HOW TO BUILD STRATEGIC ALLIANCES WITH WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Workforce Development
• Focuses on people to enhance a region’s economic stability
• Essentially a human resources strategy

Economic Development
• Focuses on developing and growing businesses
• Goal is to diversify a region’s/state’s economic base

Talent Focus

Business Focus
Bridging the Divide

Economic Development = Bringing Jobs to People

Workforce Development = Bringing People to Jobs
The Golden Circle

What is your state (or school) doing to...

- Bridge the divide between Economic Development and Workforce Development?
- Align to H3 careers (High Demand, High Skill, High Wage)
- Align with key economic initiatives
- Align to labor market data
- Meet employer expectations
The Journey
Nebraska Department of Education
Career Education
Strategy Design Retreat

September 2 - 4, 2004
Why Career Education?

• Need a workforce prepared for a dynamic future.

• Must start helping kids at an earlier age to explore various career fields.

• We need to change a few mindsets - and take the lead in the nation.

• It’s an inclusive change.
The Mission of Nebraska Career Education

The mission of Nebraska Career Education is to provide an effective and efficient framework that affords all students the opportunity to:

- Learn through career exploration and occupational skill development that meets academic standards,
- Earn as productive citizens in a global society, and
- Live as a contributing member of their community

The Vision for Nebraska Career Education

Nebraska Career Education is a vital part of the total educational system and provides equitable opportunities for all students to experience:

- relevant career exploration and preparation
- rigorous academic knowledge and skill development
- seamless transitions within the education system and into the workplace

Strategic Priorities for Nebraska Career Education

The Strategic Priorities for Nebraska Career Education are as follows:

**Teach**
- Recruit and prepare high quality teachers for Nebraska Career Education
- Explore endorsement options to ensure adequate supply of teachers for new model
- Provide effective professional development to sustain relevance of instruction
- Participate in research to determine best practices

**Deliver**
- Establish a new career field delivery system
- Create the Nebraska Career Management System
- Strengthen secondary/postsecondary transition
- Create new opportunities for special population and nontraditional involvement

**Prove**
- Develop and refine tools for technical skill assessment
- Maintain a credible system of performance measures for career education
- Use accountability data for program planning and improvement
- Connect career education to school improvement initiatives

**Connect**
- Strengthen the relationship between secondary and postsecondary career education
- Support efforts to establish dual credit and alternative delivery for career education
- Establish partnerships with Nebraska business and industry
- Create opportunities for shared resources with Workforce Development and Economic Development

**Promote**
- Develop and market Nebraska Career Education brand
- Market the change in career education
- Develop career exploration and preparation materials for a variety of audiences
- Support inclusion of special populations and nontraditional students
Articulating the Why to Stakeholders

To prepare all Nebraskans to:

**LEARN** through career exploration and occupational skill development while meeting academic standards;

**EARN** as productive citizens in a global society, and

**LIVE** as contributing members of their communities.
Why?

• To maximize the potential of students, schools, and the community.
• To link knowledge and skills to relevant experiences.
• To increase efficiency and effective utilization of personnel and expertise, and to support optimized coordination.
• To provide support for seamless transitions for students as they move from Pre-K through their careers.
2020 Vision Strategic Priorities
The How

• Teach
• Deliver
• Prove
• Connect
• Promote
Articulating the How to Stakeholders

Nebraska Career Fields & Clusters

- Marketing, Sales, & Service
  - Buying & Merchandising
  - Distribution & Logistics
  - e-Marketing
  - Management & Entrepreneurship
  - Marketing Communications & Promotion
  - Marketing Information Management & Research
  - Professional Sales & Marketing

- Business Mgmt. & Administration
  - Administrative Information Support
  - Business Analysis
  - Business Financial Management & Accounting
  - Human Resources
  - Marketing

- Hospitality & Tourism
  - Lodging
  - Recreation, Amusements, & Attractions
  - Restaurants & Food/ Beverage Services
  - Travel & Tourism

