

CENTRAL AREA MICHIGAN WORKS! CONSORTIUM



Building Strategic Partnerships For Career
Development

Strategic Plan Update
June, 2002

Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella and Montcalm

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Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Career Development Planning

Welcome to the 2002 Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium *Strategic Plan* update. This is a regional planning tool for the Career Development System. Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium is geographically defined as Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella, and Montcalm counties.

The Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Career Development Strategic Plan was a collaborative effort between the Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Workforce Investment Board and the Workforce Investment Board's Strategic Planning Team. The essence of the strategic planning was crafting long-term strategies that, when followed, would favorably position the region to thrive in a future rationally anticipated through the analysis of internal and external trends and issues.

Background

To help place the contents of the *Strategic Plan* update in a context the following is offered as background.


The Michigan Department of Career Development has conceptualized the **Michigan Career Development System** as having three distinct yet interconnected sub-system components:

1. **Career Preparation System**—delivered by K-12 school districts, intermediate school districts, community colleges, private technical schools, colleges and universities to prepare the future workforce;
2. **Workforce Development System**—delivered by *Michigan Works!* agencies and a wide variety of public and private agencies to help develop the existing workforce and assist workers and employers; and
3. **Worker Enhancement System**—delivered by employer-based training programs and customized training activities to enhance the skills of the current workforce.

The strategic planning process has been on-going since 2000.

Step one in the process was to conduct an “environmental scan” which is a detailed look at our entire community. Several months were spent gathering pertinent data for inclusion in the environmental scan. The scan was a synthesis of key community trends and performance measures that provides a framework for decision-making and resource allocation. Five preliminary goals and measures were established based on the data. The goals were considered priorities, but are not ranked with respect to priority.

Steps two-five in the process was to publish the Career Development Report Card, gather community feedback on the preliminary goals, redefine the goals, if necessary, develop strategies to achieve and goals, and develop an operational plan committing local resources for strategy implementation. In June 2001, the Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Workforce Investment Board adopted four priority goals for the next three years.



While the content of the region's first strategic plan constituted products of the process to date, establishing and strengthening strategic partnerships was viewed as an on-going effort in the Central Area region. Strategic planning is a constantly changing and evolving process.

Starting in the fall of 2001 and meeting over an eight month period, the Strategic Planning Team assessed goal progress and updated the Strategic Plan. It was necessary for the planning team to assess the status of workplace readiness and the implementation of strategies from the 2001 strategic plan. Regional data was collected and analyzed to assess the current level of workplace readiness. Reports were submitted from various organizations and agencies regarding the status of goal and strategy implementation.

Against this background, the planning team reviewed and revised the mission statement and developed a vision statement, conducted a strengths and weaknesses assessment, identified societal trends affecting employment and set measurements to identify future success. The final activity was the development of revised strategies and action plans to achieve the strategies.

The *Strategic Plan* update provides a summary of the planning activities and a roadmap for continued progress in career development activities.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you is extended to all of the Strategic Planning Team who gave freely of their time and input for strengthening strategic partnerships within the region. The Planning Team was composed of representatives from education, business and industry, economic development, Michigan Works!, and other interested citizens. The Michigan Leadership Institute provided assistance with gathering and analyzing data, and with writing this report. Funding for this report was provided by the Michigan Department of Career Development through the Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Workforce Investment Board.

A mission for the Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Career Development System was developed by the planning team. The mission is a broad statement of the major function of the Career Development System as viewed by the sub-system components and interested citizens.

The mission of the Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Career Development System is as follows:

MISSION

To ensure a collaborative system that enhances quality of life in our community through career preparation, worker enhancement, and workforce development.

VISION

In our community, employers, employees, and education partnering for careers.

