

**BERRIEN, CASS, & VAN BUREN
CAREER & EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2021
Michigan Works! Virtual Meeting**

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present:

Bob Kara, Chris Machiniak, Ken Flowers, Robert Smith, Mikki Spagnoli, Diane Owen-Rogers, Debbie Lull

Guests:

Rey Guzman (State of Michigan)

Members Absent:

Corey Clark, Dave Floran, Laurie Hasse, Cody Korfmacher

Staff Present:

Erin Venno

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:03 a.m.

II. Introductions

Erin Venno welcomed all CEAC members and guests present. A roundtable of introductions started the meeting, as well as quick housekeeping items.

III. Presentations

Chris Machiniak shared Berrien County's goals and areas of focus, particularly through their south county districts. They are focused on school-to-career, stating that co-op "is dead", and work-based learning (WBL) now have curriculum backbone. They focus on bus tours, industry visits, career events like Career Pathway Day, and virtual classroom teachings. Having industry teach a virtual lesson is very important for students. Robert Smith mentioned that WBL is crucial and everyone has had to get creative over the past year, so virtual options and ideas are so helpful. Robert also mentioned that the Van Buren Tech Center is down 100-150 students this year due to COVID. Mikki Spagnoli shared that it was just passed that in order for schools to get their full funding, they must have in-person instruction for at least 20 hours per week. That will likely change the landscape once again, including how students will get work experiences. Rey Guzman stated that employers across the state are saying the same things, and are interested in reviving the co-op experiences, and would like to see further legislation to assist in that. Chris shared that school-to-work is similar to co-ops, but are able to link to CTE, and opens doors to different facets of the work. For example, an automotive CTE student working in an automotive shop can do more tasks than a work permit allows because of their education. Robert added that it also adds in evaluation measures, ensuring a high level of quality. Mikki mentioned that there is a need for transitional conversations, like an exit interview, with students to ensure they are moving past high school in the right direction.



Chamber South
County CTE Communi

Erin Venno asked for an open discussion on interest in career events, like Career Pathway Day that has been done in the past. There was a positive consensus on hosting a virtual event. Mikki stated that Kalamazoo RESA is having a virtual MiCareerQuest on May 12th, and Diane Owen-Rogers said that

she could help us visit, if we are interested in doing so. Mikki mentioned Edge Partnerships as a platform, and Erin and Rey spoke about Brazen. Debbie Lull said that a digital solution is the best option, and similar to what they have experienced in healthcare; we have to bring it to the students, rather than the traditional format. Robert mentioned that they have done something similar to promote the Tech Center, and the students enjoyed it. Rather than visiting just a couple of programs in-person, they were able to see as many as they'd like. Bob Kara said it might be tough for the contractors to talk with students, but Debbie said that recruitment teams will try anything at this point! Ken Flowers said that short career videos with panels discussions live longer and might be a good route to take. Erin will follow up with the relevant parties to continue discussions on next steps.

IV. Updates

Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren:

Erin Venno shared information briefly shared information on Building Trades Week from April 19-23. Information was sent via email with further details. Erin stated that Michigan Works! is still operating by appointment only, but had hopes to open to the general public in May.

Secondary:

Ken Flowers updated that Lake Michigan College is focused on the fall semester. They would like to be face-to-face as much as possible, but are able to pivot to remote if needed. They are working on a Spring open house on April 22 and said he would share marketing as it becomes available.

Employers:

Debbie shared that the health system is maxed out. They have shortages in most clinical areas, predominantly in nursing, nursing assistants, and home-based settings. She again reiterated that their recruitments teams are open to trying new ideas.

Bob stated that their numbers are down slightly, but have established a few new apprentices. He also shared that he did co-op as a student, and learned soft skills, financial skills, and most importantly- responsibility. He also has an interest in seeing their revival. He also shared this career video, stating we may use if helpful: https://www.dropbox.com/s/baeyqtgel7ydxgo/Labor_Pride_V_03.mp4?dl=0

Post-Secondary:

Robert stated that they are currently still in a hybrid model. One cohort of students attends class Monday and Tuesday, and the other on Thursday and Friday. Wednesday is remote for all.

Mikki shared that Cass Lewis ISD is changing names to Heritage Southwest. It has been approved. She has one school that is hybrid, but the others are face-to-face. They will be taking the week after Spring Break to be remote, hoping to mitigate any issues. They do have a new Superintendent as well, Andy Hubbard.

Chris said they have been focusing on the budget and purchasing quality items that help to sustain programs. They do have a couple of new programs: HVAC, two new Education programs, and Allied Health in south county.

Diane shared information on the MiSTEM website, a video on Project Based Learning and Playbook grants \$10,000: https://www.michigan.gov/leo/0,5863,7-336-94421_81797---,00.html .

V. Member/Public Comments

Rey shared information about the virtual hiring events on the Brazen platform. They used it for a virtual career fair in Battle Creek recently, with good success. He also shared that an RFP for MICA 3.0 will be released in May.

Next Meeting Date

The committee will meet virtually via Zoom, unless otherwise decided on June 24, 2021 from 8-9AM.