



Support Students • Launch a Work Force • Build Your Community

The Regional Education Initiative / The Bridge

Strategic Plan

The formulation of the Regional Education Initiative began when community leaders felt the area lacked a shared vision among the academic entities and the community.

School Attendance Records

- The high school dropout rate is excessive and inconsistently tracked.
- New Mexico has twenty three high schools identified among the nation's highest for dropouts.
 - The student attendance rate is unacceptable. Records show that there are at least 2,000 absences per day per high school.
 - Dropouts report they do so because their coursework has “no relevance” to their future goals and “no one cares.”
- The National Chamber of Commerce ranked New Mexico 50th for education

Work force Survey

In November and December of 2007, the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA) administered an electronic survey of employers within the Dona Ana County. The survey was intended to evaluate the local work force's skills, training, preparedness and productivity from the perspective of local employers.

- The overall rating of the local work force on a 1-10 scale was 6.8 (good) while the applicant pool was only rated 5.5 (fair).
- Applicant pool's highest rating
 - Working with others
 - Bilingual skills
 - Ability to pass drug tests
- Applicant pool's lowest ratings
 - Math and science skills
 - Willingness to work diverse shifts

- Specialized training or education required for the position
- Skills and traits in short supply
 - Written communication skills
 - Computer skills
 - Work ethic
 - Basic math skills
 - Customer service
- Local occupations with frequent shortages
 - Engineers
 - Machinists/Metallurgy
 - Accountants/Bookkeepers
 - Electricians

Economic Impact of Decreased Educational and Work force Efficiency

- Approximately 33% of dropouts become participants of the judicial system, earn lower wages, and have a higher probability of dependence of social programs
- Remedial “re-schooling” at the community college results in paying for the same education twice
- Attendance is costing the school system an estimated \$1 million dollars
- Business expansion and recruiting is adversely affected by inadequate work force and poor national rankings for education

Solution: Establish The Bridge

- Commissioned in May 2007
- Adapts the elements of other successful national models
 - Collaboration among education, business, and economic development
 - Technical trade education existed and linked throughout the educational institutions
- Task Force Membership represents community leaders from business, educational, and government sectors
 - President of New Mexico State University
 - Public School Superintendants (3)
 - Provost of Dona Ana Community College
 - Congressional Offices- City & County Managers, Mayor
 - Chairman of Dona Ana County and Incoming Chair
 - Public School Board Members
 - MVEDA and State Department of Economic Development

- Business and Community Leaders

The Bridge: Vision and Goals

- Vision: “Graduate all students prepared to perform in an internationally competitive Work Force
- Goals
 - 1) To reduce the county wide dropout rate
 - 2) Fully integrate the educational systems in Southern New Mexico to ensure all students live the vision
 - 3) Provide and expand the technical and career education opportunities for students and the community in Southern New Mexico
- High Level Business Plan
 - Virtual integration of K-20 and business implementing best practices throughout the system (Goal 1)
 - Joint funded by education, business, and government
 - Staff with highly skilled Executive Director
 - Finalize Business & Strategic Plans
 - Incubate smaller satellite high schools (Goal 2)
 - Serve whole county
 - Focus on career and technical education
 - Two approved locations for 2009
 - Arrowhead Research Park
 - West Mesa
 - Increase Business Involvement in Education (Goal 3)
 - Cooperatives, Mentors, Career Counselors, etc.
 - Develop a strategy to focus vocational training for special needs students
 - Strengthen alliance initiatives
 - Dona Ana County Legislative Coalition
 - Dona Ana County Truancy Initiative
 - Promise for Success

How will we measure our success?

- Employability of students who complete the program
 - Supply and quality of work force
 - Unemployment and income don't necessarily identify quality
- Proposed Indicators
 - Graduation rates

- Education attainment
- Employer satisfaction rating (ethics, productivity, supply)- MVEDA Survey
- Percentage of successful dual credit completions
- Percentage of employers involved in internships, co-ops, and education to employer work programs
- Decrease in juvenile case load

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world”
– Margaret Mead