

## TOPICS AND PRESENTERS

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## INTRODUCTION

Mayor Mike Maguire, Eagan

- Recap of MN Mayors Together Meeting in at the League of Minnesota Cities Conference.
- Update from the U.S. Conference of Mayors

## TALENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND SHIFTS

[LINK TO PRESENTATION](#)

Andrea Ferstan, Greater Metro Workforce Council

- Framing the conversation: How are we (mayors and school leaders) preparing students for today's economy? How do we reimagine our systems and partnerships to maximize response to economic shifts?
- Discussion points:
  - Responding and adapting to our changing demographics and workforce needs
  - What impedes our ability to be as responsive as we would like?
  - Are there opportunities to strengthen connections between K-12 and post-secondary options?
- Over the past 5 years the MSP region narrowed the workforce gap between Whites and POC from 13 to 8.6%. The wage gap remains stagnant.
- High participation of women in the workforce is a competitive advantage in this region that can be used to attract talent. Certain sectors, particularly those in STEM fields, continue to struggle with gender diversity.
- While affordability remains a strength, the region is losing ground in this area. This affects talent attraction and retention.
- Technology is transforming the way we do our work, eliminating and creating new jobs, requiring new skills and aptitudes, and a more flexible, interdependent approach to work.
- Minnesota has a workforce shortage that is projected to grow.
- To fully address with the region's disparities, it's crucial to partner with K-12 and higher education to stop the leaks in the talent pipeline.
- Approximately 70% of jobs require some form of post-secondary credential yet only 61.4% of 25-44 year-olds have this.
- The proportion of employers who report asking employees with only a high school diploma to get additional education or training to make up skills gaps in reading, writing, or math increased from 42% in 2004 to 61% in 2015.
- This is not about finger pointing, but about coming together with solutions that work for residents and businesses.

# A CONVERSATION AMONG MAYORS AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: WORKFORCE

## Presenting and providing pathways to an array of post-grad options:

- Four-year degrees are not the only good option; though it's not always easy to change this mindset among schools, parents, and students. Start early, even in middle school, with this messaging. A technical degree might be a great starting point or lead to a fairly high-earning career that is not tied to the same potential debt burden as a 4-year degree. Marketing this choice has nuances in each district, and across urban, suburban, and rural communities.
- In communicating that four year degrees aren't the only option, it's important to acknowledge how tracking has become a way to put students of color into non-college pathways and white kids into higher institutions, and to ensure this doesn't become another segregation opportunity. For example, there's no harm in helping any kid interested in the health field get EMT certified whether this is a final pathway or a start to a longer one. Let foundational experiences open doors in either direction.
- In Burnsville, businesses have put technical training groups in the high school. The health field is booming, and EMT training is a great foundation for a job in that career.
- It is important for students to have opportunities to see themselves in various careers (especially students of color and American Indian students). If businesses can put their employees from a diverse range of backgrounds in front of students; it helps students to have these role models. Mentorship programs are another way to present more options to students. Even day-long exposures to different careers can be helpful.
- In middle school, career development is centered along 'Who am I and what am I interested in?'. Teenagers can then do more exploration by having real jobs and shadowing various career options. 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade is a time to narrow things down into a secondary education plan.
- Job fairs are becoming more common in high schools and now even middle schools. Companies are also getting smarter about reaching out to kids.
- It is important to think about the mindsets of these young, future leaders. Millennials don't understand why we have rules, and they will move on from one thing to the next trying to follow their passions. Gen Zers were children during the housing crash, and they want stability.

