
Career Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) Meeting Minutes March 17, 2025 - **Corrected**

CALL TO ORDER – Committee Chair, Tim Staffen, called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

MW SOUTHWEST CEAC MEMBERS PRESENT

James Berry (SJC ISD/CTE)
James Callahan (Labor-Trades) [✓]
Cindy Goss (KRESA/CTE)
Jerry Johnson (ISD-Calhoun)
David Maurer (PS-Humphrey Products) [✓]
Rebecca Murphy (BCPS)

Sue Quiter (BACC)
Dustin Scharer (BACC/CTE)
Jim Sertic (PS-Sertic Consulting)
Tim Staffen (CISD/CTE)

[✓] Attended virtually

STAFF PRESENT

Ashley Iovieno (MWSW)
Mac Sully (MWSW)

Kathy Olsen (MWSW)
Debbie Horn (MWSW)

OTHERS PRESENT

Callan Eschenburg (MI-LEO)
Wanda Bigelow (MI-LEO)
Brandon Fuller (MI DTMB) [✓]
Ray Guzman (MI LEO-WD) [✓]

Lisa Smith (KRESA)

MW SOUTHWEST CEAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Lanre Ajayi (GOCC)
Dr Mark Dunneback (KVCC)
LaToy Green (Parent)
Kevin Lavender (KVCC)
Sarah Mansberger (KRESA ISD)

Brian O'Donnell (PS-Hi-Tech Electric)
Andrea Rainer (Huron Pottawatomi)
Windy Rea (Job Corps)
Ken Willcutt (Labor-Plumbers & Pipefitters
& HVACR Local Union 357)

INTRODUCTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Individuals who attended in person and virtually introduced themselves and the agency/company they represented.

ELECTION OF CHAIR and VICE-CHAIR for 2025

Motion by Dustin Scharer and supported by Jim Sertic to elect Tim Staffen as CEAC Chair and Jim Berry as CEAC Vice-Chair for the 2025 Calendar year. Motion carried.

MINUTES (Exhibit A)

Motion by James Sertic and supported by Sue Quiter to approve the December 2, 2024, CEAC meeting minutes. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION/PROGRAM

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Workforce Development

Callan Eschenburg and Wanda Bigelow presented information regarding the Michigan Apprenticeship Readiness Certificate (MARC), aka Making the MARC. Highlights included the following:

- The goal is to bring structure, endorse, and add validity to the Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs).
- Level I – Confirms readiness to enter RAPs in a specified industry sector and must align with USDOL Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 23-23 quality criteria.
- Level II – Confirms readiness to enter RAPs in a specified industry sector and occupation. This level recognizes credit towards a portion of related instruction and on-the-job learned training required for RAP standards. It would count as an MDE state-approved credential for any program.
- Building a quality Apprenticeship Readiness Program that includes the five basic quality elements as outlined in the USDOL TEN 23-23.
- Effective outreach that includes strategies that increase RA opportunities for underrepresented or underserved populations facing significant barriers to employment in the RA labor force.
- Endorsement application process – Partners will design and implement AR programs and certificates that meet MARC Level I and/or II criteria.
- Hyperlinks to MARC resources.

Following the meeting, the PowerPoint presentation, as well as information regarding a MARC Webinar on April 1, 2025, and the MEATA Spring Conference opportunity, were sent to the CEAC members.

BUSINESS UPDATES

Humphrey Products—Dave Maurer reported there are renewed efforts to restart the Advanced Manufacturing Career Consortium in Kalamazoo County. An initial focus will be ensuring that the curricula at the new KRESA facility are in synch with local business needs.

MW Southwest Business Services - Ashley Iovieno reported:

- *Going PRO Talent Fund* – The application period for the Employer-Led Collaborative portion of the GPTF grant will open on March 24, 2025, and remain open until the funds are exhausted. The independent applications for FY25 Cycle 2 will open on April 14, 2025, and the application period will close at 5:00 pm on May 2, 2025. The training period will be from July 2025 to June 2026. The Business Solutions Team has scheduled several information sessions, in-person and virtual, which are open to businesses and partners. Information regarding these information sessions is posted on the Michigan Works! Southwest website and was included in the employer newsletter.
- *Healthcare College and Employment Fair* – This event was held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, with 11 representatives from nine colleges and 43 representatives from 17 employers in attendance. At least 50 individuals who attended spoke to ten representatives and were entered into a drawing. The invites for the event included first and second-year nursing students, Medical Assistants, Phlebotomy, and Coding students, CTE students, and the public. Several of the faculty also released their classes to attend the event.
- *Sturgis Career Opportunities Expo* – On Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 11th and 12th-grade students from Sturgis High School attended the Sturgis Career Opportunities Expo and met with employers to learn more about each company. In the afternoon, this event transitioned into a career fair, and approximately 30 individuals from the community attended. Some employers left the event with potential new hires. Michigan Works! Southwest was a sponsor of this event.
- *MiCareerQuest St. Joseph County* - Planning is underway for MiCareerQuest™ St. Joseph County, which will take place on May 6, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Individuals interested in volunteering and employers interested in participating should contact Ms. Iovieno at Iovieno@upjohn.org.

EDUCATION UPDATES

Secondary Education

Branch Area ISD – Dustin Scharer reported on the Branch Area Career Center and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) that included the following:

- Business Professionals of America (BPA) – Students competed in the state competition.
- ProStart – Students in this culinary-focused CTE program competed in the state competition.
- SkillsUSA – Students competed in the regional competition, and 18 students qualified for the state competition that will be held in April.
- Michigan Industrial and Technology Education Society (MITES) – Students will compete in the MITES regional competition in late April, and the state competition is in May.
- Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) – Students competed in the regional competition, and nine of the students will go to the state competition in mid-April.
- Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) – Five students competed in the state competition.
- Future Farmers of America (FFA) – Students competed in the Michigan State and Green and White Swine/Hog Show.
- The follow-up survey of CTE Completers resulted in a 97% completion rate.
- Due to low math scores, Branch ISD is part of a regional improvement plan. Math consultant Sue Quiter reported she has been working on SAT prep, outlining basic test-taking strategies, and providing resources for preparation.