- Law, Public Safety, & Security
  - Correction Services
  - Emergency & Fire Management Services
  - Law Enforcement Services
  - Legal Services
  - Security & Protective Services

- Government & Public Administration
  - Foreign Service
  - Governance
  - National Security & Planning
  - Public & Nonprofit Mgmt. & Administration
  - Regulation
  - Revenue & Taxation

- Education & Training
  - Administration & Administrative Support
  - Professional Support Services
  - Teaching & Training

- Health Sciences
  - Biotechnology Research & Development
  - Diagnostic Services
  - Health Informatics
  - Support Services
  - Therapeutic Services

- Environmental & Agricultural Systems
  - Agricultural Systems
  - Animal Systems
  - Environmental Service Systems
  - Food Products & Processing Systems
  - Natural Resources Systems
  - Plant Systems
  - Power, Structural, & Technical Systems

- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
  - Audio & Video Technologies
  - Journalism & Broadcasting
  - Performing Arts
  - Printing Technologies
  - Telecommunications Technologies
  - Visual Arts

- Information Technology
  - Information Support & Services
  - Interactive Media
  - Network Systems
  - Programming & Software Development

- Architecture & Construction
  - Construction
  - Design & Pre-construction
  - Maintenance & Operation

- Science, Technology, Engineering, & Technology
  - Engineering & Technology
  - Science & Math
    - Investigative, Informational, & Educational

- Manufacturing
  - Health, Safety, & Environmental Assurance
  - Logistics & Inventory Control
  - Maintenance, Installation, & Repair
  - Manufacturing Production
  - Process Development
  - Production
  - Quality Assurance

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Why?
# Changing Face of Rural Economic Development Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Nontraditional</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial recruitment</td>
<td>Small Business Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>Regional Center</td>
<td>Cluster-based</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bedroom Community</td>
<td>Innovation and Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amenity-based</td>
<td>Creative Class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Department of Economic Development
Industry Cluster Initiative
Nebraska’s primary industry clusters driving the state’s economic base

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Strengths</th>
<th>Emerging Strengths or Opportunities</th>
<th>Retention Targets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Industry Clusters</td>
<td>Finishing Services</td>
<td>Specialized, but Challenged in Employment and Competitive Share</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Services</td>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Distribution Logistics</td>
<td>Agriculture &amp; Food Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision Metals Mfg.</td>
<td>Renewable Energy</td>
<td>Business Management &amp; Admin. Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Industry Clusters</td>
<td>Precision Metals Mfg.</td>
<td>Software &amp; IT Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging Strengths or Opportunities</td>
<td>Renewable Energy</td>
<td>Agricultural Machinery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Specialized, Growing and Outpacing National Growth</td>
<td>- Not Specialized, Growing in Employment and may be Gaining Competitive Share</td>
<td>- Specialized, but Challenged in Employment and Competitive Share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Financial Services</td>
<td>- R&amp;D &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>- Agriculture &amp; Food Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Distribution Logistics</td>
<td>- Health Services</td>
<td>- Business Management &amp; Admin. Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Precision Metals Mfg.</td>
<td>- Hospitality &amp; Tourism</td>
<td>- Software &amp; IT Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Renewable Energy</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Agricultural Machinery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Industry Cluster Initiative

Objectives:

– Addressing common needs of firms in a cluster from workforce development to technical assistance to market access
– Better organizing and focusing state economic development services to advance competitive industries
– Enabling more broad-based initiatives to engage colleges and universities to address industry needs and opportunities
Industry Cluster Initiative

- Organize and manage industry councils.
- Find key private sector individuals to lead industry councils.
- Councils serve as primary resources to communicate private sector needs for industries to stabilize, grow and innovate.
- Goal - move industry sector up the value curve for increased value of goods/services produced & increased need for specialized and skilled labor.

