CCEDC that might be able to provide some resources used to facilitate coordination with school districts.

Patti Van Cleave

Noted that there are existing programs that are trying to organize all available resources into one spot (e.g. Career Street in Erie)

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that school districts are trying to figure these new requirements out and that some kind of coordination makes sense as a next step

Patti Van Cleave

Commented that discussions were underway on creating a new county website that centralizes career awareness program and resources.

Demetrius Roberts

Stated that the education community needs to work together and not duplicate efforts. Suggested the need for an ecosystem umbrella that can share information. Described the Pa STEM Experiences for Equity and Diversity (PA SEED) Ecosystem program. Noted that the PA SEED website currently highlights organizations that offer STEM opportunities. Suggested the possibility that this website could share additional information. Noted that the website was currently somewhat stagnant and in need of change.

Pat Bokovitz

Asked how school districts were engaged.

Demetrius Roberts

Indicated that 12 school districts were currently involved from the four suburban counties. Noted that they were examining possible governing structures for enhancing the PA SEED program. Considering becoming a non-profit organization.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Suggested that might be able to help all suburban school districts.

Kathi Cozzone

Noted that the Downingtown Education Foundation funds programs. Questioned whether it could be leveraged to help schools meet the new work experience requirements.

Pat Bokovitz

Offered the model of a dating service website where employers and schools can both go to find what they are looking for and make a connection.

Ralph Weiser

Asked why an employer would be looking at the website.

Andrea Vaughn

Commented that some companies are using Career Street as a hiring pipeline.

Ralf Weiser

Responded that his company gets interns from the Coatesville Area School District and that the program is structured and easy to use and easy for HR departments to use.

Kathi Cozzone

Agreed that the challenge will be to drive people to a website where the information is available.

Ralf Weiser

Suggested that an analogy might be the development of a new service or product. Noted that early adopters are needed who can then serve as information resources for future interested parties.

Added that vocational tracks are still not popular with students and parents. Noted the need to continue to build success for these efforts.

Further explained that HR departments are looking to fill job opening right now. Career awareness programs work best with employers with a long range perspective.

Kathi Cozzone

Commented that what is needed is a C-Level commitment.

Ralf Weiser

Responded that to get a C-Level commitment you need to demonstrate a return on the investment.

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that many employers are already early adopters.

Joe O'Brien

Commented that immediacy tends to trump longer distance visions. Stated that unfortunately there are no points for problem identification only for problem solutions.

Ralf Weiser

Suggested the development of a one sheet summary of what the value to a company is to participating in these career awareness programs followed up a great “road map” to make it easy to see how the program works.

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that school districts will have to increase their outreach efforts to succeed in accomplishing and documenting the required multiple number of experiences for every student in the district.

David Sciocchetti

Questioned whether parents might also be targets of any career awareness outreach efforts.

Kathi Cozzone

Suggested that for that to be successful you need to give parents a reason to be interested. Suggested development of some form of employment and compensation analysis based on career paths.

David Sciocchetti

Provided the internet analogy of “click bait” to attract the attention of parents.

Joe O’Brien

Suggested that outreach has to explain that college is not the only pated to employment success.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Suggested that many employers have reached the “pain point” when it comes to identifying new employees and now may have to start looking further down the road. Noted that the Industry Partnerships are currently looking at how companies can address the “pain point”. Suggested that because they are in place, the IP’s may be one way to market new programs.

Demetrius Roberts

Commented that this might be a part of establishing a common place or “go to” destination for information on next steps in examining career paths along with camps and direct experiences.

Joe O’Brien

Agreed that some kind of single point of contact made good sense.

Ralf Weiser

Suggested a need to focus on specifics of what we can do next.

David Sciocchetti

Commented that school districts have significant new requirements in tracking the career awareness experiences of their students. Suggested that there is a risk that with all of their other requirements, meeting their career awareness objectives could become a “check the box” type of experience rather than an experience that is useful to the student and the parents in analyzing various career options.

Suggested that perhaps we can help them meet their new requirements with the many existing career awareness activities.

Kathi Cozzone

Added that this might be a great opportunity to leverage programs like GETT.

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that the primary role of teachers is to educate students and that they do not have the time to do all of the other things effectively.

David Sciocchetti

Suggested that we now have a great opportunity to help them “check the box” in a very effective manner.

Kathi Cozzone

Suggested that teachers and administrators have not traditionally been fully engaged in career awareness efforts and now they have to do something. Added that how school districts respond to new requirements is usually up to the superintendent. Added that is probably clear to them that they need to do something and would prefer to do it right.

Joe O’Brien

Suggested that offer them an “easy button” that allows them to meet their requirements successfully.

David Sciocchetti

Added that a good website could show school districts how to use many existing programs to meet their requirements.

Andrea Vaughn

Noted that the way that career awareness experiences are required to be tracked under the new law presents a documentation issue for school districts.

Joe O'Brien

Noted that accepting a way to respond to requirements will be a school-by-school issue as not every school has to participate.

Patti Van Cleave

Suggested that a forum could be held on how this process could work. Added that we can get feedback and then assist with the role out of the "easy button".

Kathi Cozzone

Asked if the IP's had contact with school district superintendents and curriculum directors.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Responded that they had, twice in the past five years.

David Sciocchetti

Noted that there is a time component to this issue in that school districts have to meet the new requirements in the coming school year.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Volunteered to draft a letter to superintendents alerting them to the potential for help in meeting their career awareness requirements to move the process along.

Ralf Weiser

Agreed that there was an urgency to act now while a website is being developed.

Kathi Cozzone

Noted we will have to resolve who will issue and sign the letter.

Andrea Vaughn

Suggested that the letter might go to superintendents, curriculum directors guidance counselors STEM program coordinators and principals. Noted that the PA SEED website was available to teachers in any of the four suburban counties.

David Sciocchetti

Questioned whether these initial efforts might be structure as a Chester County "pilot" program to avoid the need to resolve the complexities of different career awareness program in different counties in the short time period available.

Ralf Weiser

Asked who owned the PA SEED website and was advised that was owned by CCIU and made available to the PA SEED ecosystem.

David Sciocchetti

Asked if focused meeting like this one might be an approach to future goal team meetings

Joe O'Brien

Commented that he liked the way this meeting worked – focused on a specific topic with room for discussion.

Meeting was adjourned.