

**BERRIEN, CASS, & VAN BUREN  
CAREER & EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Michigan Works! Hybrid Meeting**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Members Present:

Chris Machiniak (in-person), Robert Smith (virtual), Jay Bauer (virtual), Bob Kara (in-person), Karen Reilly (virtual), Diane Owen-Rogers (virtual),

Members Absent:

Mikki Spagnoli, Allie Knapp, Ken Flowers, John Fonash

Others Present:

Rey Guzman, Brandon Fuller

Michigan Works! Staff Present:

Mark O'Reilly, Chrissy Meek, Mindy Watson

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:06 a.m.

II. Introductions

Mindy welcomed all CEAC members and guests present with a roundtable of introductions and a brief synopsis of the meeting purpose for new members.

III. Presentations

*MiSTEM Pilot:* Diane Owen-Rogers, Southwest Michigan MiSTEM Director presented to the committee updates on launching the Mi-Trades program this summer with a pilot at two sites in Hastings and Kalamazoo. We engage middle school students in mathematics, construction trades focused project-based learning, and social emotional learning as part of a career exploration program. We are working to build curriculum to support a variety of ways to implement such as one-off projects on a Saturday or after school, a summer camp, summer school, school year elective, etc. As next steps are formulated, Diane will send information. As part of the statewide MiSTEM Network Math Action Area, they are looking to offer Algebra. Data Science as a future alternative to the traditional Algebra 2 course. This would allow students to engage in Computer Science as well as traditional Alg. 2 content through a PBL, statistics, and large data set analysis context. MiSTEM will be offering a 5-day training by [Bootstrap](#) in summer 2023. More information to follow. Western Michigan University received a \$1.5 million grant to create a [STEM Workforce Collaboratory](#). Part of the initiative is to create micro credential pathways and externship experiences for K-12 educators. As more concrete plans come together, Diane will share information.

#### IV. Discussions

*Career Pathway Day:* Chris Machiniak provided an update on Career Pathway Day 2022 saying it was great to be back to in-person events. Feedback received has been positive from employers, students, and educators. It was suggested that going forward with these events, school districts send staff other than CTE instructors, such as teachers, guidance counselors, school board members, and administrators. It would introduce a broader audience to the importance of career exposure and career experiences. The next Career Pathway Day is set for October 20, 2023. The location has yet to be determined. Chris plans to coordinate with Mikki Spagnoli and Rober Smith on where to hold the event.

#### V. Updates

*Workforce Development Board:* Business Solutions Executive Director, Mark O'Reilly informed the committee about the Going Pro Grant and how funds secured can help business needs such as building their talent pipeline through apprenticeships. Mark stated that the business team receives about 2 calls a week inquiring about apprenticeships. Healthcare is growing in apprenticeships, Sector Relations Manager, Mindy Watson, will connect with high school CTE classes and post-secondary institutions to help drive the talent pipeline. Southwestern Michigan College (SMC) and Corewell South, formerly Spectrum Lakeland Health, are excited to move forward on an EEG Apprenticeship.

*Community College Updates:* Dr. Karen Reilly stated that things are going well at SMC. The college is working on a revamp of curriculum going into pathways leading to short-term credentials to better streamline the certificate route. Also, 1<sup>st</sup> year trades to have hands on experience be attainable for the boom in trades. It was asked by Mark O'Reilly what the college is experiencing in terms of enrollment into trades? At SMC there has been increases in welding and construction, however, robotics is down in enrollments. Karen shared that the college is not selling the Robotics program well and could use assistance to promote and sell students on the program. Healthcare is also experiencing a decrease in enrollments. SMC would like to know how to partner with employers to create a better talent pipeline in healthcare.

*Employer Updates:* Jay Bauer from Eagle Technologies said that they are very busy. PO's have dropped off, though that is typical for this time and is normal. It then picks up during and after the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Jay also reported that this area has a lot of enthusiasm for the trades and is starting to pick-up. Eagle is planning to build their apprenticeship program to take on 30 new apprentices by enrolling two times a year from once a year. There is still the need to educate youth and parents about the trades, with support at the high schools being phenomenal. Committee member, Bob Kara, asked Jay "How long is an apprenticeship program at Eagle?" Programs run 4 years, expectations far exceed the requirements for DOL, with more educational classes included. Eagle is seeing higher retention rates with apprentices. It was mentioned that Youth want to learn more on the job skills, though many employers see a strong need for soft skills training. Mark O'Reilly added that some community colleges insert soft skills into general education requirements to finish journeyman card and associates degrees.

*Secondary School Updates:* Chris Machiniak informed the committee about a new electrical program to start at Lakeshore High School. Berrien RESA has added a new position in CTE who will make connections to education and business. The goal with this position is to grow work-based learning.

Robert Smith, from the Van Buren ISD, mentioned that there will be an expansion of programming in Plumbing, Electrical and HVAC at the Van Buren Tech Center. There is also a building wide job fair in the planning stages. They would like to have 50-60 employees, asking if Michigan Works! could assist with engaging employers.

VI. Member/Public Comments

None to report

Next Meeting Date

The committee will meet on March 16th, 2023, from 9-10am. Virtual and in-person options will be available.