Transportation, Logistics
Manufacturing
Information Technology
Bio Fuels/Solutions
Food Processing Value added ag
• Cluster managers will be the primary communication and connecting point between the industry councils and government agencies such as NDED, NDOL, NDE, universities, colleges etc.
Nebraska Industry Councils

Employer Voice on Workforce Issues

Logistics, Manufacturing, Bio-Science, Finance/Insurance, Information Technology and Health Services

Program Stakeholders

Education

Labor Market Analysis

Partner Council

CTE, ABE, TANF, VR, MSF, SNAP, SCSE, HUD, WIA, W/P, TAA, Postsecondary Ed, Veterans, Corrections, Juvenile Justice, etc.
Partner Councils

• **Mission** – Convene & strengthen cross-agency partnerships

• **Purposes**
  – Skill gap solutions
  – Resource solutions
  – Work readiness solutions
  – Innovative workforce solutions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Agency</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Nebraska Department of Education | • Career Technical Education  
• Adult Basic Education  
• Vocational Rehabilitation |
| Nebraska Department of Economic Development | • HUD  
• Nebraska Advantage Training |
| Nebraska Health and Human Services | • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families  
• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
• Senior Community Services Employment Program |
| Proteus, Inc. | • Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program |
| Nebraska Community College Association | • Community Colleges (6) |
| Indian Center, Inc. | • Native American Program |
| American Business Corporation | • Job Corps |
| US DOL Apprenticeship Program |  
| Nebraska Department of Labor | • Wagner Peyser  
• WIA  
• Veterans  
• Trade Adjustment Assistance  
• Unemployment Insurance  
• Worker Training  
• Rapid Response  
• Labor Market Information |
Pathways to Prosperity

• The challenges:
  – The idea of the “forgotten half”
  – A more demanding labor market
  – Widening skills & opportunity gap
  – Setting the right target

Pathways to Prosperity

• By 2018, Nebraska expected to have 1.1 million jobs.
  – Of these jobs, 66% will require some type of postsecondary education.
  – However, only 29% will require a 4-year degree or higher, while 37% will require an Associate’s Degree or some college.

Potential Solutions

1. Promoting World-class CTE
2. Providing effective career counseling
3. Expanding work-based learning
4. Forging business-education partnerships
Bridging the Divide

Economic Development = Bringing Jobs to People

Workforce Development = Bringing People to Jobs

Nebraska Career Education System

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Nebraska Career Education System
Rigorous and Relevant Career Education

• Nebraska Career Education is:
  – Aligning to H3 careers (High Demand, High Skill, High Wage)
  – Aligning with Nebraska economic initiatives (Battelle Study)
  – Aligning to labor market data
  – Meeting employer expectations
Career Education Standards & Programs of Study

- Course standards developed at the cluster and pathway level
- Alignment between secondary and postsecondary Programs of Study
- Crosswalked to the Nebraska State Core Academic Standards
Utilize data to align CTE with workforce and economic projections
Develop talent pipelines for economic growth and workforce development
Align high school CTE programs with postsecondary education entrance expectations
Provide opportunities for students to obtain industry certifications/credentials
Strengthen Career Guidance
reVISION

Establishing a clear vision for Nebraska Career Education.

Part 1: School's Assessment of Current Career Education Programs
Part 2: Meeting Facilitated by Nebraska Career Education Staff
Part 3: Community Engagement Meeting #1
Part 4: Meeting Facilitated by Nebraska Career Education Staff
Part 5: Community Engagement Meeting #2
Part 6: Meeting Facilitated by Nebraska Career Education Staff
Career Academies
Career Centers

NDE Rule on Career Academies under development

Career Center Conversations
- Lincoln, Omaha, Columbus, Rural Pilot
World-Class Career Technical Education