Battle Creek Public Schools (BCPS) – Rebecca Murphy reported the following:

- Battle Creek Central High School (BCHS) is certified as a Certiport Test Center and teachers are registered as proctors and will take tests this year.
- BCHS is working on an MOU with Grand Valley to align their high school science curriculum so that students will earn a portable credential for Grand Valley.
- A Career Fair is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19, 2025, and over 60 partners will conduct mock interviews and help seniors connect with employers.
- Ms. Murphy also mentioned that transportation is a huge barrier for students, and they have the infrastructure to address this issue.

Kalamazoo RESA (KRESA) – Cindy Goss reported the following:

- The Career Connect grand opening for the public is scheduled for May 22, 2025, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at 3500 Vanrick Drive, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
- CTE enrollment is going well, ~~384~~ 1,017 seats are filled for fall 2025, with over 800 students on the waiting list for the remaining 384 available slots.
- The follow-up survey of CTE completers achieved an 83% completion rate. Results indicate that 97% of students are working, in the military, or engaged in higher learning, and 75% of students are in a field related to the CTE program they completed.
- To improve the survey completion rate, KRESA is implementing Career Pathway Planning. Beginning next school year, every student will have the chance to use Xello and other resources to create a plan of short-term and longer-term next steps after graduation to address their career goals.
- The CTE school counselors have worked hard to develop a robust school counseling plan and have earned the highly regarded Recognized American School Counselor Association Model Program (RAMP) status. It was noted that they are one of only a handful of RAMP-certified school counseling programs in the State.

St. Joseph County ISD (SJCISD) – Jim Berry reported the following:

- MiCareerQuest™ in St. Joseph County will be held on May 6, 2025, at the Doyle Community Center in Sturgis. The goal is to have 60 employers in attendance. All ninth-grade students in the county are invited to attend.
- Dr. Adam Cloutier and Chad Spence both won state awards at the Michigan Career Educational Conference in January from the Michigan Association for Career and Technical Education (MI ACTE). Dr. Cloutier received the Postsecondary Professional of the Year Award, and Chad Spence received the New Teacher of the Year Award.
- The SJCISD CTE Agriscience program competed in the MSU Green and White Swine (Pig) Show and did well.
- Jenny Troyer received the Honorary State Future Farmers of America (FFA) Degree, which is the highest honor for Michigan FFA.
- Ten (10) of 19 CTE Marketing students took top ten honors in Detroit at the State DECA conference.
- Skills-USA Regional Competition - An HVAC student took first place in Electrical, and another student placed third in Welding. Those students will move on to the State competition.
- A former Mendon High School graduate, who is now an electrician with Pfizer, came to the CTE Habitat House along with four other Pfizer volunteers to teach students how to rough in the electricity on the house.
- The CTE HVAC program was invited to the State Capitol and will attend the CTE Showcase on April 29, 2025.
- The new CTE Mobile Lab is progressing, and plans are to be in all middle schools for the 2025-26 school year to work with 7th and 8th-grade students for 40-minute hands-on manufacturing lessons.
- The ISD is also adding a robotic dog.

Calhoun Intermediate School District (CISD) – Tim Staffen reported the following:

- The Calhoun Area Career Center (CACC) held its Student Showcase on March 6, 2025. There were 400 visitors, and at least one school made it a field trip for their students to allow them access to more programs. The most popular choice, based on the exit survey, was the Allied Health programs.
- The CACC had several mid-year resignations and is filling positions in Programming, Construction, Allied Health, and a school counselor.
- The Calhoun ISD has identified a new superintendent, Jerry Johnson, who will assume the role on July 1, 2025.
- The project for K-5 career development, “Crayons to Careers,” was very successful. Moving forward, CISD hopes to increase the number of partnerships to impact additional classrooms next year.
- The CACC partnered with Kellogg Community College (KCC) and its Higher Ed Strategic Investment Grant, focusing on a Pre-K-12 career exploration component. The CISD is hoping to utilize “Crayons to Careers” in this partnership.
- The Calhoun ISD CTE school counselors also earned the highly regarded Recognized American School Counselor Association Model Program (RAMP) status.

Post-Secondary Education

No reports as there were no representatives present from this sector.

Adult Education

Jerry Johnson reported the following:

- Enrollments have increased in most Adult Education programs. However, there has recently been a decline in English as a Second Language (ESL) services. Efforts are being made to reconnect with the population needing ESL services.
- Metrics for the Adult Education programs look good regionally and are showing increases in measurable skills gains and credential attainment.
- Implementation is starting up for Section 107(a) innovative programs.

- Although he is moving into the Superintendent position at Calhoun ISD, Mr. Johnson reported that he will continue to represent Adult Education on the CEAC.

MI Job Corps

No report.

OTHER UPDATES - EVENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jim Sertic mentioned keeping an eye on CTE budgets, as there is some confusion about whether this funding will be reduced.

Lisa Smith reported that the CTE building will be utilized for the Career Now program during the summer and after-hours for healthcare and skilled trades for training by employers and KRESA.

Tim Staffen reported that WMU is a possibility to assume the fiduciary role for Southwest Michigan Regional STEM.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT CEAC MEETING

The next CEAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 12, 2025, at the Upjohn Institute, 300 S. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Members were encouraged to attend in person; however, if needed, a virtual link will also be available.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Olsen, CEAC staff support

Tim Staffen, Chair CEAC