CU Cradle2Career
Pathways to Success for Every Student

Goal Team Monthly Report
Goal Team: Workforce Readiness

1. **Team progress since the last report (attach meeting minutes if applicable)**

2. **If no significant progress made indicate issues with progress**

3. **Agenda item(s) for discussion at next Steering committee (if any).**
   a. **Define issue and desired outcome of discussion.**
   b. **Attach relevant documents needed to prepare for discussion**

4. **Team progress since the last report :**

6–8 Grade Sub-Committee

This group has divided into sub-groups to tackle getting information, and here is the status:

a. **Meet with Providers: Charles, Corey, Javaé, Denise, Mindy**

This group met on June 14 and here is a summary of that discussion:

Javaé prepared a chart based on the skills identified by our business partners:

The chart identifies:
Target Skills, Target Skills Providers, and the Skills Objectives

And, is divided into five sections or "buckets":
Leadership and Life Vision
Mentoring and Modeling
Family Services and Support
Education and Career Services
Character Building and Life Skills

We have three after school providers involved, but do want to get one or two more to participate. We have asked the providers for who they think should also be involved, and have asked Workforce Ready team members as well.

It was suggested to try to get organizations that are involved with each "bucket" to the table together to chat about that particular section.

It was suggested that it might be good to get the after school providers and the schools together for a conversation about what the providers need from the schools, and visa versa, so they can share information back and forth. It was suggested that a standard release form, that was the same for all schools, would help simplify the process.

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Barriers were discussed and a large barrier is mixed messaging, as the kids get a positive message from the after school programs, but a different message at home. More work needs to be done to help the parents understand the value of what is being taught and to help support the education and messaging being given by the after school providers. In general, many parents do not trust the schools, which is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Funding is also a barrier, as with everything, the more funding you have the more you can do. The Providers thought that a higher level of philanthropy is needed to expand current or start new programs, but CUC2C is not a fundraiser.

b. **Meet with schools: Carol, Amanda, Robert, Denise**

Urbana

This group met on June 5 with Middle School Principal Scott Woods, Urbana High School Principal Matt Stark, and Superintendent Don Owen.

What is Done Now:

Goal setting is done in homeroom; they do have advisory curriculum, do EFE and Parkland for the day, have career class but it is not required; Splash is after school onsite program, related to 21st Century Grant.

Challenges:

Getting businesses to open doors; mentor issue-no capacity to add more; paid staff and time an issue; many local programs are too restrictive and exclude kids, limited number of career speakers in a limited variety of areas.

Ideas/Comments:

Need to engage 6th grade in goal setting and defining skills needed; 7th grade to explore careers; get students to see connection to education; provide more project based STEM programs since those always "sell out"; provide job shadowing; provide community awareness programs to alter parents perceptions about every kid needing college and that there are other career options available.

Champaign

Carol Packard and Sarah Bradshaw met with Marc Changnon and Michael Lehr, Director of Curriculum, on June 27 and here is a summary of that discussion:

Mike Lehr described current process of curriculum innovation in Unit 4. He emphasized the need for designing interdisciplinary units that require critical thinking that met the Common

Core standards for reasoning skills. He uses Bloom's revised taxonomy and Webb's 4 Levels as guidelines. Currently, the middle school teachers meet regularly as a team to develop and integrate projects into their curricula. He prefers problem-based projects with the focus on upper level critical thinking skills and is big on experiential learning.

Mike and Marc shared the new Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act, passed statewide in July 2016, which supports high schools to develop competency-based curricula that prepare students for particular industry sectors. The state has a set of guidelines for 8th grade competencies in career education.

Marc briefly described current efforts in Career Cruising. He gave us an Employability Skills Assessment form that he asks teachers to give and explain to the students. This assessment comes from an annual review process commonly used by employers, and assesses such things as professionalism, communication, teamwork, etc. At this time using this form is voluntary and not required. The purpose is to help the students link school expectations to work expectations.

We discussed how grade 6-8 hands-on activities could support Career Cruising to more experimentally link what they learn in school to local workforce competencies. One of the obstacles to having outside people come in to do projects with kids was last minute no-shows. "Projects in a box" was suggested, which they already currently have for science projects. It was suggested that perhaps they could start with 2 or 3 work related projects co-designed by teachers and local business volunteers. These could be integrated into the general curriculum, or done during their Flex-time periods.

Our emphasis was that CUC2C is here to provide assistance for the educators to help them so that students see the connection between school work and career work. The CUC2C committee would help recruit volunteers from local businesses and facilitate the teacher-business partnership.

Mike said he would bring that back to his teachers to see if there was any interest.

c. **Determine Local Career/Job Current and Future Needs: Nick, Mindy, Denise**

Denise, Mindy, Nick, and Amanda H. (new with EFE) met on June 28 to discuss the future job trends. Nick provided documentation from the state for our area of what jobs are growing. Nick will give further thought and provide a brief report on:

♦ The top 5 or so job areas that are growing the most
♦ The skills that need to be addressed in 6-8 grades
♦ What is rising to the top related to project-based learning?

Mindy will send an email to the Chamber members asking for their input on jobs projections once we can identify what particular questions we want to

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ask them for both the 6-8 grade and for the Youth Employment groups.

The Youth Employment Sub-Committee met on June 28 and the following are highlights from that meeting:

The goal of this meeting was to work towards getting a vision statement completed that defines what this committee is trying to accomplish. It is the hope of the committee to have this statement finalized and approved at the next meeting in July.

Laura Weis had the group write down one word about their experience at their first job—anything that came to mind. A variety of words were provided and written down as either a feeling or an experience.

The group then broke into teams of four/five and were tasked with writing a story about workforce readiness. All three stories were then put up on the board and "diagrammed" by identifying these three things:

Our Cause
Our Action
Our Impact

Then, the words that fell into those categories were written onto the particular sections that they applied to. These words are what has been used to formulate the draft vision statement to be discussed at the next meeting:

VISION STATEMENT (DRAFT)
Youth employment in Champaign Urbana gives our **high school students** the **needed skills to fill the talent pipeline** for our employers. Our comprehensive Youth Employment Network **results in students with better grades and attendance.** The network **increases our community's economic growth and decreases crime and truancy.**

This committee is also addressing:

1) We need to consider requesting that the schools help us in surveying students. We need to know how many kids are employed throughout the school year (why and why not). The why nots – are there barriers that we need to start addressing.
2) We also need to assess the demand side from employers for student employees.
3) For students who do not work, what are the comparable experiences that would give a student similar skills.
4) Using whatever final version of the vision statement we come up with—what do we need in the community as part of the YE Network? Does that piece exist locally? If yes, who owns that piece?
5) As part of the Network, what are the Best Pactices out there? Are there Best Practices that would help to fulfill the vision and who is the best entity/organization in town that has the capacity to emulate

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that Best Practice? If an organization is willing to adopt a proven Best Practice, how do we help make it a reality?