
Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC)

Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2024

CALL TO ORDER – Committee Chair, Tim Staffen, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

MW SOUTHWEST CEAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Lanre Ajayi (GOCC) [∇]
Jim Berry (SJC ISD/CTE)
Scott Cubberly (KCC) [∇]
Cindy Goss (KRESA/CTE)
Jerry Johnson (ISD-Calhoun) [∇]
Sarah Mansberger (KRESA ISD) [∇]
David Maurer (PS-Humphrey Products) [∇]

Rebecca Murphy (BCPS) [∇]
Brian O'Donnell (PS-Hi-Tech Electric) [∇]
Sue Quiter (BACC) [∇]
Dustin Scharer (BACC/CTE) [∇]
Jim Sertic (PS-Sertic Consulting)
Tim Staffen (CISD/CTE)

[∇] Attended virtually

STAFF PRESENT

Drew Duncan (MWSW)
Ashley Iovieno (MWSW)

Kathy Olsen (MWSW)

OTHERS PRESENT

Suzanne Eman-Jaehnig (LEO-WD)

MW SOUTHWEST CEAC MEMBERS ABSENT

James Brylowski (Labor-MI Building
Construction Trades)
James Callahan (Labor-Trades)
Dr Mark Dunneback (KVCC)
LaToy Green (Parent)

Kevin Lavender (KVCC)
Andrea Rainer (Huron Pottawatomi)
Windy Rea (Job Corps)
Ken Willcutt (Labor-Plumbers & Pipefitters
& HVACR Local Union 357)

INTRODUCTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Individuals attending in-person and virtually introduced themselves and the agency/company they represented.

MINUTES (*Exhibit A*)

Motion by Jim Berry and supported by Cindy Goss to approve the September 12, 2024 CEAC meeting minutes. Motion carried.

PROGRAM

MW Southwest Partnerships & Resources

Ashley Iovieno reported on multiple partnerships and resources for building a skilled workforce which included the following:

- *Going PRO Talent Fund* – Fifty-five (55) businesses in the MW! Southwest region applied for a Going PRO Talent Fund FY25 Cycle 1 grant to support incumbent worker training and new hires, including apprenticeships. Staff are expecting an announcement, as early as this week, regarding awards. For companies not awarded, MW! Southwest Business Solutions staff will assist with identifying other funding to support their training needs. The application period for Cycle 2 funding is scheduled for the spring of 2025. The application period for Employer Led Collaboratives (ELCs) is also scheduled for the spring of 2025.
- *MiSTAIRS* – Three employers are closing out their training funded by the MiSTAIRS grant. This is a training grant to help offset apprenticeship costs. Funds from this grant are still available through the end of 2025.
- *MiREACH* – The MiREACH training grant was for rural healthcare providers and it is fully expended. The geographic areas eligible included Branch and St. Joseph Counties and a small portion of Calhoun County. The focus was on short-term training for patient focused occupations except for dental.
- *Michigan Apprenticeship Readiness Certificate (MARC)* – The Michigan Apprenticeship Readiness Certificate (MARC), a State issued certificate, confirms high quality apprenticeship readiness along with a Perkins CTE credential. There were many questions around the value of a MARC and discussion as to how to get industry buy-in and endorsement. A presentation from the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity will be requested for the next CEAC meeting that will be held in March 2025.

BUSINESS UPDATES

Sertic Consulting - Jim Sertic reported that KRESA is hosting an open house at the Air Zoo for secondary programs (CTE, EFA, EMC) from across Kalamazoo County on December 2, 2024 for students and parents to explore career interests. He further reported the [Innovation Expo](#) will be held on Friday, December 6, 2024 at Western Michigan University's Engineering College. Projects at this Expo are great examples of high-tech engineering projects. Some members reported on schools that are planning to participate in the event.

Humphrey Products – Dave Maurer reported the MiCareerQuest™ that was recently held in Kalamazoo was a success, and he thanked everyone who contributed to the event.

