



Mountain Desert Economic Partnership
Regional Education and Economic Development

Team 3 Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2020

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

In Attendance:	
Matt Wells, MDCP JPA	Rebecca Rubio, Lucerne Valley USD
Kendle Crowell, MDCP JPA	Susan Drake, SB County Supervisor Lovingood
Andy Page, MDCP JPA	Clayton Moore, Victor Elementary SD
Sheila Thornton, One Future Coachella Valley	Carol Tsushima, Alliance for Education
Kim McNulty, One Future Coachella Valley	Lilia Aguirre, VVC
Ryan Holman, Snowline JUSD	Chad Brooks, Snowline JUSD
Jeff Dunagan, General Atomics	Frank Castanos, VVC

Next Steps/Tasks:	
1) Create a shared document where we can start making a list of industry contacts and content experts	Matt Wells/Team
2) Mechatronics video planning w/ Kranbox	Carrie O'Neal, Jessica Swift, Jeff Dunagan

1. Welcome and Introductions

Called to order at 3:31 p.m.

2. Recap of All Team's Work Since May Meeting

Team 1:

- Innovation Kickoff was held on May 27th
 - 60 plus attendees.
 - The presenters introduced the mission and vision of the Team and the to build an ecosystem of local innovators and entrepreneurs and to kick off a virtual startup lab.
- A secondary Innovation Dialogue was held on June 10th
 - This was a continued conversation from May 27th to address questions from a post-event survey and to continue building the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.
- More conversations will be held, with the next one taking place on July 1st, with a focus on Design Thinking.

Team 2:

- The value proposition presentation is nearing completion.
- Once final revisions are completed, the presentation will be printed and distributed to four year presidents and deans during meetings between them and a subgroup of Team 2, who will discuss the benefits of them bringing more degree options to our region. We have great, qualified students, they just need the opportunity.

Team 4: Essential Skills

- The Essential Skills booklet continues to be disseminated and BCC has announced they will be utilizing the skills in a couple certification course curriculums and in their Adult Education classes.
- The Team continues to support SBCSS Alliance for Education and their focus on an updated essential skills certification, which will be validated by San Bernardino and Riverside county workforce investment boards and will include skills found on our list.
- Next steps will include finding community organizations, businesses, and school districts to commit to adopting and utilizing the Essential Skills list.

3. Stakeholder Spotlight of the Month

Matt Wells introduced the idea of spotlighting an MDEP partner at every monthly meeting so the entire team can better understand the work everyone is doing at their “day job” and how that work intersects with MDEP. If we know more about what our partners do, we can partner with them in more meaningful, intentional ways.

4. Team 3: Tiered Economic Opportunity Update

- a. Mechatronics Curriculum Alignment Collaboration Recap
- Jeff Dunagan discussed the meeting with CTE Auto and Welding teachers from K12 and CCs, which was extremely informative and productive.
- Every person really liked the idea of Mechatronics and building upon what is already there, instead of reinventing the wheel and coming up with an entirely new pathway.
 - The major piece of feedback is that we need to market the program in the right way to attract the right students.
 - Create graphics and different media and industry engagement pieces to help students understand what is there - this includes students in CTE programs and not in CTE programs.
 - All parties, including teachers, counselors, and parents are also important audiences to reach with this marketing strategy.
 - Jeff shared a graphic he created to show what Mechatronics is and the career paths that fall within that industry sector. It also included educational paths starting with CTE-related mechatronics programs in HS. Cert and degree programs at the CC level can be added to include that possible step for students, as well. The group really liked the simplicity of the graphic and it will be a great tool for teachers, students, etc.
 - Frank Castanos commented that collectively in the High Desert programs, we already offer many of the courses necessary to build up this pipeline. It is not too large of a shift and we have teachers on board to make adaptations and service their students.
 - What we need to do is show everyone involved that going into a skilled trade pathway doesn't necessarily mean that someone will only be able to get a dead end skilled trade job - there are many options and good money to be earned. Matt added that just because a student is enrolled in a certain CTE program, that does not mean they are destined for a career in that field. It doesn't pigeonhole you to only become a mechanic if you are in an Auto class. So many of the skillsets learned in these classes bleed into other technical trades related to Mechatronics.
 - Teachers shared that they also need to better understand what job opportunities exist in the region beyond what their experience is/was when they were in industry. Whatever we

can do to equip them with that knowledge will change the dynamic in their classrooms and for their students.

