



Personal Pathways to success™

CATAWBA  
REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTER

## Education & Business Summit

### Table Discussion Results

April 2015

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

Educators and parents need to visit businesses/manufacturing facilities.

Businesses should advertise their success stories to educate people of the benefits.

Counselors should introduce opportunities beginning in elementary and middle school.

Companies need to translate the idea of “coolness in making things” to students.

School districts need to sell the fact that Career Centers lead to a job quicker and just as successfully.

Continue the career planning process for students across the State.

Aptitude testing for students, like military does with ASVAB, could identify students for technical courses

Host career night at all levels of school.

Market high-skilled technical jobs that showcase the upcoming need.

Expose students to a variety of technical courses in 1 semester (an introduction to 4 at one time).

Schools should bring back the work-based learning program during the school day and employers must embrace the idea.

The media plays a role and needs to help expose successes in technical careers through a regular schedule of news stories spreading the good word.

**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?**

Need a better way to identify who needs remediation at an earlier age and retain if needed.

Adult learners can share stories with others of how they overcame.

Assign a company mentor to those adult learners already in the workforce.

Give college placement test results to teachers who can assist students prior to test retake.

Clearer expectations from colleges are needed for reading & math skill levels.

Remediation programs need to be in high school.

Utilize volunteers to offer assistance to students to relieve teachers' schedules.

Basic fundamentals of communication skills, math, computer are critical.

Decrease class size to engage and assist students through a smaller learning environment.

Help students see the practical application behind the competencies.

Offer weekend programs at York Tech designed to raise Compass test scores.

High school students often need a refresher, simply because learned the material several years prior, not because they can't do the work.

**Refer to “Profile of the SC Graduate” on your table. How can education and business partner to help our students gain these skills? Are there innovative ideas we should employ?**

- Mandatory course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade for students to learn soft skills, careers, personal finance, public speaking
- Educators need to learn more about the types of businesses in the region and their needs
- Businesses can hold workshops for their employees to review the soft skills their children will need
- Teachers need to focus on adaptability and capacity to change with students
- Teachers should continue utilizing collaboration and teamwork in the classroom
- Start soft skills at elementary level through character education programs (ie. Franklin Covey)
- Integrate career center courses with advanced core classes
- Teachers should not allow passive learning environments & utilize project based learning & problem solving through logic
- Companies should help our teachers to define the “WOW” factor in the classroom through guest speaking or Junior Achievement
- High schools need to reinvigorate the “career cluster” program and rebrand the Career Centers in high school to get businesses more engaged

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

- Critical thinking and reasoning skills
- Communication – both verbal and written skills
- Desire to learn
- Conflict resolution techniques
- Student are too often not given the opportunity to solve a problem and reach their own conclusion
- Understand there are consequences in a company for not following procedures
- Companies should add mentoring programs for new hires
- Acceptance of company’s culture
- Six Sigma corporate principles can be practiced at K-12 level
- Business volunteers in the classroom can help delineate the needs to students
- Parents need a better understanding of the Work Keys test all students are taking