



Personal Pathways to success™

**CATAWBA
REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTER**

Catawba REC Education & Business Workforce Development Summit Results – April 2013

Low-skilled, routine jobs in our community will continue to be eliminated due to technology advances and an increased emphasis by industry on high-skilled jobs. What are the consequences for the community if it fails to react to the fundamental economic changes occurring in the business environment?

Higher unemployment rate

Companies and individuals migrate elsewhere – losing businesses and jobs in our community

Decreased tax revenue

Lower quality of life – stagnant community

Higher crime rates

Increased number of unqualified job candidates

Increase in public assistance will be needed w/decrease in availability

Business and industry often says students coming out of high school are not prepared for the workforce. Exactly how are they not prepared? What are your specific expectations as far as skill sets and thinking capacities for our graduates to have?

Most important are soft skills and critical thinking skills (punctuality, teamwork, attitude – teach at home)

How to apply knowledge – not just memorize the answers

Basic Skills (add, subtract, multiply, divide, fractions, decimals, ruler, reading for comprehension)

Decision Making/Reasoning Ability/Creativity

Verbal Skills – this is lacking due to increased use of technology (texting)

Criminal background is often a barrier to hiring

Financial literacy

How to prepare for job application/interview

Everyone has the ability to learn – how do you teach desire?

How can we make technical careers, including those in manufacturing, more interesting and attractive to students/parents?

Provide first-hand experience for teachers, parents, students to showcase:

Internships/Shadowing/Tours/Open Houses/Career Fairs/Mentoring

Career guidance for students through IGPs and interest inventories

Effective marketing using blogs and social media (ex. www.dreamitdoitsc.com)

Document salary possibilities/benefits to encourage students/parents

Showcase successful students to increase interest

Offer college credit to high school students – dual credit/middle college

Increase business involvement in schools through curriculum development

Early exposure to manufacturing careers in schools: ex Summer Camps for young students

Academic remediation, for example: reading levels, math skills, comprehension and retention of relevant information, writing and communication, are problem areas for many youth and adults seeking postsecondary education opportunities. How does the need for postsecondary remediation impact higher skill attainment? How do you suggest we improve these levels?

Increase testing centers & assistance provided – technical colleges are great for this

Integrate reading and writing in all classes w/greater emphasis at early ages

Improve education system through greater flexibility in schools – one size doesn't fit all (virtual education, school choice)

Use technology in the classroom to show real world connection and training

Increase funding to provide remediation and training to individuals

Cross train existing employees to enhance their skills

Utilize existing program like WIA, Adult Ed, Library System to increase skill set

Students should utilize academic success center while in college

Company mentors can build confidence to help overcome obstacles

Use high school career centers to motivate students to learn

Increase the role community/churches play in motivating – develop Community Resource Center

Offer more continuing education classes at technical colleges

What role should the community at-large play to encourage its youth to stay in school and its adults to go back to school to qualify for new job opportunities? Are there strategies/programs you are aware of?

Begin “stay in school” campaigns in early childhood and middle school, drop-out prevention

Motivate students by showing “real life” application – business guest speakers/mentors

Parents must be involved in education success

Utilize Adult Education programs – Workkeys, GED & high school diploma

Provide programs to address transportation & child care as barriers, ex. WIA

Utilize Library System to provide internet service for job search and skill development

Companies provide on the job training or financial incentives for increased education

Financial literacy programs in community can develop individual independence

What do educators believe business can provide them? What do they need? How can business become involved in the classroom?

School-to-Work Partnerships: ex. Shadowing/Internships/Career Fairs/Tours

Open company doors to students. Some restrict age & do not make programs available.

Mock Interviews or scholarships for students

Active involvement in the well being of students by mentoring them in specific career areas to increase motivation and desire

Serve on Advisory Boards to impact curriculum and make equipment recommendations

Educators can participate in local business human resource staff meetings

Adopt a school to “grow your own” as the Human Resource group in York did