



Champion Report

Theme Area: **Education and Workforce Development**

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REPORTING PERIOD: October 14, 2014 through January 13, 2015

Goals/Strategies or Action Steps:	What NEW success have you had in moving your theme goals forward over the reporting period?
<p>EW2B</p> <p>EW2A</p> <p>EW5H</p>	<p>Rural MN CEP RMCEP – Has agreed to partner with NJPA to be the the Ramp-Up to Readiness Coordinator for the region in schools where Career Exporation and planning is provided by on-site RMCEP Career Advors, Partnering with NJPA and Schools engaged in the Rural Minnesota Career Advising Consortium .</p> <p>RMCEP – Has successfully integrated 13 Region 5 schools into the Rural Minnesota Career Advising Consortium, partially fun ded by NJPA and the Otto Bremer Foundation. Now serving ovber 4000 students in the 5 county area.</p> <p>RMCEP – Along with the Little Falls SAchool District, presented the Central MN Region Career Advsing Model to the Minnesota Rural Eduction Association (MREA) in October, 2014</p> <p>RMCEP – Working on a pilot program for Community Internships in the Little Falls Community with the Little Falls School District. Focus area include Healthcare , Manufacturing, IT, Journalism and Agriculture. Will expand to other school districts in the Rural Minnesota Career Exploration Consortium and communities in the 5 county area.</p> <p>RMCEP – Was a presenter at the NJPA Career and College Readiness Summit recently held.</p> <p>RMCEP – Recently started the second year of the Adult Workforce Development Competitive Funding funded by DEED. Will train an additional 20 adults in occupations needed in the regional economy.</p>
<p>EW5A</p> <p>EW4H</p>	<p>NJPA The Cradle to Career Planning Group, which includes key leaders from schools, colleges, and regional partners, has continued to meet. This group will convene again on January 21st to discuss pilot programs around Ramp up to Readiness and Project Lead the Way. There is also continued planning and discussion on alternative ways to deliver concurrent or PSEO courses and content to secondary students.</p> <p>NJPA hosted a Career and College Readiness Summit on December 10th at NJPA. Over 25 regional partners attended, mostly from Region 5 high schools. Various topics and programming options were covered and next steps to engage were discussed with participants.</p>
	<p>CLC CLC and Rural MN CEP and the Brainerd ABE have just completed another FastTRAC cohort in manufacturing/IT. Completers of this program (fall 2014) now have the appropriate skills to enter the workforce or to continue with their education. Students in this cohort received the appropriate ABE</p>

bridge coursework to get them up to speed on today's learning standards for employment, and learned skills in IT and manufacturing. (EW3).

M-State Rural Minnesota CEP, and the Lakes and Prairie ABE are engaged in another **FasTRAC** program in the **Industrial Maintenance/Electrical**. This program will provide 12 credits of course work in the Industrial Maintenance/Electrical Program offered at M-state.

The Advanced Manufacturing Education Alliance (AME) has partnered with the 360 Center of Excellence in Manufacturing to deliver courses that lead toward a college certificate and industry certification (MSSC - Manufacturing Skills Standard Certification) to regional employers. To date, over 300 students have enrolled in these courses. The courses focus on preparing current and local workers to expand on their learning through non-traditional pathways to climb the ladder of success. The businesses involved in this initiative are very engaged and allow students time to attend the classes while at their workplace. This is being done through mediated telepresence in the training rooms at several employers. (EW3 and EW4).

CLC is creating a **FabLab at the Staples Campus** Regional Advanced Manufacturing Education center that will be open to the general public. The lab will provide access to equipment that the public and businesses cannot afford. The FabLab will have professional quality 3D printers, scanners, lasers, metal and wood equipment, lathes, mills, computers, and more and will be connected to the other FabLab's throughout the world through a live streaming, idea sharing blog center. CLC is currently seeking an additional \$100K to fully furnish the lab and bring it to the highest standards of production. (EW4I)

CEO program continues to develop and expand. Cindy Koll is the instructor for the program that teaches high school students about entrepreneurship through a project-based curriculum delivered on-site at participating local host business sites. An articulated pathway for credit is being developed through Bridges. (EW2A, EW2C)

CLC Ag & Energy presented to the Commissioner of Ag in December by invitation. The meeting set the stage for the next round of NEXGEN grants that will focus on cover crops and double-cropping. The Ag Center is expanding its work with cover crops. (EW2F and EW4C).

