

## **County Strategic Planning June 1, 2009**

### **Where we left off at our last meeting:**

- Math is our mantra in Jackson County.
- Waiting to see what the United Way committee was doing.
  - United Way met at MSU Extension and acted as a focus group for the County's Strategic Planning Team.
- Kevin Oxley and the Jackson ISD were putting together a math summit.
  - After the summit, we will meet to see what needs to be done and bring in other people as the project unfolds.

### **Recent United Way meeting:**

- United Way staff went in with an agenda to make a recommendation to adopt United Way of America's plan for improving high school graduation rates.
- There has been some trouble with the Community Solutions Team with prioritizing.
  - The team had a lot of special interests which had to be reduced to what was "near and dear to their hearts", in order to begin moving forward.
- Had an opportunity to read the United Way's mobilization plan for high school graduation.
  - United Way has been working on this plan on a national level and has access to frameworks and support materials to support the Committee through the process.
  - Everything fell into place, and everyone fits under the plan.
  - The plan is to move forward with improving high school graduation rates.
    - Issues that are a part of why kids don't finish school are issues that donors and the community are used to United Way dealing with (truancy, mentoring, etc).
    - It was said that it is possible to predict as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, by looking at attendance and truancy records, whether or not a child will be successful in finishing high school.
- Talked about wanting Jackson to be known as a "math county", where people are successful in math.
  - Would like to get a community leader to join discussion.
  - The suggestion was made that there be an overall coordinating organization, most logically being the ISD, to drive the process and require all school districts to fall in line.
    - There needs to be that driving force in order to make things happen.

### **Education in Jackson County**

- From August 19 – 21 the three institutions of higher education in Jackson County will be having a workshop at JCC to begin talking about what should be expected of students at the college level, what they are getting at the high school level, ACT scores, etc.
  - Invitations and letters will be going out in the near future.
  - Hoping to get 60 faculty from area colleges and high schools to attend.
    - The goal is to help area educators understand the level of math knowledge needed at the college level, and to reduce the need for remedial and developmental courses by 5% over the course of the next few years.
- Working with parents is also important.
  - We cannot work with parents until we can tell them "this is what your child needs to know".
    - Curriculum is currently not standardized between schools, so MEAP scores will need to be used in order to determine areas of emphasis.

- Early Childhood will partner with ISD to work on math with preschools, childcare centers and home daycare providers.
  - Hoping to find a funding source to develop a workshop that can be repeated.
- Get parents involved through youth servicing agencies and hold meetings at non-educational facilities so that they don't feel uncomfortable, such as a library.
  - Possibly can use college students who are studying education as mentors.
    - Using student teachers will be useful in helping parents understand "new math".
      - It is hard, however, to teach "new math" to parents who don't understand "old math".
  - The County can be a "cheerleader" in this effort, and can help recruit volunteers for the mentoring program.
- The Governor's Education Summit was recently held.
  - Patty will send PowerPoint to Jan.
  - Scores were up slightly, but is not increasing for the groups of students who need it the most.
  - Results from the United States were embarrassing when compared with other industrialized nations.

### **Where are we now?**

- Figure out where Kevin is with the math summit and get more information.
  - Put the next meeting on hold until the next steps are determined at the summit.
    - The ISD can act as a leader and can coordinate a county-wide effort.
      - Can help districts to collaborate curriculums, as there are a lot of issues going on in the education community centered around math.
      - Work to keep groups from duplicating efforts. This will be challenging.
- Irene will ask her group to make a recommendation to the Community Solutions team regarding creating a benchmark that students earn a minimum score on the math component of the ACT in order to be ready for college-level math.
- The County Education Team doesn't need a specific task in order to carry on.
  - Role can be to help other groups move in the right direction.

**The next meeting will be scheduled during the month of October. At that time, the group should have more data to work with.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Scott Bailey*