EDUCATION UPDATES

Secondary Education

Branch Area ISD – Dustin Scharer reported the following:

- A College Fair was held at the Career Center during the day on September 24, 2024.
- The following week, the BACC hosted college application workshops.
- On October 7, 2024 BACC staff attended a Math in CTE workshop in Detroit. The goal is to improve and meet MME Match scores.
- A Career Day was held at the Dearth Center for all ninth grade students in Branch County on October 17, 2024.
- Staff are working on getting responses to a follow-up survey from CTE program graduates. The survey report is due December 18, 2024 and so far, approximately 45% of responses are complete. Staff will use the response results to plan for improvements. It was noted that BACC received an honorable mention from the State of Michigan for the quality of their follow-up survey.

Battle Creek Public Schools – Rebecca Murphy reported the following:

- Battle Creek Central now has three State approved CTE programs.
- Under the Battle Creek Schools Academy Model, career exploration is done through expos and opportunities within different industries.
- A career fair with more than sixty booths for students to visit was recently held for freshman. Another event was held that included small group career panels.
- A career fair will be held in the spring for seniors and will include a job fair with on-site interviews.
- Two rounds of industry tours were held for 10th grade students. The on-site visits aligned with career pathways such as Health and Human Services, Business and Industry, and Industrial Trades.
- Last year, teachers participated in externships at Bronson and efforts will be made to repeat the experience this year.
- Battle Creek Schools is working on securing state approval for aligning Health Sciences with Grand Valley.
- Staff are seeking grants to support a small business school store.

Kalamazoo RESA (KRESA) – Sarah Mansberger and Cindy Goss reported the following:

- The open house at the Air Zoo previously mentioned will have opportunities for students and parents to explore Career Technical Education (CTE), Education for the Arts (EFA), and Early Middle College (EMC) programs.
- The grand opening of KRESA’s new Career Center will be May 22, 2025. More information will be released soon.
- KRESA students are participating in the [Innovation Expo](#) at WMU this Friday.
- Kalamazoo RESA is also working on completing follow-up surveys for CTE program graduates.
- Key dates for KRESA events are posted on the left sidebar of the [KRESA Career Connect website](#).
- KRESA staff, along with their mobile lab, participated in the Kalamazoo Holiday Parade. The focus was to help raise awareness of Career Connect programs and services, including career awareness and exploration and CTE classes.
- Roughly fifty staff have been hired for KRESA’s new Career Center and many of them are transitioning from industry to education. Building occupancy is scheduled for the end of March and the public grand opening is scheduled for May 22, 2025.
- A supply chain instructor was hired, and the curriculum will be taught in business classes. The instructor will also be presenting at the Michigan Career Education Conference as to how to align supply chain education with business.
- It has been a struggle to get State approval for a stand-alone logistics certification.
- Staff recently returned from touring the [Cherry Creek Schools Innovation Campus](#). The campus was recently recognized as [one of the top 100](#) most impactful, innovative programs in the world and one of the top ten in the United States. The architecture firm, DLR Group, which designed the Cherry Creek campus is also the firm that designed the KRESA Career Connect campus. The Cherry Creek campus is known for its cross program collaboration, building culture, professionalism, and business partnerships

St. Joseph County ISD (SJCISD) – Jim Berry reported the following:

- Chad Spence, the CTE Public Safety teacher, over the past 2½ years has resigned as he will be the new sheriff in St. Joseph County in January 2025. Chad did a fantastic job building the program. Jennifer Newman, who has 25 years of experience working in Berrien County, was recently hired to replace Chad.
- St. Joseph County has approved up to \$200,000 to create a manufacturing themed mobile lab.
- SJC ISD is also working on completing follow-up surveys for CTE program graduates.
- An aviation program, created through a partnership with Three Rivers Aero, is new this program year. There are four students enrolled, and they want to expand to sixteen next year. The ISD is also working with WMU for dual enrollment. Drone aviation is included in the curriculum.
- There was a CTE float in this year's Centreville Holiday Parade.
- SJC ISD received an Early Middle College planning grant. There will be a focus on health science and \$20 thousand of the grant will be for a new mentor at Glen Oaks Community College.
- SJC ISD is selling their John Deere tractor at an auction and the funds generated from the sale will be reinvested into the Agri-Science program.

