

## APPENDIX 1: BREAKOUT FEEDBACK

### I. Business and Community Engagement Breakout

#### A. Questions asked:

1. *What is an engaged community?*
2. *What are barriers to engagement?*
3. *What can you do?*

#### B. Led by:

1. Russ Oaks, Knox County Schools
2. Tammy Sommers, NAI Realty
3. Karen Davis, Knox County PTA and the Public School Forum
4. Bonny Millard, Blount Education Initiative
5. Pamela Treacy, School Matters and Lawler Wood
6. Sallee Reynolds, Hardin Valley Academy

#### C: Summarized notes:

##### 1. What is an engaged community

- Characteristics:
  - Proactive (more than just talk)
  - Sense of urgency
  - Sustainable
  - Best practices
  - Support in times of trouble & celebrate accomplishments
  - Embrace diversity – in thought, religion, members of community
- Mutual shared goals and focused vision by all stakeholders
  - Meaningful partnerships formed among all stakeholders – sustainable and active participation
    - Shadowing, mentoring
    - Public & private
    - Everyone must feel welcome
  - Stakeholders are accountable and have honesty of status
  - Stakeholders include: parents, grandparents, faith-based, unions, higher education, business, government, teachers, legal community, social services, students, and media.
- Frequent & effective Communication
  - Must be consistent, honest, clear
  - Open forum
  - On-going dialogue/surveys
  - Community must be informed and educated of services
- Comprehensive services without duplication
- Utilization of available resources
- Businesses willing to give back – in terms of goods, services & funds
  - Hands-on
  - Sense of ownership
  - Welcome involvement – schools open
  - Internships/apprenticeships
  - Volunteers/mentors – release time
  - With intent to improve skill-sets
- Identification of:
  - Needs – in general, but also for individual schools
  - how everyone is involved
- Outreach to non-traditional students
- Visualizing and understanding the future
- Understanding the value of education
- Action planning – with a timeline for 20-25 yrs
  - Forward thinking
  - Identify alternatives
  - Evaluation
- Strong leaders with leadership skills
- Opportunities and resources for lifelong learning

##### 2. Barriers to Engagement

- Stakeholders (businesses, community, parents, students):
  - May not be aware of resources and opportunities (careers, etc.)
  - Don't know what to do, where to go
  - Lack role definition
  - Human nature/resistance to change
  - Lack of student input
  - Apathy
  - Cultural or generational disconnects
- Technology gap
- Concentration on high school students, not focusing on earlier school levels
- Parents/Community support of other activities instead of education
  - Pace of life
  - Only support *own* child
- Disconnect between business and school
  - Business and education are not being proactive – reactive instead
  - Business speed v. education speed (education lagging)
  - Gap between teaching and learning and practice (workplace)
  - Business perception of losing “manpower”
  - Lack of co-ops, alternatives
- Lack of ongoing, sustainable communication – among all stakeholders
  - Between teachers and students about application and skills
  - Between parents & teachers
  - Silos & geographic restraints
  - Media
- Lack of understanding needs and goals of constituents
  - No common education goals on a community-wide basis
  - Stigma associated with technology training
  - “It was good enough for me” beliefs
- Lack of funding
- Socioeconomic restraints
  - Time, \$, working parents
- Lack of parenting
  - Values and attitudes
  - Discipline
- Students' leisure life style, lack of accountability
- Constraints at school level
  - Limited or no innovation
  - Resistance to change
  - Uniformity
  - Teachers' perceived external pressures
  - Bureaucracy (too difficult to make changes)
  - Inexperienced and overworked teachers
  - Lack of teacher support
  - Limited competence and confidence in providing real-world applications for content
- Organization of community engagement
  - Lack of volunteers and tutors
  - No contact for volunteers, liaison
  - Limited willingness to help and allow volunteers to come in
  - Legal boundaries of public education
  - Lack of follow-through/commitment
- Not valuing education
  - Respect, perception
  - 2/3 of Knox County does not have a child in school
  - Public does not perceive the magnitude of the problem
  - Short-term thinking
- Other
  - School counselors
  - Politics
  - Drugs
  - Disabilities and health issues (mental and physical)

### 3. What can we do

- Encourage volunteerism by all stakeholders (business, parents, faith-based, youth groups)
  - Get them into schools
  - Reading and math tutors
- Develop a return on investment approach for all stakeholders
  - Incentives
  - recognition
- Build relationships with business, invite them to be a part of school family
  - Increase ownership of business/community in school
  - Advisory boards
  - Get buy-in early
  - Expose students to career paths and varied options
  - Help with application and real-world based ideas
  - Corporate mentoring, guidance
  - Hands-on experience through Internships, apprenticeships, co-ops
  - Job skill introductions
  - Encourage engagement among employees
  - Involve scientists from OR
  - Take a child to work
  - Person at school and business who will reinforce/assign jobs
  - Do more than just talk, bring materials, actually demonstrate
- Collaborate on desired outcomes
  - Develop a long-term vision
  - Collectively "raise the bar"
  - Accountability for everyone
  - Make better use of educational foundations to ensure similar mission/vision/values and expression of needs
  - University/post-secondary should be a resource
  - Mini summits locally between business and educators
  - Days of service
  - Help community with vocabulary
  - More positives, PR about education
  - Recognize advancement of those in trades (viable career path)
  - Discover and communicate needs of both business and schools to each other
    - Include parents in this communication
    - Develop structure and source to continue
    - Communicate reasons to be involved and options to do so - network
    - Instill personal commitment
    - Use terminology that everyone understands
  - Connect through available agencies and resources
- Collectively impact student curriculum and outcomes
  - Engage students & share educational objectives with students
  - Introduction to trades early – 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Making certain professions attractive
  - Early identification of strengths and weaknesses, nurture early
  - Increase focus on what's really important – academics + athletics
  - College and career fairs
  - Provide education/training for the under-educated adults in the community
  - End social promotion
  - Get rid of perception of 2-tier education system
- Better utilize existing programs and resources
  - Use school building for other events
  - Full service community center
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Program (CCLC)
  - Adopt a School
  - Clubs – provide transportation
- Facilitate/foster the business/education relationships
  - Utilize the media
  - Chamber ambassador programs
  - Testimonials
  - Promote grass-roots involvement
    - Churches

