

County Strategic Planning
July 31, 2008

Present: Earl Poleski, John Graves, Ken Toll, Patty Kaufman, Doug Schedeler, Nancy Miller, Jan Seitz, Michael Gradis, Mary Cunningham-Deluca

Guest speaker: Nancy Miller, Jackson Legacy Program.

- Legacy got started because of the Economic Development team and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Engage Chamber with internal marketing strategy.
- Promote education and its importance by supplying scholarships.
- The community does not have a culture for education today.
- Promote employee volunteerism as mentors.
- Legacy is very engaged in the higher education system.
 - Further ahead than other communities in Michigan.
 - Has partnership with K-12 systems.
 - Has marketing strategy.
 - Local resources to students, such as the Access Center located in the Sears wing at Jackson Crossing Mall.
 - Lots of traffic, but people still don't know where to go.
 - 15-20 people a day come in.
 - Hours are 10a – 6p M-F, 10a – 2p on Sat.
- The County is interested in engaging employees in mentoring, for example, students with disabilities in order to connect them with the proper organizations to help them.
 - The County also wants to get other organizations to understand and support this effort.
 - Volunteers are the key to success.
 - “Always do what you say you are going to do. Kids need that!”
- There needs to be a coordination of efforts.
 - We don't want to duplicate what others are doing, but instead to coordinate with them, or piggy back, in order to efficiently use resources.
- College is not for everyone, but there are other avenues available to them.
 - Other locations, besides school, can engage these individuals.
 - Not necessarily another youth center.
- Change culture in environment to promote the importance of education.
- Have energy be well directed without duplicating.
- Encourage the support of education through Economic Development.
 - The County is not a funding source, but they recognize the importance of education.
 - Possibly release time/give space for employees to mentor.
- If you believe something is important, you make an investment in it.
 - Need a commitment of resources (3-5 year investment).
- Three areas to focus on:
 - Education
 - Financial Security
 - Health
- Support and join other groups around the community.
 - Shared goals are *very* important.
 - Don't just talk—show.
 - Need to start pulling people together, not just engaging in conversation.
 - This is not “the” County plan, but “a” county plan collectively.

Next Steps

- Do we continue down this path or go to another place to get refined?
- Successful transition to higher education.
- Do we continue or join a larger group (Great Start, Legacy, United Way, and JSEG)?
 - Perhaps the next step is to join Great Start, Legacy as an active player.
- Need to create incentive for people to believe that higher education is the strategic goal of the community.
- Need to take leadership role.
 - “How will you support us” is a question that should be asked.
 - United Way has access to many businesses.
 - Create a list of bodies to support us.
- Team should meet again to get a list of goals (measurable pieces) and take those to colleges, school districts, etc.
 - “What you’re accountable for is what you measure”
 - Need to come up with a draft.

John Graves passed out some literature for Linda Brian, who was unable to attend. He also distributed outlines from the previous meeting. He will work with college presidents and superintendents from now until the next meeting, and will report back at that time.

At this time there has not been a date set for the next meeting. John Graves will communicate with Jan Seitz.

*Respectfully submitted,
Carol Sosinski
Scott Bailey*