Calhoun Intermediate School District (CISD) – Tim Staffen reported the following:

- Although supply chain logistics has its own CIP code, it is embedded in other programs and CACC is exploring supply chain for Agri-Science as there are many opportunities for logistics of Agri-Businesses such as Post and Kellogg.
- CACC is also working on completing follow-up surveys for CTE program graduates. He noted that it is a challenge to get responses due to the high level of spammers with phone, text and email correspondence; thus, it is very important that the caller ID indicates CISD. He further noted that takes combined efforts to accomplish gathering the CTE feedback.
- CISD is partnering with the manufacturing consortium on using a canned curriculum, called [Craftsman with Character](#) that includes character education, soft skills and employability skills. They will begin with one employer partner with a cohort of approximately five students in the fall of 2025. CISD will provide the instructor, and the employer will assign a mentor to work on the character behavior in the workplace.
- CISD students had a fantastic experience with this year's MiCareerQuest™. Regarding eighth grade visits conducted separately, the CISD is noticing that those events are having a little less impact. Thus, moving forward, instead of separate events, the CISD will continue with MiCareerQuest™ Southwest and other smaller visits.
- CACC is looking for a computer networking or computer programming instructor. He asked members to please send referrals to the CISD jobs website.

Post-Secondary Education

Glen Oaks Community College (GOCC) – No report.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) – No report.

Kellogg Community College (KCC) – Scott Cubberly reported the following:

- KCC and WMU have received multiple grants that include \$700 thousand to support K-12 engagement with STEM over the next 18 months; \$2.7 million to work with local businesses in the Blue Oval Battery Park to upskill incumbent workers; and \$1.1 million for a smart factory with robotics and an engineering design lab at the Albion campus. Following the meeting the [MEDC media release](#) will be sent to CEAC members.
- New programs at KCC include a robotics certification and an advanced manufacturing certificate.
- KCC also received a grant to fund curriculum development.

Adult Education

Jerry Johnson reported the following:

- Adult Education Providers were awarded Section 107(a) funding to secure navigators and success coaches for the adult education programs that reside in the Southwest Michigan region. The goal is to help adult learners design personalized educational and career plans tailored to high growth/high demand sectors.
- Data from the most recent program year shows the adult education programs in the Southwest Michigan region in the top quarter of regional rankings for Credential Completion with a rate of 46.5% compared to the statewide target of 41%; and Median Wage Earnings of \$7,534 compared to the statewide target of \$4,700.

MI Job Corps

No report.

OTHER UPDATES - EVENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ashley Iovieno reported there have been some temporary layoffs including five individuals for a short-term layoff at Tech Moto and another company with a one-week layoff, both are in St. Joseph County. Staff are expecting other short term layoffs related to auto suppliers in Calhoun County.

Jim Sertic noted that businesses either cannot find enough hi-tech employees, or they are laying off. Layoffs are typically low tech and low skill workers and an advantage of CTE programs is that they support learning higher skills. It will be important to reinforce with students that one way to help avoid layoffs is to become highly skilled. Representatives from business who were present at the meeting indicated support for learning more to increase employment security.

Ms. Iovieno further reported that she will be traveling to Chattanooga, Tennessee to tour digital fabrication labs at three schools in Hamilton County.

Tim Staffen reported that there has been no word regarding a new MiSTEM Director and Fiscal Agent for the Southwest MiSTEM Consortium. He will follow up with the State and an update will be sent to members following the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

2025 MEETING CALENDAR (*Exhibit B*)

Kathy Olsen presented a draft calendar proposing four CEAC meetings for 2025 and for each meeting, there were two choices. She noted that the dates proposed do not conflict with annual state conferences that many members attend. Members were asked to advise her if there were any other major conflicts with the proposed dates. Based on feedback gathered, the final meeting dates will be set, and a notice will be sent to members following the meeting.

NEXT CEAC MEETING

The next CEAC meeting is scheduled for either Monday, March 10 or 17, 2025, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Members were encouraged to attend in-person; however, if needed, a virtual link will also be available. [Following the meeting, the date was confirmed to be March 17, 2025.]

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Olsen, CEAC staff support

Tim Staffen, Chair CEAC