- Multiple Delivery Methods
  - Career Academies/Career Centers
- Innovative Instruction
  - Problem-based/Project-based learning
- Extended Learning
  - Career Student Organizations
  - Work-based learning
- Blended Courses
  - Core academic credit for CTE courses
Course 1: Food Production, Nutrition & Health (2013-14)
Course 2: Food Science (2014-2015)
Course 4: Food and Nutrition Science Research & Development (2015-2016)
• Designed to provide students with a clear link between high school and growing career areas.
• Four, project-based courses in the career areas of Food Science and Nutrition Science
• Industry and university representatives identified the complex and authentic projects that will be used to teach the technical content
• High levels of technical and academic rigor
• Partners: NDE, UNL, ConAgra Foods, and SREB
Nebraska Standards for Career Ready Practice

K-14 Professional Development

New Toolkit

Self-Evaluation on Nebraska Career Connections

Endorsement by NE Workforce Investment Board

Departments of Labor and Economic Development and Vocational Rehabilitation collaboration
Collaboration Initiatives with NE Departments of Labor and Economic Development

- Industry Councils
- Career Readiness Modules
- Teacher Effectiveness Modules
- H3 Website
- NE Learns State-Wide Workshops

http://nelearn.nebraska.gov/
H3 Website
http://h3.ne.gov/H3/

• Real-time information on Nebraska’s “Hot Jobs” – high skill, high wage, high demand occupations
• Workforce projections by economic industries and career clusters
• Great resource for educators, economic developers, students, parents, community leaders and career seekers
Career Readiness Modules
Teacher Effectiveness Modules

http://nelearn.nebraska.gov/

• Designed for employers, career seekers, parents, educators, students, and professionals.
• Focuses on knowledge and skills important for success in both classroom and workplace settings.
• Moodle-based modules produced by NET Interactive and Educational Media
Career Readiness Modules Table of Contents

Career Readiness Modules are constructed in Module and are accessible at http://nelearn.nebraska.gov/.

Module 1—SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
1. Overview
2. Identifying Interests and Aptitudes
3. Researching Companies and Job Openings
4. Networking: What is it?
5. Networking: Online and In Person
6. Job Prep Self-Check
7. Applying for a Job
8. Creating a Resume: Overall Tips
9. Creating a Resume: Detailed Scenarios
10. Writing a Cover Letter
11. Designing a Portfolio
12. Applying for a Job Self-Check
13. Interpersonal Skills: Preparing
14. Interpersonal Skills: On the Phone
15. Interpersonal Skills: Face-to-Face
16. Interpersonal Skills: What to Wear
17. Interpersonal Skills: You and the Employer
18. Interpersonal Skills: Following Up
19. Interpersonal Skills: Self-Check

Module 2—WORKPLACE SUCCESS
1. Overview
2. Defining Success
3. Competing with the Rules
4. Meeting Expectations
5. Skills for Success
6. Commitment to Success
7. Responsibility
8. Networking
9. Successful Habits Self-Check

Module 3—COMMUNICATION
1. Overview
2. Business Conversations
3. Constructive Communication
4. Constructive Communication: Questions & Answers
5. Business Conversations Self-Check
6. Face-to-Face Communication
7. Nonverbal Messages: Tone
9. Nonverbal Messages: Body Language and Emotions
11. Oral and Written Communication: Self-Check
12. Oral and Written Communication: Phone Etiquette
13. Oral and Written Communication: Special Features of Phone Calls
14. Oral and Written Communication: Email
15. Oral and Written Communication: Email Etiquette
16. Oral and Written Communication: Formal Documents
17. Oral and Written Communication: Word Choice and Format
18. Oral and Written Communication: Self-Check

Module 4—PRESENTATIONS
1. Overview
2. Preparation Research
3. Preparation Organization
4. Preparation Organizing
5. Preparation Engaging an Audience
6. Preparation Delivering
7. Preparation Practice, Practice, Practice!
8. Preparation Self-Check
9. The Event: What to Do and What Not to Do
10. The Event: What to Wear
11. The Event: What to Bring
12. The Event: What to Say
13. The Event: What to Use
14. The Event: What to Check
15. The Event: What to Do during the Event