- Matt shared about some videos that Jeff and Carol found to give teachers a better understanding of what Mechatronics is. The videos were all from trade schools in different parts of the country. We asked Kranbox to help us put together a Mechatronics video with high desert schools, students, and industry partners so people can get an overview snapshot of what Mechatronics is from a local perspective. It will help us tell our own story and embed them in the lessons that the Alliance for Education publishes and to gain more industry and educator participation. Having a good video to break down the term Mechatronics and give it a practical meaning and setting will really help with the marketing of this.
- Rebecca Rubio added that from a counselor perspective, one of the great takeaways from the conversation was the need to ensure that the concentration with students isn't always on the four year degree for certain careers. For example, engineering components can be part of an automotive or aviation pathway - it doesn't mean that a student has to go to a four year university and onto an engineering job. The conversation needs to be had with students so they understand what enrolling in these CTE courses really entails and what the skills learned in those classes can provide them after HS.
- Further conversation was had regarding counselors and the importance of their understanding and involvement with CTE programs:
 - Ryan Holman asked Rebecca how to best get this information in front of Counselors to give them the understanding to properly relay it to students? Rebecca felt like connecting it to the school site level would be the first step. Usually, the focus is on the overall picture and what all school districts are doing, but that becomes a barrier where counselors can't see past their own school sites, so they don't see how it applies to their students and their four year plans. Those connections need to be made. The pendulum has shifted in terms of CTE and explaining the process and how it relates to *their* students at *their* school site would be a great first step.
 - Ryan and Rebecca talked about the need for a High Desert Counselor Conclave because there are no other times when all the counselors get together and learn about CTE, cert programs, etc. It would also help inform them of the many career opportunities in the area.
 - Lilia Aguirre shared that she recently completed a counseling degree program and CTE wasn't something discussed or explained, so there is definitely a gap there for counselors. Rebecca agreed that even during her 3-year counseling degree program at CSUSB, CTE did not come up and counselors are expected to learn about it at a school site. If we could provide workshops or CTE training sessions for local counselors, that may help to gain regional support. They need to understand how CTE impacts student's daily lives.
 - Jeff asked how to get counselors motivated/interested to learn more about CTE? Rebecca responded that CTE is now part of the College and Career Indicators, so because that is data that is used to hold school sites (and counselors) accountable, it may hold more weight. Carol Tsushima added that CTE has a lot of moving parts and is constantly changing, so it is a lot more to add to counselor's plates - there are some systemic and logistical problems there that need to be addressed. The counselors are the gatekeepers to the school's dashboards, so we have to be aware of that and be empathetic to them as we move forward and ask more of them related to CTE.
 - Matt talked about the strategy of a counselor being dedicated to CTE. Sheila Thornton added that true integration of college *and* career and having informed counselors, whether or not they are specific to CTE students, is integral to student success. They need to have a cohort mentality and aspire to the principle of integration of the two. Ryan added that we need to overcome preconceived notions. Counselors have the hearts for students and want to serve them, so if we can *show* them what the

possibilities are for students, they will be on board with the message and can better serve the kids. We have to make it easier on them because of the workload and the politics involved. Their goal is to prepare students for beyond the school system - whatever that looks like.

- Rebecca added that we need to share the MDCP flyers as visual reminders of what is offered through MDCP and through MDEP. There is not an email listserve of counselors in our region, but it would be beneficial to build one and continually send them resources like that.
- b. Engage more industry! Discuss methods to find industry partners who are interested in participating in the webchat series.
- If we could get industry partners into the classroom, what content would teachers and students need to hear? We need to build a pipeline of interested industry professionals interested in getting into the classroom.
 - With new restrictions, we don't know what that will look like, so Jeff stated that Nepris or an online platform like Zoom will be a key tool to go about doing this. It allows for us to get into the classroom virtually and has far less impact on the industry partner and to the teacher (less time away from work duties, driving, etc.)
 - The call to action for this team is finding those individuals that are subject matter experts to become interested in this project and then figure out how to set them up for these webinars. Jeff suggested looking into alumni associations as a place to start.
 - Jeff would like everyone on the team to use their networks, find who they can find to participate in this web series, and then we can work on building the content. Jeff suggested reaching out to alumni associations may be a good place to start.
 - Matt mentioned a conversation he had with Shannon Shannon, who is very well connected with the local Chambers and VVC College foundation. If we have a specific ask, she said she will blast it out to the Chambers to spread the word. Matt will approach her with this initiative.
 - Frank Castanos discussed VVC's Construction Readiness Program, in which the students were completely immersed in industry, took field trips to industry locations, met with guest speakers, etc. This provided them the key if they wanted to pursue a career in the Construction trades, so maybe it is something to replicate or take effective pieces of as we try to spread awareness of Mechatronics career opportunities and what is really entailed.

NEXT STEPS:

What is the subset of work we tackle in the next couple of months?

- Matt will create a shared document where we can start making a list of industry contacts and content experts
- Mechatronics video planning w/ Kranbox
- Teacher survey to understand what content they need in the web series and what industry partners we need to showcase (to be done in the Fall when teachers return from break)
- Prepare marketing material and content
- Preparations for some kind of counselor conclave event

5. **MDEP Website & monday.com Project Boards**

Matt Wells shared the updated MDEP website: mdcareerpathways.com/mdep

The tactical plans were broken up into project boards using monday.com and they will be forward facing on the website so everyone can see projects being worked on, who is working on what task, timelines to complete tasks, and progress made so far. This should be an easier method for team members and other partners to understand the scope of work, what projects are upcoming and where they can help.

6. *Tactical Plan Review and Update Timelines*

Matt Wells discussed the need to review tactical plans and create timelines for outputs which can be added to the project boards on the website. Ryan Holman, Jeff Dunagan and Matt Wells will work on this in between team meetings.

7. *Next Year's Meeting Dates Discussion*

Matt Wells proposed sticking to the same schedule for MDEP meetings next school year, which would fall on the third Tuesday of each month.