

**BERRIEN, CASS, & VAN BUREN  
CAREER & EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 21, 2021  
Michigan Works! Virtual Meeting**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Members Present:

Bob Kara, Chris Machiniak, Robert Smith, Cody Korfmacher, Mikki Spagnoli, Diane Owen-Rogers

Members Absent:

Karen Reilly, Corey Clark, Dave Floran, Laurie Hasse, Ken Flowers, Robert Smith, Debbie Lull, Allie Knapp

Others Present:

Rey Guzman, Kelly Dargus

Staff Present:

Erin Venno

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. Introductions

Erin Venno welcomed all CEAC members and guests present with a roundtable of introductions.

III. Presentations

*Career Pathways Day:* Chris Machiniak asked for a “temperature” check on whether a spring career exploratory event was possible. Erin Venno’s feedback from an employer survey in August was overwhelmingly positive; Bob Kara and Cody Korfmacher stated that “business as usual” and felt that employers would attend events if they were available. Mikki Spagnoli and Diane Owen-Rogers are going to check with the Kalamazoo region to see what they are planning for the coming year. Chris Machiniak will initiate a brief call with the Career Pathways Day planning committee; Mikki Spagnoli and Robert Smith will check back in with the local schools. Bob Kara also offered to check with other local unions to understand the overall willingness to participate.

*Senior Event:* Chris Machiniak also talked about the possibility of holding a Senior event, focused on resume/cover letter writing and mock interviews, in conjunction with industry and Michigan Works!. Robert Smith shared that they have done this previously, and it was very well received by students and teachers. Mikki Spagnoli echoed that she’d be very open to having this across all three counties. Rey Guzman asked if colleges also would attend this event, and it was shared that there is an event that typically already occurs for colleges to come and talk with students in October. It was cancelled this year but has been a recurring event for a while. Diane Owen-Rogers also shared that Western Michigan University has a Career and Student Employment Services that does these things and might be interested in participating. She is going to share their contact information.

*CTE Credentials:* Mikki Spagnoli presented a credentials update for CTE programming in Michigan, with the purpose of updating/implementing industry-relevant credentials. All CIP codes are being revamped to competency-based credentials, and the second wave of the grant is moving forward. The state has approved ten CIP codes in welding, finance, marketing, mechatronics, law enforcement, IT, and cyber security. Mikki is responsible for finance and marketing and is requesting assistance in identifying employers and teachers to assist in the identification process. For more information, please see:

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/2021-006\\_Credential\\_Update\\_for\\_Perkins\\_V\\_Reporting\\_724705\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/2021-006_Credential_Update_for_Perkins_V_Reporting_724705_7.pdf)

*SW MiSTEM Strategic Plan:* Diane Owen-Rogers shared the Southwest Michigan MiSTEM Strategic Plan. Over the coming year, the MiSTEM network is piloting programs to expand education, with

several local schools being involved: Niles New Tech, Cassopolis Public Schools, and Comstock STEM Academy. Also shared was the STEM REDI (Racial equity, diversity, and inclusion) initiative that will be focused on developing a 3P (problem, place, and project) based learning model using STEM. Diane has requested feedback on several items to help provide valuable input and feedback. Please see to provide information:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1IkD7PtSe1WaXuFhr4nCEXs2O5cYUli5zVlr1SPs1wA/edit?usp=sharing>

MiSTEM Network 2021- 2022 Strategic Plan:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oW6B2b6uWkUpneq8SeJq7YYAf2ydFiX943TnzoSwMdm/edit#heading=h.fxbxfrn5d5q>

#### IV. Discussions

*CEAC Roster:* Erin Venno requested assistance in nominating additional employers to the CEAC. Also, a local district that provides CTE or Adult Education is needed for the CEAC roster. Chris Machiniak suggested that each county lead provide a name/contact information to assist.

*2022 Meeting Dates/Locations:* Erin Venno shared that the 2022 meetings will be moved back to in-person, with a virtual option available. They will be the third Thursday in January, March, June, and October unless objections are raised. It was suggested to move to 9AM, with no objections.

#### V. Updates

*Workforce Development Board Update:* Erin Venno shared that Michigan Works is fully open for walk-in and appointments. The service center remains slow at this time. She also provided an update on the MiLEAP team, sharing that Navigators are now located at Lake Michigan College and Southwestern Michigan College. They can provide a wide variety of assistance to students.

*Community College Updates:* There were no community college updates.

*Employer Updates:* Bob Kara shared that they are currently busier now than they were in July and are looking at probationary applications due to the need for more staff. If so, they will begin a new apprentice cohort in the Spring. Cody Korfmacher stated that he would try to have one of the CEAC educators speak to his business group about career exploration events. He said they are all struggling to find talent in this environment and are often looking for entry-level staff or interns; this would be good visibility for them.

*Secondary School Updates:* Robert Smith shared that their expansion with the health department is nearly complete and have added a dental assistant occupation. They are also looking to expand their Early Middle College program. Lastly, he shared that their construction program works in two phases: indoor work at the tech center and on-site work. They just completed a house in Lawton and are working with the city of Decatur for another site. Chris Machiniak and Kelly Dargus talked about the tri-county Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment that is currently underway. They look to ensure that students are prepared for work and that educators are working with industry to ensure smooth transitions. Chris stated that their number of shared time students is very similar to last year, and programs are running smoothly despite the turbulence of COVID-19. Diane Owen-Rogers said that MiSTEM has been approached by IBEW to participate in CACTUS, where 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students have the opportunity to work together with electrical industry professionals to bring electrical construction projects to life. Read more here: <https://www.necanet.org/about-us/news/news-release-archive/news/2018/06/25/cactus-pilot-program-introducing-young-students-to-the-trades>

*Parent Updates:* Cody Korfmacher did not have any relevant updates to provide, as things remain very similar in nature.

#### VI. Member/Public Comments

Rey Guzman thanked the members for having him. He shared that Going Pro Talent Fund applications are open. They are curious as to how these will be received this year amongst COVID-19 and the overwhelming talent shortage. He looks forward to seeing those for the coming year.

#### Next Meeting Date

Next meetings dates will be scheduled and sent out by Erin Venno for 2022.