Module 5—CONFLICT RESOLUTION
1. Overview
2. Different Styles - Different Conflicts
3. Conflicts and Styles Self-Check
4. Respect
5. Active Listening
6. What's Going On?
7. Conflict Can Be a Good Thing
8. Reaching a Resolution: Preparation
9. Reaching a Resolution: Right Before the Meeting
10. Reaching a Resolution: The Meeting
11. Reaching a Resolution Self-Check

Module 6—DECISION MAKING
1. Overview
2. Take Time and Care
3. Who Decides?
4. The Need and the Players
5. Research
6. Gearing Up to Decide Self-Check
7. Create Options
8. Evaluate Options: With your Heart
9. Evaluate Options: With your Brain
10. Options Self-Check
11. Decide, Act, and Follow Through

Module 7—TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP
1. Overview
2. Teams, Leaders, and Managers
3. Intrapersuades
4. What Makes a Good Leader?
5. Leadership Self-Check
6. The Whole Picture
7. Running Meetings
8. Communications: Consensus and Conflict
9. Brainstorming
10. Embracing Change
11. Teamwork Self-Check

Module 8—WORKPLACE ETHICS
1. Overview
2. Following Laws and Workplace Codes
3. Specific Issues
4. The Special Case of Theft
5. Your Ethics Self-Check
6. Implications and Consequences
7. Conflicts with Company Ethics
8. Dealing with Unethical Behavior
9. Respect on All Levels
10. Owning Your Actions
11. Behaving Ethically Self-Check

Module 9—SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AWARENESS
1. Overview
2. Social Awareness
3. Dining Etiquette
4. Social Awareness Self-Check
5. What is Culture?
6. Cultural Groups
7. Stereotypes & Generalizations
8. Cultural Awareness
9. Promote Intercultural Communication
10. Cultural Awareness Self-Check
11. Fight Harassment

Module 10—FINANCIAL WELLBEING
1. Overview
2. Managing Credit
3. Wise Consumer Choices
4. Credit Card Issues
5. Credit Card Tips
6. Identity Theft
7. Credit Report
8. Credit Self-Check
9. Financial Goals
10. Personal Budget
11. Lifestyle, Insurance and Taxes
12. Financial Wellbeing Tips
13. Financial Wellbeing Self-Check

Module 11—PERSONAL WELLBEING
1. Overview
2. The Wellbeing Wheel
3. Personal Wellbeing Plan
4. Body: Nutrition and Diet
5. Body: Fitness and Exercise
6. Body Self-Check
7. Mind: Cultural Health
8. Mind: Intellectual Health
9. Mind: Social Health
10. Mind: Emotional Health
11. Mind: Seeking Health When You Need It
12. Mind: Self-Check
13. Life: Balancing Home and Work

RESOURCES
1. How to Use This Course
2. Useful Resources and References
3. Contact Us and Site Credits

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Produced by NET Interactive and Educational Media through a Workforce Innovation Act (WIA) incentive grant.
NEBRASKA STANDARDS FOR

career ready practice

The Nebraska Standards for Career Ready Practice addressed in each of the Career Readiness Modules are noted below. Career Readiness Modules are constructed in Moodle and are accessible at http://nelearn.nebraska.gov/.

MODULE 1. SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
1. Applies appropriate academic and technical skills.
2. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.
6. Utilizes technology.

MODULE 2. WORKPLACE SUCCESS
1. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
2. Contributes to employer and community success.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Models ethical leadership and effective management.
6. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.
7. Utilizes technology.

MODULE 3. COMMUNICATION
1. Applies appropriate academic and technical skills.
2. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
3. Models ethical leadership and effective management.
4. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.
5. Utilizes technology.

MODULE 4. PRESENTATIONS
1. Applies appropriate academic and technical skills.
2. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
3. Contributes to employer and community success.
4. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
5. Uses critical thinking.
6. Demonstrates innovation and creativity.
7. Utilizes technology.

MODULE 5. CONFLICT RESOLUTION
1. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
2. Contributes to employer and community success.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Demonstrates innovation and creativity.
6. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.

MODULE 6. DECISION MAKING
1. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
2. Contributes to employer and community success.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Demonstrates innovation and creativity.
6. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.

MODULE 7. TEAMWORK & LEADERSHIP
1. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
2. Contributes to employer and community success.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Models ethical leadership and effective management.
6. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.

MODULE 8. WORKPLACE ETHICS
1. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
2. Contributes to employer and community success.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Models ethical leadership and effective management.
6. Utilizes technology.

MODULE 9. SOCIAL & CULTURAL AWARENESS
1. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
2. Contributes to employer and community success.
3. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
4. Uses critical thinking.
5. Models ethical leadership and effective management.
6. Works productively in teams and demonstrates cultural competency.

MODULE 10. FINANCIAL WELLBEING
1. Contributes to employer and community success.
2. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
3. Uses critical thinking.
4. Utilizes technology.
5. Attends to personal and financial well-being.

MODULE 11. PERSONAL WELLBEING
1. Contributes to employer and community success.
2. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them.
3. Uses critical thinking.
4. Attends to personal and financial well-being.

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Produced by RTI Interactive and Educational/Nebraska through a U.S. Department of Education Impact Grant
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This project was funded through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, administered through the Nebraska Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the United States Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NCE

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

-learning.org for Nebraska

CTE
Nebraska Career Education System
Rethinking Work-Based Learning

• Expand and improve opportunities for work-based learning
  – Expand job shadowing, internships, connections to business
  – Develop virtual tours of Nebraska businesses
  – Teacher and counselor externships

• Engage Nebraska businesses and communities

• Partner with state and local chambers of commerce
Watch Now

Papillion-La Vista Public Schools believe in giving their students access to 21st century skills. In the Academy programs, high schoolers learn applied science and get a behind the scenes look at a variety of career options they may not have considered.  

On-The-Job In A Most Unique Way

http://nelovesps.org/watchnow?TN=PROJECT-20110619100633
World-class Workforce

Nebraska business leaders have traditionally bragged about the exceptional quality and work ethic of the average Nebraska worker. Data comparing gross domestic product per capita clearly supports this employer belief, with Nebraska's GDP per worker well in excess of the national average.

By definition, Nebraska has enjoyed full employment for much of the past decade, averaging less than 4% unemployment. Unfortunately, this low unemployment rate has resulted in worker shortages across the state, especially in the skills and trades areas. Nebraska employers are increasingly reporting difficulty filling positions at all levels, some companies are even choosing to grow operations in locations outside of Nebraska as a result of this limited workforce.

To maintain its competitive edge, Nebraska must possess a readily-available workforce that enjoys strong skills, an eagerness to learn and a passion for success. Aggressive statewide efforts must be made to substantially grow the number of high-quality workers in the state. Long-term, Nebraska students must be given the chance to learn about opportunities in various career fields through career exploration and hands-on learning. Similarly, students must be given real-world work experiences that solidify their career choices and lead them to Nebraska career opportunities. Without aggressive strategies to grow and equip the future workforce, Nebraska's economic future will be limited.

Ideas

48. Establish a coordinated statewide focus on career academies to assure that high school students explore and learn about career and post-secondary educational opportunities before they graduate. Academies allow students to choose a focused educational path that offers employment skills, career readiness and successful higher education outcomes.

49. Reemphasize the role of community colleges in preparing students for careers in skilled and technical areas.

50. Create regional vocational tech high schools linked directly to community colleges for skills training and obtaining academic credit.