The partners are:

- Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Workforce Investment Board, Executive Board and Education Advisory Group
- EightCAP, and its Michigan Works! Centers
- Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District
- Ionia Intermediate School District
- Montcalm Intermediate School District
- Montcalm Community College and MTEC
- Economic development organizations including Greater Gratiot Development Inc. and Middle Michigan Development Corp
- Private employers
- Business organizations
- Public and private agencies

Assumptions

Organizational assumptions convey the major premises that drive the nature of an organization's decision-making and practices. While the career development system is a collection of organizations, there are some intrinsic assumptions that are common to all. These assumptions were and continue to be underpinnings to the strategic planning process.

- A healthy business climate enables community well being
- Skilled, productive workers are essential to business success
- Workers considered to be “highly skilled” possess both skills specific to the occupied job (“job-specific skills”) and skills general to virtually all workplace settings (“employability skills”). Both are necessary ingredients for a productive workforce.
- In today's culture, the greatest opportunity to effectively transmit general workplace skills is in the formal education system, identified as the Career Preparation System. The other two subsystems, Workforce Development System and Worker Enhancement System, exist to fill in gaps, prepare workers with job specific skills beyond those attained in the Career Preparation System, and keep adult workers on a progressive track.
- To attract skilled workers back to the region and encourage a balanced economy, the region must attract and retain jobs that offer substantial wages and benefits.
- One's income and quality of life are dramatically influenced by the skills and knowledge one possesses.
- There is a sense of urgency—the region's economic position; thus, quality of life is at stake if we do not address regional workforce issues in the short and long term.

In addition to assumptions, the planning team set to paper some of the hopes, fears and priorities for the strategic process and plan.

Career Development Planning Will...

HOPES

- ◆ Expose all to wider range of choices, build confidence, culture and leisure
- ◆ Make a change, get direction, focus on middle tier of students
- ◆ Engage community in relationships, improve quality of life in all areas
- ◆ Improve quality of life, cooperation between school, community, industry, and business

FEARS

- ◆ Geography, slow to respond, lack of ability to implement
- ◆ Focus will change or will not make a difference
- ◆ Spin wheels—the right people will not be reached
- ◆ Stagnation and red-tape

PRIORITIES

- ◆ Make a clear, understandable decision
- ◆ Workable, doable plan, get the word out
- ◆ System and process flexible to make a difference
- ◆ Set goals and strategies that are sustainable

While the Central Area has experienced population growth, that growth has been primarily concentrated in two sectors: individuals of retirement age and the incarcerated. There has not been the same proportionate increase in the available civilian labor supply. Anecdotal information, population data, and graduate surveys suggest the higher-skilled younger populations are leaving the region. Initially, some leave the area for postsecondary education opportunities followed by labor attached elsewhere. Others leave the area for immediate employment opportunities. The region’s quality of life or “lack of excitement” is a compelling factor for their flee. However, this same quality of life is a factor for individuals to return when it is time to “settle-down.”

The Planning Team evaluated the strengths and challenges of the region within the context of why do employees and employers choose to work in the Central Michigan area. What is being done well that meets the mission and vision? What would need to be different in order to compete in the future in programs and services to achieve the mission and vision? What would influence an individual, employer or employee, to stay in the area, move to the area, or return to the area?

Strengths	Challenges
Family business and ties to the community	Increase awareness of roles we play – resource mapping (19) ^A
Lower business costs and lower cost of living	Accountability model that requires we work together (14)
Governmental support for retention and training	Develop better sense of future - proactive vs. reactive (9)
People choose rural area	Public awareness of services (6)
Proximity to urban areas	Continue collaboration and get over turf issues (5)
Agricultural base	Market employee-employer training (2)
Labor pool has been good	Address the underemployed who do not understand training system (1)
Strong sense of community	Remind people of value of life-long learning
M-TEC Center, satellite programs	Communication through engagement and feedback
On-going forums such as E.A.G	Marketing the learning opportunities, parent education campaign
Communities and organizations working on same issues	Utilize and grow technologies to access services
Educational buy-in for Career Pathways	Address/focus on small industries
Mind set – willingness to get better	Orient new workers and employers to our culture
State and federal funded employer services	Create a common mission and channel our energy toward it
Involvement of municipalities	Workforce training for mature and seasoned workers
Collaboration and partnerships, on-going planning	
Montcalm Community College	
Michigan Works!	