The MnSCU Center of Excellence in Agriculture, Ag Centric, will be launched on February 3 at the MN Department of Agriculture in St. Paul. This is a partnership between CLC, Ridgewater College and Northland College. Agriculture Career Pathways, precision agriculture that includes utilization of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and robotics, farm-business management data collection and analysis and curriculum development are current focus areas for Ag Centric. (EW2C, EW4C, EW4H)

The **Staples Ag & Energy Center, Lakewood Health Systems** and Hunger Free MN received a partnership grant to engage students in providing low income families with food raised at the Center and the greenhouse and high tunnels. (EW2A)

MState (Wadena campus)

MState (Wadena), Rural Minnesota CEP, and the Lakes and Prairie ABE completed **FasTRAC** cohort in the **Industrial Maintenance/Electrical**. This program provided 12 credits of course work in the Industrial Maintenance/Electrical Program offered at MState. (EW3)

MState (Wadena) will be launching a Gas Utility Construction and Service program in June. This program will prepare students to install, maintain, and operate natural and propane gas distribution systems used to

supply residential, commercial, and industrial customers. This will be the only Gas Utility program in the state of Minnesota. **(EW1A, EW1C, EW2A, EW2B, EW2C, EW4D, EW4H)**

MState (college wide) received a \$2.5 million TAACCCT grant from the Department of Labor. The grant will provide three mobile training labs in the areas of Safety, Blueprint Reading and Precision Measurement (manufacturing based) and CDL training. **(EW1A, EW1C, EW2A, EW2B, EW2C, EW4D, EW4H)**

MState (college wide) is a TAACCCT grant consortium partner with 13 MNSCU institutions. The focus of the grant is to provide career pathways in advanced manufacturing in fields of mechatronics, machining and welding. **(EW1A, EW1C, EW2A, EW2B, EW2C, EW4D, EW4H)**

Other
 NJPA has partnered with CLC and M-State Wadena to create the **Career Exploration Initiative**. The search for the coordinator is underway. The CEI project is designed to get K-12 students interested in STEM/CTE/STEAM careers and post-secondary education through the use of hands-on experiences with equipment. The project equipment will be rotated to all K-12 districts in region 5 throughout the school year. This project will complement the career counselors of Rural MN CEP and the Bridges program. **(EW1C, EW2A, and E4WD).**

How are you working with any of the other RR Theme areas?

RMCEP – is actively engaging additional school in the **Rural Minnesota Career Exporatoin Consortium** for the 2015-16 school year. 2 addition schools have committed at this time.

RMCEP - has recently contracteed with **Lutheran Social Service** under **the WIA Youth Program** to provide a several **Boot Camps** and **Outreach Services** for at-risk youth who are out of school and potentially homeless. Development of **Life skills** and attachment to **Post Secondary Education** are the primary goals.

RMCEP – Work Force Investmant Board (WIB) recently held a session on **Occupatons in Demand (OID)** with area organizatons and businessis to gain in additional knowledge in the skill needs of employers in the 5 county area.

RMCEP – Recently was invited to present the **Rural Minnesota Career Advsing Consortium Model** to the **Blandin Foundation** for consideration of an expanded **Multi-Community project to serve students in Northern Cass, Beltrami and Itasca Counties**. Communities may include; **Cass Lake- Bena, Walker Akely- Hackensac, Remer, Deer vRoiver, Virginia, and Grand Rapids**.

RMCEP - Recently signed contracts with **Crow Wing, Cass, Morrison, Wadena and Todd Counties** to continue to provide **Employment and Training Services under the Minnesota Family Investment Program, (MFIP), and the Diversionar Work Pogram (DWP)**.

RMCEP - Recently started a new program to provide **GED and Career Pathways** education services to at-risk youth and young aduolts adults to engage in **Skills Building and Career Pathways**. Funding provided by the **Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Innovation Programs**.

List any Goals or Recommendations within the plan that your team of theme Champions are struggling to address?

How we measure results of Bridges or Colleg in the Schools impacts.
 Who is doing training and TA for entrepreneurs? Or Senior Workforce?

RMCEP - Recently attended sessions at the CTE Conference in Minneapolis to use the new SLEDS System to track students through K12 and higher education for outcomes. Will intergate this capability within the

Rural Minnesota Career Exploration Consortium. This will tie k12, secondary and post secondary education

to student outcomes after graduation from secondary, ort post secondary institutions..

RMCEP – Provides the SCSEP program for **Senior Employment** and attachment to the Labor Force in the 5 county region. RMCEP partners with **Experience Works** for “**Senior Job Search**”

Education and Workforce Development

Education and Workforce Development Issue I (EWI)

Educating and retaining workforce: Facets of this issue include; understanding the demographic and skill make-up of the people in the region's major employment sectors. Other key components of this issue include lifelong learning aspects: how to keep young workers in the region, how to attract & retain talent, and how to best utilize an older workforce. Collaboration between private/public/non-profit sectors is of paramount importance for recommendations and actions to be successful under this theme.

Education and Workforce Development Issue I Goal

Educated workforce: Our region provides affordable and multiple educational opportunities to effectively employ the current and future workforce, and to improve our knowledge of how to live a sustainable life as individuals and as a community at large.

Recommendation EW1

Lifelong learning: Prioritize and promote lifelong learning for all residents of the region.

Action Step EW1A

Workforce training: Create a WPA-like (aka transitional jobs) workforce training effort.

Action Step EW1B

Early childhood education: Prioritize early childhood education and maintain consistent educational pathway options.

Recommendation EW2

Educational system improvements: Improve the educational system to provide a well-qualified future workforce.

Action Step EW2A

Experiential learning: Foster advanced placement opportunities, promote entrepreneurial skills, and involve students in hands-on work experience, on-the-job training and paid internships. Expand upon the "Bridges Academy" initiative administered by the Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce.

