



Career and Educational Advisory Council Agenda
215 Straight Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI
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Meeting ID: 213 500 461 959 82 Passcode: fG9dr7q4
5/15/2026

- I. Introductions
- II. Purpose of the committee
To assist the WDB in facilitating and building a collaborative partnership between employers, labor, workforce development advocates, local school districts, postsecondary institutions, and training centers to identify and collectively develop and implement training strategies that effectively address Michigan employers' talent needs.
- III. Review Previous Meeting Notes & Action Items
February 2026 Meeting Minutes **Action Item**
- IV. Regional Grant Updates – new/potential/updates **Information Item**
- V. Regional Adult Education Update **Information Item**
- VI. CTE Updates **Information Item**
- VII. Michigan Works Updates **Information Item**
- VIII. CEAC Metric Updates **Information Item**
- IX. Any other Council Member Activities/Initiatives **Information Item**
- X. Next Meeting Date:
 - September 25, 2026



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Meeting ID: 284 278 951 805 31 Passcode: pJ3x8ic6

2/20/2026

Minutes

CEAC Members Present: Tonia Castillo (Chairperson), Pay Walstra (Vice-Chairperson), Samantha Zentner, Joe Tenbusch, Jacquie Rehkopf, Joe Lienesch, Bernard Brown, Dan TenHoopen, Shelbee Axom-Anderson, Chauncy Williams

CEAC Members Absent: Rich Franklin, Ted Paton, Kim Call, Lisa Hungerford, Mike O'Connor, Joe Matthews, Ginger Rohwer

West Michigan Works! (WMW) Staff Present: Angie Barksdale, Tasha Evans, Amy Lebednick, Karrie Brown, Chad Patton, Dane Sanders

Guests Present: Lisa Seigel (MiSTEM Region 7), Chris Stafford, Carol Davis, Eric Greene, Mike Eichberger, Kandy Lazell (Virtual)

I. Call to order at 9:32am by Chairperson Tonia Castillo. Tonia requested introductions from those in attendance.

II. Purpose of the committee

To assist the WDB in facilitating and building a collaborative partnership between employers, labor, workforce development advocates, local school districts, postsecondary institutions, and training centers to identify and collectively develop and implement training strategies that effectively address Michigan employers' talent needs.

III. Review Previous Meeting Notes & Action Items

September 2025 Meeting Minutes

Action Item

Tonia requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes

Motion – Dan TenHoopen

Second – Pat Walstra

Meeting minutes approved by vote – Motion carried

IV. Regional Grant Updates – new/potential/updates

No discussion occurred.

Information Item

V. MiSTEM Update

Information Item

Lisa Siegel relayed that MiSTEM was not included in state school aid budget for fiscal year 2026.

Current advisory committee has worked to get corporate donations and philanthropic dollars to keep the MiSTEM network in place until September 30th.

VI. Regional Adult Education Update

Information Item

Pat Walstra discussed Adult Education Funding, mainly through WIOA. Section 107 experienced nineteen percent decrease in funding.

107 special programs funding is a partnership between adult education providers, local career tech centers, and Michigan Works!. Region 4, Muskegon ISD, Ottawa ISD, Allegan ISD, and Kent ISD, has four of the eleven grants in the State. Students are actively working towards high school diploma, GED, and workplace readiness. They are taking classes at local career tech centers.

107A Adult Education Innovation Grant, 11 of 15 Adult Education providers sign on along with partnerships from The Literacy Center of West Michigan, Read Muskegon, Ottawa Area ISD, Grand Rapids Community College and West Michigan Works!. One thing done from this grant is short term micro credentials. Another is contextualizing GED courses. The adult student is able to work on mathematics, pick an area of interest that is applicable to the GED and also learn it for a particular career.

High flex learning labs are able to stream course work to institutions that do not have a specific program allowing students in an area to learn despite not having that specific material at their location.

Project elevate

VII. CTE Updates

Information Item

Jacquie Rehkopf discussed that currently are in the CLNA, comprehensive local needs assessment, it is biennial. Intended to inform Perkins Grant.

61b expansion grant requires expansion at middle and high school level to engage in conversation with CPED at local districts.

Ottawa has five or six districts putting in for the MEERA labs in middle schools.

Ottawa has started a fire program where students receive a Fire 1 or Fire 2 certificate. Also started a surgical tech program at the Careerline Tech Center. In the coming year will be starting HVAC program.

Local districts are looking to go the early middle college route and looking to blend CTE and early middle college. Looking to establish ISD level MEERA advisory board with a variety of local manufacturers.

Joe Tenbusch relayed no new programs this year, looking to apply for 61B for five schools for MEERA next year. Instituting a PAES Lab, practical assessment exploration system, for students to transition to that with an IEP where we will have a lab where it is practical experience for different jobs, then place students in those experiences during their junior or senior year.

Joe Liensch discussed a new CTE center is in the works for Kent County. Planning on completion around Fall of 2028, serves additional 500 and potentially up to 1,000 students.

