

HUMAN CAPITAL

The *Advance Now* strategy identifies the Madison Region's need to grow and attract top talent through a coordinated pipeline, while ensuring that the current and future workforce meet and exceed expectations of firms and business clusters that are starting up, expanding, and locating in the region. The Human Capital Workgroup addressed these needs with the following key recommendations and suggested implementation for the next year.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary recommendation of the workgroup was to align education and workforce development efforts with target sector initiatives. To that end, the group identified the following actions:

- Create a roundtable solution that will give business, economic development, educators, and workforce professionals a platform for collaboration and will generate specific and actionable efforts that will provide an opportunity for the business community to become more engaged.
- Conduct data collection and trend analysis on emerging industries and related job forecasts to inform the work of each roundtable.
- Based on the trends and identified needs, align workforce needs with educational offerings linked to those needs. In addition, identify regional educational gaps related to emerging or high need industries.
- Build both longer-term strategies for workforce development, but also shorter-term, innovative, more responsive solutions.
- Recruit roundtable participants from existing employer engagement groups such as the Technical College Program advisory boards representing the targeted clusters, the Workforce Development Board and Economic Development sponsored sector teams, K-12 Business Education Partnership members, and industry associations such as WMC members, and Chambers of Commerce from the region.
- Explore a strategy to house employer engagement information that is easily accessible to employers and partners.

A second recommendation of the Human Capital Workgroup was to forge strong partnerships between educators, parents, students, and regional businesses. Within this objective, workgroup members agreed that parent engagement must be the first priority, particularly in terms of evaluating potential career options for their students. To help accomplish this, the group advised the following:

- Be proactive in partnering with the region's school districts and existing partners (such as Chambers of Commerce and nonprofit agencies) to inform parents throughout the region about the new Academic Career Plan requirements and strategies for parents to become involved.

To accomplish the above recommendations, as well as collaborative actions recommended by other workgroups, the Human Capital Workgroup put forth a third recommendation to create a "Collaboration Protocol" that will establish and maintain a collaborative framework where we can work toward "WE SOLUTIONS." This would be a strategy that keeps industry and the public/community partners in close collaboration so they are aware of what industry and workers need and can mobilize resources to be responsive. The Collaborative Protocol would:

- Clearly identify the role of each partner
- Create a specific timeline and describe the resources required for the effort
- Secure commitment by each partner specific to time, talent, and resources committed

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the above recommendations and additional input from the workgroup, the Madison Region Economic Partnership (MREP) would be responsible for recruitment of roundtable partners, conducting data collection and trend analysis, and either become the custodian or help determine the custodian of employer engagement information. MREP would facilitate the roundtable partners using a collaboration protocol. Finally, MREP would also play a lead role in marketing to parents regarding their student's academic plan development.