## Community partnerships.

- Mayor Doug Anderson reports on [Lakeville Works](#): a partnership between businesses in the community and the school district where students can find jobs, and businesses are beginning to look at training youth to consider trades as an option – for example setting up labs in schools, focusing on STEM education, and working to get students into real-world internship type positions at local businesses.
- Businesses are helpful partners for schools, as well as higher education institutions, like the U of M, for example. In some cases, schools are beginning to flip the question to businesses and other partners from, "What can you do for us?" to, "What can we do for you?" when it comes to preparing students to fill some of these workforce shortages.
- Partnerships with chambers of commerce may provide opportunities for teacher externships to visit businesses, learn, and incorporate this knowledge into lesson plans.
- Partnerships can be broader than citywide; school districts and mayors may also look at partnering with the county. In Scott County, for example, with the [Live Learn Earn tagline](#), the mode of operation is to look across multiple cities and districts to understand the bigger picture of workforce challenges, and to understand how people are engaging with the county government when they need support with housing and bigger system issues.
- The role of mayors is to bring all partners together; to look out for the students in each community holistically. The way that public education is financed can impede schools' ability to address the problem of workforce and post-secondary preparedness, so districts such as Lakeville ensure the partnerships they delve into with companies or orgs are sustainable; coming with a committed investment.

**Other challenges/opportunities:**

- It's important to also consider the needs of lower income residents – do they have food and housing security, so students have a baseline for success?
- Restrictions on school operations can be an impediment to getting students real world experience with jobs and internships and allowing for more project/life-based learning, e.g. strict restrictions on seat time and school schedules. An alternative school modeled a calendar that was 9 weeks on; 3 weeks off, allowing students to experience different internships and work experiences outside of school throughout a year.
- To combat the challenges of student loans, mayors could approach the legislature. Or, states could become a lending agency to replace private lenders and control interest rates.
- It's important to better educate kids on personal finance, surrounding topics such as bank accounts, investments, loans, insurance, etc.

# ATTENDANCE

## MAYORS

James Hovland	City of Edina (co-chair)
Mike Maguire	City of Eagan (co-chair)
Marylee Abrams	City of Maplewood
Doug Anderson	City of Lakeville
Kirt Briggs	City of Prior Lake
Anne Burt	City of Woodbury
Ron Case	City of Eden Prairie
Jerry Faust	City of St. Anthony
Tom Funk	City of Victoria
Mary Gaasch	City of Lauderdale
Shep Harris	City of Golden Valley
Courtney Johnson	City of Carver
Marvin Johnson	City of Independence
Elizabeth Kautz	City of Burnsville
John Keis	City of Little Canada
Julie Maas-Kusske	City of Maple Plain
Mary McComber	City of Oak Park Heights
Tim McNeil	City of Dayton
Rhonda Pownell	City of Northfield
Maria Regan Gonzalez	City of Richfield
Jake Spano	City of St. Louis Park
Brad Wiersum	City of Minnetonka
Ken Willcox	City of Wayzata
Gene Winstead	City of Bloomington
Lisa Whalen	City of Minnetrista
Janet Williams	City of Savage

## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Abigail Alt	B-E-S School Board
Chase Anderson	Wayzata Public Schools
Theresa Battle	ISD 191 Burnsville-Eagan-Savage
Michael Bauman	ISD194 Lakeville
Clint Christopher	Eastern Carver County School District
Renee Correille	ISD 282 St Anthony New Brighton Schools
Jimmy Francis	South St. Paul
Jake Grussing	Scott County
Keith Jacobus	South Washington County Schools
Mike Johnson	South Washington County Schools
Brad Larson	City of Savage
Bob McDowell	Stillwater (Assistant Superintendent)
Melanie Mesko Lee	Burnsville
Christine Osorio	ISD 622 North St. Paul – Maplewood – Oakdale
Denise Pontrelli	Stillwater (Superintendent)
Kevin Schultinger	Prior Lake - Savage Area Schools
Josh Swanson	Eden Prairie Schools
Steve Unowsky	ISD 280 Richfield
Dave Webb	South St. Paul Schools

**ULI MINNESOTA**

Caren Dewar, Aubrey Albrecht, Cathy Bennett, Rachel Lieberman

**AUGUST 12: NO MEETING; SUMMER RECESS**