^A Each team member selected the top three challenges. The number the total team members who selected the challenge as one of the top three.

2001-2002	2002-2004
<p>Priority Goal 1: Prepare students for workplace readiness</p> <p>Action Steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide connectivity activities for youth to associate school completion and workforce success 2. Implement ISD-wide coordination of curriculum alignment with MEAP objectives 3. Implement Career Pathways in all school districts 4. Increase parental involvement and community awareness in academic and career planning 5. Increase the number of parent endorsed educational development plans 	<p>Priority Goal 1: Prepare students for workplace readiness</p> <p>Strategy: Continue the implementation of career pathways.</p> <p>Action Steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue articulation of curriculum with career pathways 2. Expand student shadowing experiences, internships and mentoring 3. Expand teacher in industry program 4. Continue and increase number of students with written parent endorsed Educational Development Plans 5. Encourage school districts to consider educational development plan as part of student portfolio, graduation requirement or credentialing.
<p>Priority Goal 2: Support career preparation and technical training for secondary and post-secondary students</p> <p>Action Steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a career and technical education-marketing program 2. Increase educational participation and partnerships with businesses 	<p>Priority Goal 2: Promote career preparation and technical training</p> <p>Strategy: Continue to promote the value of career preparation, worker enhancement, workforce development and agency partnerships.</p> <p>Action Steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare annual career development report for distribution to the community 2. Increase enrollment, programs and services at area Career Centers and at local based career-technical programs 3. Increase programs, services and enrollment at M-TEC Center 4. Continue career showcase activities in all intermediate school districts

2001-2002	2002-2004
<p>Priority Goal 3: Assist employers with recruitment and incumbent worker training</p> <p>Action Steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase employer awareness and use of Michigan Works! Services through a marketing campaign 2. Facilitate broader input on workforce development needs 3. Increase enrollments in occupational training programs for incumbent workers 	<p>Priority Goal 3: Assist employers with employment of available labor pool</p> <p>Strategy: Foster communication, cooperation and partnerships among educators, agencies, employers and employees.</p> <p>Action Steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a Leadership Council to coordinate partnerships and implement career development strategies 2. Collect annual data on career development for analysis by the Leadership Council 3. Create advisory committees between education and industry 4. Develop education and business focus groups 5. Develop employer packets 6. Develop electronic newsletter for employers
<p>Priority Goal 4: Support management of data system on workforce development in region</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annually assess the state of the current workforce and the needs of a future workforce 2. Biennially publish a report on the state of the workforce to the community 	<p>Goal 4, “Support management of data system on workforce development in region” has been eliminated from the priorities listing. However, the collection, analysis and management of data is a required element to assess progress with the other three goals.</p>

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Measurements

The Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium Workforce Investment Board and the Leadership Council will collect data on an annual basis for analysis of progress and redefining of goals and strategies. The indicators of success will evaluate the effectiveness of current goals and strategies.

Indicators of Success	
Factors to Measure:	Measures:
1. Effectiveness of career preparation, career pathways, integration of curriculum with career pathways and business/education partnerships	A. Annual employer surveys, wage and benefit surveys B. One year and five year graduate follow-up surveys and graduate employment rate
2. Worker enhancement and employer training	A. Survey of M-TEC and GTEC activities, enrollment and customer satisfaction B. Trend analysis of MDCD data
3. Employee turnover and retention rates	A. Annual employee turnover data
4. Economic development	A. New business starts B. Business turnover/migration C. Increase/decrease in employment D. Net job creation E. Wealth creation
5. Labor force participation	A. Michigan Works! data B. MDCD labor market data
6. Quality of life	A. Community assets survey B. Quality of life indicators assessment

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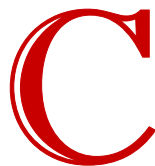
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Michigan Relay Center 1-800-649-3777 Voice and TDD
Funding provided by the Michigan Department of Career Development through
Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium