



VISTA 2025 Goal 2:

Position Chester County as a magnet for attracting talent and a model for developing an employer ready workforce.

Initial VISTA 2025 Goal 2 Team Meeting

March 21, 2016

Meeting Notes

Team Members Attending: Joyce Chester, Kathi Cozzone, Jennifer Duff, Trish Faidiga, Jerry Parker, Joe O'Brien, Kevin Quinn, Chaya Scott

Also Attending: Marybeth DiVincenzo, Pat Bokovitz, Ashley Oddo, Gary Smith, David Sciocchetti

Kathi Cozzone

Welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Asked if there were comments on the meeting notes from the last meeting. No comments were offered.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Described how the industry partnerships use available data to drive activities. Noted the Pennsylvania State Department of Labor was the traditional information source. Explained that the workforce summit caused a re-thinking of the completeness of the available data. Discussed how the current use of data was reactive rather than proactive.

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that Mark Lautman, the keynote speaker at the workforce summit, had stressed the importance of data for both measuring performance and predicting where things were heading. Noted that current data may be insufficient for our purposes. Suggested a need to maximize partnerships to get the critical data.

J.M.

Suggested that L&I data is not always reliable and questioned how we can get good data.

Kathi Cozzone

Noted that the National Association of Counties (NACO) has significant county level data and may be a source worth investigating.

Joe O'Brien

Suggested that we are in a data rich environment but are too often poorly focused. Added that we have the ability to generate our own data where existing data is insufficient through surveys.

J.M.

Raised the need for tracking changes in the need for talent. Asked who is tracking this need. Cited contingent worker changes as a key concern.

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that this is a capacity issue. We only measure what we are required to measure. Questioned whether we need to invest in better data collection and analysis.

Trish Faidiga

Recognized that everyone is busy with what they have to do and suggested that we may need to identify someone as the person with the responsibility to collect and manage data.

Jennifer Duff

Suggested that there is no opposition to getting better data but noted that we need to establish targets based on what we have and what we want to know. We need crystal clear objectives before we dive into the mountain of data that now exists.

Chaya Scott

Suggested that we start with requirements and then fill in the gaps. She noted that the Boys Scouts ask high school students what they are interested in and then guide them in activities in those career areas.

Kevin Quinn

Commented that surveying is a good supplement to existing data.

Kathi Cozzone

Noted that the VISTA 2025 process was part survey and that the workforce summit also elicited significant information. She added that the assembled data was not all in one place and suggested that the first step to better data was to define who was responsible for assessing the existing data.

Trish Faidiga

Suggested that we recruit a millennial with good data skill for a short term gig to organize our data.

Jennifer Duff

Suggested that the workforce summit identified some gaps in our data that would be a good place to start.

David Sciocchetti

Questioned whether County colleges and universities could be added to the effort of getting needed data.

Pat Bokovitz

Suggested that we would still need a person to coordinate and integrate.

Jerry Parker

Argued that we need to better define the problem. Stated that we don't know what we don't know. Commented that DCCC and CCIU are working hard to find and use data for their programs and activities.

Pat Bokovitz

Gave example of critical workforce data problem related to information that there were too many teachers only to find shortly thereafter that there were not enough. Emphasized the need for a data person to better track rapidly changing circumstances.

Kathi Cozzone

Noted the many good ideas that emerged from the workforce summit and the need for a way to measure progress on those ideas

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Supported the need for a data person.

Jerry Parker

Stated that we need a professional with the right skills.

Pat Bokovitz

Suggested that this was a great opportunity to partner and indicated that he would research some possible approaches and report back at the June meeting.

Trish Faidiga

Commented that college interns could definitely be a part of the solution.

Kathi Cozzone

Suggested that West Chester University's Center for Community Solutions was a resource that could also help.

David Sciocchetti

Suggested the need to move on to the next agenda items.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Presented an overview of the recent Girls Exploring Tomorrow's Technology event. Noted that 622 young women and 176 parents and educators participated with 36 sessions and 82 speakers and 134 volunteers. The event included 56 STEM activities.

Ashley Oddo

Presented a short video of the GETT event

J.M.

Asked if there was data on the career choices of the young women who attended GETT.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Indicated that there was only anecdotal data at this point but that this issue had been added as a goal of the program.

Trish Faidiga

Asked about Chester County school district participation and was advised that many did participate but not all.

Joe O'Brien

Commented that non-traditional approaches to career exploration were still a problem for school districts.

Kevin Quinn

Suggested that the data focus needs to be on what employers need – a user side approach, and that GETT is an important part of that.

Joe O'Brien

Cited the CCIU Allied Health programs as an example of that and indicated that CCIU was looking for additional industry specialties.

Jerry Parker

Reaffirmed the need for a business focused effort but stressed the need for private partners. He emphasized that students may not have the option to move in these directions if they fail to get the basic skills they need. He noted that math is key and it is important that we let students know what's required to avoid later challenges.

Joyce Chester

Noted that “job shadowing” is a good way to expose students to the needs for specific types of jobs. Added that this requires direct connections to employers.

Joe O'Brien

Concurred with the need for students to take and persevere with math

Kathi Cozzone

Described the challenges her son faced with math and noted that there was a need for more information to allow children to make informed decisions.

Jennifer Duff

Added that sometimes we make math scary and that discourages students when the truth is that math opens new opportunities that translate very well into the new digital world.

Jerry Parker

Described math as the “place where STEM dreams go to die” and emphasized the need to change this. Noted that the traditional approach of one size fits all for math was giving way to a new approach of multiple tracks based on job requirements.

Pat Bokovitz

Stated that the quality of the Chester County basic education systems created options for County children that many others do not have.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Suggested that the Downingtown STEM school benefited from the high basic skill levels of the district's students.

Joe O'Brien

Agreed that those accepted to the STEM school were generally above average. Noted the need to expand the STEM concept to a broader range of students and added that this was an issue that was being worked on.

Jennifer Duff

Commented that we need to change the perception that only STEM academy graduates could expect to have STEM careers.

Joe O'Brien

Commented that we need to expose more children to the range of manufacturing and related jobs and the need for basic math skills in those jobs.

Kathi Cozzone

Noted the need to get state legislators more involved and suggested that we share the report from the summit with them.

Pat Bokovitz

Reported on the new Workforce Development Board Two Year Transition Plan. Noted that the WIOA had established new requirements that needed to be addressed. Indicated that the plan would be finalized over the next two months with public comments solicited sometime in May.

Described some of the points of emphasis of the new plan including: an expanded focus on a re-entry program, a special focus on young adults in targeted neighborhoods and a renewed focus on engaging employers.

Described some of the recent accomplishments including: the fact that Financial Stability Center had served 2,600 participants with a wide range of services, that the HOOD was actively engaged in providing a range of services and that there was a renewed focus on employer outreach, including the Industry Partnerships and Hire One.

Kathi Cozzone

Commented on the national interest in reform of the criminal justice system that was reflected in the new guidelines for the transition plan.

Pat Bokovitz

Noted that there was a strong infrastructure already in place and that the new plan was intended to build from that. Reaffirmed the importance of good data. Invited all present to an open house on May 26th.

Chaya Scott

Noted this was a great opportunity for new initiatives and new partners.

Pat Bokovitz

Commented that there would likely be a mix of new and old.

Gary Smith

Asked if there was anything new for veteran's in the new guidelines.

Pat Bokovitz

Responded that veteran's will be a priority.

Joyce Chester

Suggested that there may be a need for a specific approach.

Marybeth DiVincenzo

Commented that more could be done if we had better data on returning veterans.

Jerry Parker

Noted that Sikorsky had a good veterans assistance program

Kathi Cozzone

Noted in her closing remarks that there was a need for more employers on the goal team.