51. Conduct a review of all K-12 and higher education curriculums with input from private sector human resource professionals to determine that curriculums support Nebraska's private sector job opportunities.

52. Enhance job training and education programs to assure an available and highly-skilled workforce for Nebraska's manufacturers.

53. Highly encourage all higher education students to complete a for-credit internship/practicum in their field of study prior to graduation. Encourage businesses to participate through continuation of the Nebraska Intern Program. Use a catchy marketing campaign like "Brain Retain" and add a "Monster.com" website where employers could link up with college students.

“Workforce education needs to be flexible and meet the needs and wants of business first, and the needs of the delivering institution second. Community colleges need to go the extra mile and deliver innovative services in a timely fashion.”

~ Jason Stratman
Western Nebraska Community College
Cultivate Our Education System

Nebraska’s economic foundation is closely tied to the existence of a strong education system that generates the workforce, business owners and leaders of the future. Historically, Nebraska has held the success of its public schools in high regard. Students from Nebraska, for example, routinely score well above national averages on tests like the ACT. However, like other aspects of modern life, education faces unique challenges in assuring a talent pool that can compete in the global marketplace.

Changes in family and economic structure have placed an increased emphasis on the importance of early childhood education. K-12 schools must routinely balance the demands of teaching a growing curriculum and an increased emphasis on outcome measurement while also addressing social and cultural erosion in the classroom. Higher education (community colleges, colleges and universities) must continually reevaluate their curriculums to assure they meet the needs of an ever-changing employment market for graduates.

Nebraska’s commitment to a strong public education system does not come without a cost, as education funding is a major component of the state’s budget and is also a major factor in local property tax rates. In recent years, the increasing tax support requested for education has consistently exceeded the average increase in the cost of living. Every year, the level of funding required to support education at all levels is a point of legislative debate while taxpayers increasingly demand transparency within the education system, particularly related to outcomes.

To leverage future economic success, Nebraska must continually cultivate a dynamic education system. This dynamic system will require a focus on educational quality and outcomes. Costs will need to be controlled by cooperatively establishing priorities and making strategic investments. Educators need the freedom to adopt new teaching methods and to encourage life-long learning. Success of our dynamic education system will offer opportunities for enhanced economic growth across the State.

Ideas

32. Nebraska needs to place more importance on high quality early child care and education for improved economic development and quality of life. Early childhood education is one of the most efficient ways to improve quality of life, stimulate long-term economic opportunities, increase the number of good jobs and improve education.

33. Create a public school teacher pay structure that is performance-based, with flexibility to offer higher levels of funding to teachers working in historically low performing schools, as well as teachers in difficult to fill subjects.

34. Eliminate tenure for new hires in the higher education system.

35. Assure a more reasonable teacher certification process for non-traditional educators (i.e. retirees, business professionals, etc).

45. Nebraska should work to better coordinate curriculum and degrees among community colleges.

46. Incorporate basic budgeting and finance skills such as balancing a checkbook, basic accounting and financial investing into required curriculum for all graduating students. Too many students are graduating not knowing how to do these basic skills, which are a given part of day-to-day life.

47. Intentionally and strategically incorporate entrepreneurship awareness and exploration into Nebraska’s elementary, middle and secondary school academic and career technical education curricula to help forge a bond between youth and their communities and the state.

“This is a time when our higher educational institutions can be innovative in how they deliver education, and shape the skills of students and the existing workforce. Growing the talent pool through education will assure Nebraska’s future growth.”

~ James Linder, MD
University of Nebraska
SkillsUSA: Working to Ensure America Has a Skilled Workforce.

http://nelovesps.org/watchnow?TN=PROJECT-20120514050439
We need to equip students with the right knowledge, skills and direction to prepare them for life.

We need to give them the tools and experiences to align their passion, aptitude and skills to seek the right postsecondary education to prepare them for their chosen career path.

We need to prepare them for THEIR future, not OUR past.
Thank you for your time.

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