Developing local district CTE programs. Submitted 19 new programs, 13 have gone through the approval process.

Internally looking at early middle college programs, general associates in both IT and engineering.

Working with GRCC and having students choose a major or a career path with pursuing general associates degrees.

CLNA – reconfirmed growth in certain areas: manufacturing, health, transportation and logistics.

Entertainment is growing in Grand Rapids, how does that translate to hospitality careers?

4-5 school districts applying for MEERA.

Bernard Brown relayed that last year Muskegon added seven programs, added three additional programs this year in HVAC, airframe technician, and community health worker.

Muskegon public has early middle college approved for education allowing education students to go to MCC for their 13th year. MSU has given the students a two year direct connection from MCC so three years after graduation they will have a bachelor's degree.

Many students qualify for grants and scholarships and have a free two years with MSU.

In relation to 61B, Muskegon has a minimum of eight middle schools going for either manufacturing pathway or IT pathway. Muskegon had four high schools with CTE program last year, will have ten programs by the Fall of this year.

Muskegon has four adult education programs and Goodwill in the area has three additional adult education programs for a total of seven in Muskegon.

VIII. Michigan Works Updates

Information Item

Chad Patton relayed that MiCareerQuest is on May 20th, 2026, still looking for volunteers.

Spots available for Sessions one and three.

Ascend program is opening summer career readiness in April. 16-24 year olds interested in a paid work experience that is 6 weeks long.

Amy Lebednick discussed launching career exploration events website that helps students, teachers, and guardians to show career exploration events hosted by partners and schools.

joficareerevents.org

National apprenticeship week is April 26th through May 2nd.

Discover Manufacturing and Agribusiness Talent Council have scholarships for graduated high school seniors or adults looking to take college courses or in college pursuing a degree in agribusiness.

Karrie Brown relayed that Future Rounds is happening Wednesday, March 18 from 5-7pm at Kent Career Tech Center. It is open to parents and students to explore health careers following a patient through the path of care and seeing how different occupations tie into that care. Explore Hospitality is currently working on identifying their first career exploration projects (outside of MiCQ) and are considering modeling Future Rounds but to follow an event relevant to students, like planning their high school open house, to see how different hospitality industry sectors are involved and highlight as many industry occupations as possible. It could be piloted in the 2026-27 school year, depending on planning.

Angie Barksdale discussed that at the federal level it is unlikely for WIOA reauthorization bill until November election. The continuing resolution has budgeted funding through September 30th. WIOA has bipartisan support. At the local level, Congresswoman Scholten introduced bill for vocational education.

Watching the Governor's budget closely along with the happenings at the federal and state level around apprenticeship dollars.

IX. CEAC Metric Updates

Information Item

Amy Lebednick relayed that registered apprenticeships are currently at 63 occupations.

Karrie Brown discussed Discover Manufacturing week had a successful 2025 with over three thousand students participated with over one hundred employers and nearly seventy schools involved. Planning for 2026 is underway.

GRCC Future Tech students were able to go on tours.

Chad Patton spoke about connecting Ascend youth with Discover Manufacturing week to contribute to talent tours.

X. Any other Council Member Activities/Initiatives

Information Item

Chris Stafford discussed that Barry County has ten CTE programs and applying for three more.

Eric Greene from Kellogg Community College relayed that they are projecting population and employment growth in Barry County.

Carol Davis discussed that those in Barry County want something local in Barry County for education and keep the youth local as opposed to traveling long distances to an education facility.

Mike Eichberger from Grand Valley State University relayed that in September there is going to be a CTE 101 workshop on the GVSU campus to expose staff to the benefits of CTE and eliminate any stigmas.

Tonia Castillo adjourned the meeting at 11:01am.

XI. Next Meeting Date:

- May 15, 2026

CEAC PERFORMANCE METRICS

5.15.2026

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS

Number of WMW-Sponsored Registered Apprenticeship Occupations: 63

| | Current as of 5/5/2026 | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|
| | Apprentices | | Employers |
| | Completed | Current | Current |
| Construction | 0 | 133 | 20 |
| Healthcare | 4 | 44 | 12 |
| IT (Currently inactive) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Manufacturing | 8 | 156 | 85 |
| Professional Services | 10 | 83 | 15 |
| TOTAL | 22 | 416 | 132 |

MICAREERQUEST 2025

Event was held March 20th, 2025

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total registered students | 8,486 |
| Total number of schools represented | 89 |
| Total number of participating employers | 89 |
| Total exhibits | 104 |
| Careers featured | 293 |
| Total number of volunteers | 154 |

MANUFACTURING WEEK 2025

Event was held October 13 – November 25, 2025

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Total number of teachers | 89 |
| Total number of students | 3,310 |
| Total number of employers | 102 |
| Unique schools | 67 |

TALENT TOURS

January 2026 – March 2026

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Total number of students | 12 |
| Total number of events | 4 |
| Total number of employers | 2 |