Action Step EW2B

Assessment: Create a technical assessment of interests and skills.

Action Step EW2C

Connect students and employers: Promote the skills that employers are looking for and where the jobs opportunities are to high school and college-aged students.

Action Step EW2D

Critical thinking skills: Teach critical thinking skills.

Action Step EW1C

Education resource center: Consider developing a one-stop shop and education center site where people can learn about resources and how they can be a part of the solution.

Action Step EW2E

4-year degrees: Seek to have four-year college degrees delivered from within the region.

Action Step EW2F

Various types of degrees: Create areas of excellence but allow for a broad range of learning opportunities (liberal arts as well as engineering). Allow for flexibility of learning when needed.

Action Step EW2G

Teacher engagement and accountability: Teachers often have excellent ideas of how to improve performance, allow for 180-degree evaluations that come from colleagues, students and parents. Let performance be evaluated, not length of employment. Set higher standards and give higher pay for exceptional performance. Keep practices and ideas that are working.

Action Step EW2H

Home schooling: Expand upon and grow homeschooling and social networks of homeschooling locations.

Action Step EW2I

Charter schools: Expand charter school options as an additional option to delivery of education.

Recommendation EW3

Non-college pathways: Promote options in addition to college for pursuing education, job advancement, and higher pay. This may include additional workplace training, achieving advanced certifications and licenses, or seeking other non-traditional pathways to climb the ladder of success.

Action Step EW3A

Senior workforce: Retool and engage the senior workforce. Access retired talent as educators. Encourage seniors to maintain competency with emerging technologies.

Capitalize on experienced professionals to mentor others. Encourage employers to recruit across the experience spectrum. Create distance at-home learning opportunities while allowing experienced workers to “test out” of training modules.

Recommendation EW4

Role of business in workforce development: The business sector should be proactive in preparing the region’s future workforce.

Action Step EW4A

Hire locally: Encourage employers to hire locally.

Action Step EW4B

Welcome teachers: Create open doors to teachers in the workplace.

Action Step EW4C

Engineering and agricultural careers: Develop more educational opportunities for engineering and agriculture careers.

Action Step EW4D

STEM: Focus on Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) training.

Action Step EW4E

Focus economic effort: Concentrate on a specific economic cluster for the region such as creating a hub for agriculture or a green job training center.

Action Step EW4F

Employer/student correlation study: Complete a study on which employers are hiring and correlate the findings with information on students taking classes, going to college, or graduating from high school in the state. Consider instituting programs where employers pay for relevant certifications.

Action Step EW4G

Employer/worker correlation study: A survey should be sent out to all employers in the region to find out where job opportunities may be as a result of people retiring, future business expansion, etc. and this information should be shared with citizens seeking employment.

Action Step EW4H

Educational pathways: Develop an educational pathway for varied stages of business development with associated resources.

Action Step EW4I

Training and technical assistance for businesses and entrepreneurs: Expand business training and technical assistance. Offer workshops and other technical assistance to educate prospective and current entrepreneurs on how to locate and apply for loans for new or expanding businesses. Assist in educating people in finding capital.

Recommendation EW5

Affordable workforce education: Reform our education and workforce development systems by making education affordable for all learners.

Action Step EW5A

Build on current efforts: Build on existing education and workforce development collaborations such as the Public Work Force Development System, MnSCU, and Adult Basic Education.

Action Step EW5B

Agricultural workforce: Emphasize and promote agricultural education along with gardening.

Action Step EW5C

Training: Combine the concepts of on-the-job training (training at the work site) and lateral training (career path – next level of training). Institute additional apprenticeships that will enhance job creation and enhance skills.

Action Step EW5D

Skills assessment: Conduct an assessment of the demographic and skills makeup/aptitudes in the region's major employment sectors, including incumbent workforce sectors and the unemployed and underemployed workforce. Use this information to identify gaps and gain a better understanding of what education is needed to fill these gaps. Assess and improve soft skills.

Recommendation EW6

Coordination of economic development efforts: Businesses and government should work closely with local economic development and community development agencies to attract new employers and small businesses to the area.

Action Step EW6A

Livable wage jobs: Focus efforts on attracting employers that will provide a variety of jobs that pay livable wages.

Action Step EW6B

Minimum wage jobs: Discuss minimum wage standards and area jobs in our community with state government and public office.

Action Step EW5E

Skills assessment connected to education: Inventory existing skills, compare these to needed skills in key industries, and address the gaps. Focus on evaluating skill sets of high growth industries to determine which incumbent workforce sectors may be transitioned into higher growth industries. Develop core educational disciplines at basic levels to provide greater flexibility for workers throughout their career.

Action Step EW5F

Distance learning: Promote community-based distance learning via global interconnectivity. For example, integrate home-based learners at the community level for social activity along with an advanced online learning experience.

Action Step EW5G

Work-at-home: Provide more work-at-home employment opportunities. This can be accomplished through the expansion of telework and home-based services and businesses.

Action Step EW5H

Affordable, accessible training: Provide affordable and accessible training in promising fields. For example, online courses are more accessible for people without transportation options.