



MINUTES

Education Summit

Chamber Community Room

April 19, 2007

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Present: Sallye Darmstadter, Dr. Larry Phillips, Dr. Eric Wright, Royce Garrett, Bonnie Denmon, Bobbie Davis, Jim Brody, Jim Lovelady, Mary Ann Whiteker, Jane Ainsworth, Dr. Charles Kent, Jim Watkins, Leon Manning, Roy Knight, Peggy Muckelroy, Ralph Marshall, Don Mulbach, Brent Hawkins, Heather Kartye, Jerry Huffman, Susie Cardwell

Jim Brody, Chamber Board Chairman, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He asked those present to introduce themselves.

Jerry Huffman, Chamber President, explained a little history of the Chamber's involvement in education activity and indicated the purpose of the meeting was to outline a plan for future involvement, based on the Vision 2020 plan.

Items discussed included:

- **Business/School Partnerships**

- Roy Knight suggested that there be a link from the Chamber's website to each of the school districts' websites.
- Jane Ainsworth suggested that summer programs be set in place that allows students the opportunity to job shadow or intern with local businesses.
- Certificate of Employability issued to students completing specific work/intern qualifications.
- Last three weeks of senior year in high school students intern with a local business and make a presentation on their experience.
- Workforce Solutions (Contact: Angela Cristwell) has a summer work program available currently for disadvantaged youth.
- Mentoring Programs
 - Huntington ISD is currently coordinating a program that includes internal and external mentors.
 - Retirees could be a source for mentors.
 - Dr. Charles Kent discussed the mentor program he is currently putting together. He has met with representatives from each of the schools as to what their needs will be. Tara Watson has agreed to assist with marketing. The Chamber will also be needed to help disseminate the information to the business community.
 - Mentors for occupations would mean providing an "interest inventory" on each student and pairing them with a mentor in a career that is applicable to the student's "interest inventory".
 - It was suggested that the Chamber take a look at what other Chambers of Commerce's are doing with business/school partnerships.

- **Academic Achievement Recognition**

- Local businesses could sponsor an awards dinner for superior students and scholarships could be a part of that. For example, Lockheed-Martin could sponsor the "Pre-Engineering Award."

- The Chamber's Science & Technology Fair could focus more on those students that genuinely have an interest in that field and match them to a business person in the student's area of interest.
- The comment was made that the students "in the middle"—not in the 20%, etc., need to be the focus of recognition—possibly a role model, an influential speaker, etc.
- "People skills" need to be better developed for all students. For example, their ability to interface with adults.
- Students that excel in a specific area in school could be paired with a mentor in that field.
- "Globe Scholars" or "Texas Scholars," which are students that graduate on the "Recommended Plan," should be recognized.
 - Evening ceremony where hamburgers are served.
 - Those students would have the first opportunity to interview for internships/jobs with local employers.
- **Multi-Institutional Teaching Center (MITC)**
 - Dr. Larry Phillips discussed an 8-week summer program that could consist of 900 students in which local businesses could cover the cost of the first semester of college up to \$500 for the student.
 - A university would need to commit to the project and Angelina College could take the responsibility.
 - 10-15 classrooms equipped with distance learning capabilities would be needed.
 - The program could actually begin before a facility is constructed.
 - It would cost approximately \$4 million to construct a suitable facility.
 - Mary Ann Whiteker suggested that an "Academy Center" be created in Angelina County for all school districts.
 - Many large school districts in the State of Texas have already created their own, including Wunsche High School in Spring, Coppell High School, and Conroe High School.
 - Vocational programs from all schools districts could be pooled and classes taught at Angelina College.
 - Students would be able to graduate high school with a certification.
 - Mentors could go directly into the academy to mentor students.
 - A bond could potentially be passed county-wide to help fund the program.
 - Buses could transport students from schools to the academy.
 - Students would receive dual credits for the courses.
- **Teachers of the Year Program**
 - Bobbie Davis informed the group about the program Longview and Henderson put on for their teachers.
 - They held a community fundraiser. The funds went into teacher mini-grants.
 - The students nominated the teachers and read their comments about the teacher to the audience.
- **Additional Comments/Notes**
 - Bonnie Denmon commented that Leadership Lufkin and Leadership Tomorrow need to be utilized more.
 - Comments were made regarding the recruitment and retention of teachers.
 - County-wide sign-on bonuses.
 - No or low closing costs for teachers on houses.
 - Bonus packages
 - New teacher reception/recognition.
 - Peggy Muckelroy commented on a computer program that Workforce Solutions was access to which allows students to see cost of living required to live the lifestyle they would like to have.
 - Jerry Huffman asked the group to consider whether or not a community-wide education summit should be held.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.