

OTTUMWA SUMMIT DISCUSSION SUMMARY

WHERE WE ARE

WORKFORCE-RELATED GAPS & BARRIERS



- Communication: access to applicable information, promotion of careers and guidance as early as junior high, knowledge regarding post-secondary options
- Data about why students are not enrolling in post-secondary training and education
- Teaching time management and soft skills to students
- Limited resources in rural areas
- Registered Apprenticeship opportunities and teacher externships
- Time needed for school counselors to invest in students' career planning
- Business promotion of education/certificates
- Conversations regarding education needs to be repeated

TRENDS



- Knowing where and how to access resources to help people to overcome barriers
- Communication needs and resource-sharing
- Parental involvement, generational poverty
- Child care and housing challenges
- Increase hours of bus operations

More than 130 stakeholders attended the Future Ready Iowa Summit in Ottumwa on October 30, 2018.

This document summarizes their ideas to address workforce needs.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

CURRENT EFFORTS AND COMMUNITY STRENGTHS



- Social media strategy
- STEM BEST program/engaging business
- Trio, GAP/PACE, Gear Up Foundation Grant, career days, college visits, Upward Bound, Mentoring programs, E mentoring, Ottumwa Job Corps Center
- Employers going into high schools to discuss opportunities
- Registered Apprenticeship programs, Career Academies, quality pre-apprenticeships, GPS program at Cardinal, educators in the workplace, dual-credit programs (high school/Indian Hills Community College)

POLICIES AND REGULATION BARRIERS IDENTIFIED



- Inequality in education funding, restrictions on funding
- Liability for employers for work-based learning and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities
- "Cliff effect" in government assistance eligibility
- Rigid state graduation requirements
- Change to competency-based education system
- School schedules, get career and technical education (CTE) classes back into schools, involve business in education
- FAFSA completion
- International degrees not recognized

TECHNICAL SUPPORT REQUESTED



- Advertise resources on radio shows, TV, social media
- Tools to make the business case on Future Ready Iowa
- More information regarding labor market in the area



OTTUMWA NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS



- Require every student complete a FAFSA before high school graduation
- Increase business partnerships
- Increase funding for community colleges to address inequalities and the middle skills gap
- Address flexibility/accreditation process
- Gather data as to why graduation rates are low in rural communities
- Identify financial resources to examine alternative models of public education
- Define leadership for moving forward with local Future Ready Iowa efforts
- Short-term certificates built into A.A or A.A.S. programs
- Market to businesses to promote tuition assistance for employees
- Market GAP/PACE, Job Corps, and WIOA programs to students
- Promote the “why” on furthering education
- Identify funding streams to move initiatives forward
- More collaboration between programs (SparkTank and career academies) for school districts
- Align school requirements with business needs
- All students need to participate in Work-Based Learning activities and take a career development course
- Increase community involvement
- Continue the summit's discussions

INNOVATIVE, CREATIVE IDEAS



- Peer-to-peer mentoring
- Reach young ages with social media
- Connect mentors from business to students (create personal connection, makes a difference)
- Simulate work environments in a variety of industries
- Financial literacy classes early (career earning potential)
- Getting families involved, teachers to make home visits
- Meet in different settings to discuss opportunities and programs (churches, community centers)
- Make financial aid program marketing child-friendly
- Monthly high school homeroom presenters to discuss workforce, programs and assistance
- Student ambassadors
- Debt forgiveness
- Information for student and parents online all in one place
- Business match on loans for students to attend college
- Business/Community partnership, Chamber host tours of businesses to increase awareness and interest
- C3 marketing regarding college to change culture

WHO NEEDS TO BE AT THE TABLE



- Community leaders
- Department of Labor
- Financial Aid Specialists
- Students, parents, families
- Legislators
- Iowa Department of Education, schools
- Foster care
- Iowa Department of Human Resources
- Small businesses
- Underrepresented populations



**WANT TO GET INVOLVED
IN NEXT STEPS?**

Contact Linda Rouse with the IowaWORKS Center in Ottumwa
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