

Strategy Session: Education  
July 9, 2008

Summary Report

**Points of agreement from all sessions: Income, Education, Health**

- Agreement on 3 issues being “key root community issues”
- Agreement that all issues are interwoven and interdependent
- Consistent concern over potential loss of:
  - Emergency support and funding
  - Capacity building funding
- “Gap” issues (affect and are affected by income, education, health):
  - Housing
  - Family Structure
  - Environment
  - Arts and Culture
- Agency concern: don’t waste our time with “more” meetings, engage other collaboratives and partnerships as appropriate – don’t reinvent the wheel (Great Start, Legacy, 10 year plan)
- Some question the need for UW to be engaged in Education with so much strong activity already in existence (Great Start, Legacy and more); HOWEVER, leadership of those efforts are encouraged by and supportive of UW involvement

**Summary of feedback from community session: Education**

- Generally, education (cradle to grave) is perceived to be the core of all three issues
  - Parenting, Childcare and Early Education
  - K-12, Higher Ed and Extra-curricular
  - Alternative Ed and Justice Programs
  - Lifelong learning – life skills

- Possible Goals:
  - Demonstrate that community values lifelong learning
  - Ensure that all have equal access to quality education
  - Educated citizens stay or return to live in Jackson

**THEMES:**

- Education ties all areas together
- School readiness is key to success
- Education is lifelong = community success
- Bridging gaps between various groups; get everybody on same page and minimize hostility toward higher ed
- Involve all constituents – parents, students and teachers
- UW involvement minimizes turf issues – can coordinate and streamline efforts and measurement
- Stability of student = family; healthy families underlie it all
- How do we evaluate process and progress?

**SPECIFIC QUESTIONS AND PARTICIPANT COMMENTS (sampling):**

- **Income, Education, Health: Are these the right areas? Are there other root issues that we should consider?**
  - Yes
  - Covers broad area, but right areas – education is primary
  - Struggle with Income – how do you communicate it? Move to economic development?
  - What happens when people are not educated? Affects income – how to get around it
  - We felt the 3 areas pretty well covered the programs needed in Jackson.
  - The possibility of having a fourth category for “support” issues was discussed.
  - Key to the education is involvement of the family with parents attending parent teacher conferences.
  - UW doesn’t have all the money in the world
  - 3 serious major topics may have better impact
  - Broad spectrum, doesn’t exclude anything – we need to hone in the community
  - What is the big picture? What are critical needs? Don’t just focus on what will fit
  - We can make those tough decisions
  - 10 year vision
  - Get everyone to value education: HS graduation is only a start
  - Overall – think they are right areas, just need more definition – need to have good leadership, boundaries and address priorities
  - Concern – what if a major disaster occurs? (needs to be considered how it could fit under these areas)

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- Education affect many areas (child care, income, jobs)
- Fear of change, most nonprofits are struggling
- What about capacity building?
- Education starts before birth
- w/o family support, how will kids think of college? Criminals may be brightest minds.
- Where does juvenile justice fin?
- Narrow focus is better – better explanation to community
- How does partnership with schools work? Ex: Center for Family Health at Parkside (schools look to community for support services)
- UW staff need to be “big picture people” not administrative positions

• **Community Solutions Teams: Is this the right approach? What are the pros and cons?**

Pros	Cons
Community involvement	Recognize other issues and area needs
They are all inter-related: education, income, health - can't and shouldn't separate them	Need to look outside these 3 areas
This will help to streamline the focus of United Way	Don't want 3 areas to compete with each other
Supported by Public data & perception	Some programs will fall out i.e. Salvation Army Food Pantry
More accountable, this system is very important	Difficult to communicate income; describe in a way that is compelling
Increase collaboration and reduce overlapping	How will \$ be disbursed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special interest that people will take to the table</li> <li>• Key to have nonprofessionals at table</li> <li>• Every nonprofit has somewhat of a credibility issue</li> <li>• People are going to be reluctant to give \$ unless they know it's going to what they want</li> </ul>
Raise bar for services to a new level (use \$ proactively)	Community involvement needed
Answers “What is UW REALLY doing?”	Logistic/admin issues – larger table more difficult to move in a direction
	Must have those necessary voices at the table (ex: superintendent at education)
	1 <sup>st</sup> job to look at current successes and identify gaps
	Need a leader of each area that can make compromise when conflict arises
	Setting priorities within each area may be difficult, need to stay focused

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	Accountability?
	Need to be inclusive
	UW staff needs to be communicating CONSISTENTLY
	What happens when a donors favorite program/agency is cut?

**Who should be included in decision making and information gathering related to Education needs and outcomes? Who is already doing good work? Are there any “unusual suspects” we should engage?**

- Adult Education/Community Ed
- Alternative Ed
- Great Start Initiative – infancy stage
- Life Long Learning
- Bigs, other organizations need to be included
- Child & Parent Centers
- Those that should be involved with the Education planning group would be educators; those involved with the education process at prisons; a group of youth that are made up of those that are/have struggled with education; Work first program participants;
- Great Start Board
- Legacy
- Youth home staff
- Educators, teachers
- Homeless education liaisons – McKenney Vento
- Preschool educators
- Counselors
- Private charter /home schools
- Childcare providers, head start, infant care
- Truant officers
- Juvenile court/Legal system
- ISD
- Youth Coalition –JA, Boys Clubs
- Library – Info Source
- School district
- Colleges/Higher Ed
- Head start
- CC providers
- PTA
- Churches
- JCSAPC
- JCEG
- Mentoring Collab
- Career Center
- MI Works
- 3SEG – Tom Grayson
- Orgs dealing with kids – Bigs
- Reverend Hines

- Dropouts – stories –why
- Senior citizens – retired educators
- Parents – will be hard – dig deep to get people to come
- Policing agencies – before port is left young kids start off small – data or experience they can recommend
- Medical doctors – pediatricians have a lot of info, providing info to newborns
- Business community (chamber, business associations, manufacturing)
- JNSC
- City/County elected officials
- County leaders
- Agencies that provide prevention education (CPR, disaster)
- Child-care facilities
- Neighborhood associations (partnership park, BBBS)
- Life-skills trainers (cook, balance check book)
- Community action agency
- 2-1-1
- Top 3 – business leaders, education leaders, community support systems
- Work first
- Tech schools
- Youth council
- Work service
- Children
- Social workers
- Parochial, charter, out-county schools
- GED
- Reading Recovery Program
- Jackson County Assoc Infant Mental Health
- Friend of the Court

**Upon what statistics and data sets should we rely to establish baselines and measure our progress?**

- Readiness to learn. Need common parameters.
- Need to measure Student Efficiency
- Enrollment in post secondary education
- Increase in community support of importance of education
- Have to measure proficiency, connectiveness that student and adults feel regarding education
- Statistics would include those graduating; MEAPS scores; number of those attending college and/or career school
- Kids Count
  
- % of class repeaters
- % of students who go to college; % of those who graduate college
- % who graduate, stay in Jackson voluntarily
- Legacy should be easy
- Great Start – huge strides in setting up objectives
- Attendance
- Parental involvement in education process

- Data from programs (ex pre- and post-tests)
- High school drop out rates
- Data – ask business community what they look for in workers and data to measure these
- Unemployment (who and education level)
- Valid data
- # of people returning to school because of unemployment, etc
- Single-family home data
- School report card
- Track parent teacher conferences
- 211 reports
- Divorce rates
- How do we measure non-traditional success?
- Youth surveys
- Decrease in petitions to court and referrals to ISD – schools can deal with problems internally
- Civic engagement

### **What does success look like?**

- Get students connected aside from academics readiness. Find out what their interests are and what they're learning. Survey this in school.
- We have a culture of Mandated Education
- Need a system to recognize and support "HOW" people learn with different intelligences
- Success = Customer focused system
- Goal meet the needs of the customers in the community of all ages
  
- Success would include more students graduating high school; students graduating and being ready for college; retention of young people in Jackson.
- Educated people who return to community
- Self-sufficiency
- 1<sup>st</sup> generation graduates
- Reduction in gangs
- Reduce unemployment
- Confidence, positive attitude
- Increase in the % of residents who have further education
- Stability
- Increase # of children reading at grade level or above
- Increase in education time
- Decrease in discipline, truancy, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse
- Parental support for educational process; encourage businesses to support parent involvement in education
- Increase mean income
- Nontraditional successful families (how to measure? not rich, still happy, good kids)
- Inclusion of programs that Success by 6 has
- By grade 3 – serious check of children
- Follow a whole group
- Legacy increases grad rates and college attendance
- See remediation rates go down

- Math skills – lack in critical, logical thinking
- Productive, prepared citizens
- UW slogan Live United
- Get youth involved – what will we do with:
  - Dropout rate
  - Teen pregnancy
  - Hostility in community to higher ed
  - Success – all ideas – common themes
- Conversation about family structure
- Does it make sense to discuss family support systems separate
  - If you don't have family support – how do you succeed?
  - Incorporate different ways of getting input – people aren't always going to speak up
  - Don't need to create new group
- Long-lasting change (long-term change)
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Sustainability
- Positive behavioral change
- Reduced unemployment, teen pregnancy, crime etc
- Reduction in risk areas with problem target areas (risky behaviors)
- OVERALL– once major problems (goals) identified, sustainable partnerships created to help reduce the concerns
- Tech-savvy important – connect MI into technology
- Kalamazoo promise program – brings new people to community
- After school program @ Lily
- Kids' Hope program
- Increase math and reading skills in entire county
- Global or Individual specialties?
- Get partners to focus on 10 – 15- 20 year goal?

**Misc Thoughts and Suggestions:**

- Corporations – success
- Internships for High School students
- Foundations – unusual suspects
- Education may be the easiest impact area because GS and Legacy are already attacking Education
- UW – a way to get things done, not the end
- Set aside personal issues to work for common good
- Concern: many businesses creating own schooling system because students are not learning needed skills in schools
- Will there be a research consultant to assist with measurement plans, etc? could be a local university collaboration