- Civic organizations, youth-based organizations
  - School members attend homeowner and neighborhood associations
- Collectively improve teaching and learning
  - Teamwork and listening
  - Empower teachers to discipline
  - Involve professional organizations in the classroom and for teacher professional development
  - Incorporate best practices
  - Develop small learning communities
  - Help parents to be parents
  - Put passion back in teaching

## II. Effective Teaching

### A. Questions asked: What are the barriers in:

1. Attracting quality educators?
2. Preparing quality educators?
3. Inducting quality educators?
4. Retaining quality educators?
5. What are some possible solutions?

### B. Led by:

1. Athanasios Bayiates, Knox County Educators Association
2. Tom Brown, Holston Middle School

### C. Summarized Notes:

#### 1. Attracting Quality Educators

- Pay and benefits
  - Promises of loan forgiveness not honored
  - Signing bonus restrictions
  - More career choices available that compete with teaching
- Perceptions of education
  - Lack of status, respect for the teaching profession
  - Negative perceptions of public schools
- Work environment
  - Fear
  - Flexibility
  - Time constraints
  - Legal ramifications
  - Discipline
  - Lack of support at the building level for staff (aides, assistants)
  -
- Quality Teachers
  - Have to like kids
  - Responsibilities extend beyond school walls
  - Place teachers based on skill strengths
- Local funding is the majority
- Consistency across the district (e.g., TAP not available system-wide)

#### 2. Educator Preparation

- Lack of non-traditional access
- Length of preparation time (5 yrs), then low pay
  - one-year non-paid internship
- Need classroom exposure earlier - not enough hands-on experience
- Being taught in a way that we should not teach
- Lack of content knowledge
- Rigor/relevance
- Misconceptions about classroom
- Not prepared to teach the wide-variety of issues – learning, behavior, handicap, medical
- Not practical enough; too much theory
- Collaboration, team prep time
- Lack of mentor programs
- More partnerships with colleges and states
- Expense of programs

- Teaching everything in lower grades
- Clearer understanding of district needs
- 3. Induction of Educators
  - Staff development
  - Lack of mentoring (qualified and trained) and cohorts
  - Poor classroom management
    - Experienced help to deal with discipline problems
  - Lack of administrator support
  - Understanding culture
  - Lack of planning time in the regular school day
- 4. Retaining and Supporting Experienced Educators
  - Pay scale
  - Lack of recognition and respect
  - Support systems
    - From administration on discipline issues
    - Lack of parental support
    - Professional development – collaboration and funding
  - Lack of materials
  - Class size
  - Given new curriculum w/out input
  - Lack of teaching assistants
  - Stress
  - Burnout
  - Inflexible scheduling
  - Isolation
- 5. State & Federal Regulations
  - Oppressive
  - Inflexible
  - One size fits all
  - Teachers need a bigger voice
    - Non educators making decisions and creating legislation
    - Need better communication with legislature
  - Full-faith and credit – states recognize
  - Unfunded mandates
  - Need licensure options
  - NCLB – no creative aspects, no critical thinking skills
- 6. Possible solutions
  - For retaining and supporting experienced educators:
    - Stress reduction – filter & shelter – protect disruption of time
    - Health club type membership or related classes accessible
    - Work environment MUST be as positive as possible
    - Strong, supported discipline policies
    - Breaks in schedule - Free time in classroom – no meetings or in-service
    - Last 9 weeks there are no breaks
    - Increased benefits, such as 401K
    - More support staff
    - Funding for materials
    - Mentoring
    - Promotion system for teachers in the classroom
    - Ability to get outside of classroom
    - Change environment
    - Incentives/bonus
    - Recognition and celebration
    - Tenure revised
  - Pay for work: internships, mentoring, etc.
  - Benefits packages
  - IHE (Board of Regents Institutions of Higher Ed) & State Dept of Ed. - more conversation and alignment
  - Use people in workforce to teach

- Increase Special Ed. courses
- Get workforce involved in funding for future employees
- Reduce paperwork for educators
- Teamwork
- Earlier experience in classroom settings
  - Interns do more than copying and grading
- Reinstate FTA
- Have a class, “Teaching as a Profession,” in high school

### III. Developing a Communications Strategy

Questions asked:

1. *What are some words that stuck from the general session?*
2. *Who needs to hear it?*
3. *Tell the story (in 2 minutes or less; What would you tell your neighbor?, e.g.)*

B. Led by:

1. Hallerin Hilton Hill,
2. Dee Haslam

#### 1. Words that Stuck?

- Value of education
  - People who pay for education and don't have school aged children need to care
  - Sense of urgency
  - Perception
  - Complacency – good is not good enough!
- Communication to stakeholders – educating parents and community
- What needs to be taught – curriculum
- Engagement...students, parents, community, business
  - HS dual path = NO! 1 Path = success!
- Begin early...home, pre-K, K-3
- Address non-academic issues – schools serve as whole life facility (mental illness, training, resource center).
  - Shared responsibility – not just schools
  - Cooperation – team mentality
  - Community support & “buy-in”
  - Change perception of community
  - Communicate expectations
- How to meet the needs of all students (low, average, high)
- Connecting all educational levels (alignment)
- Develop a community that can self-support
- Focus on skills and getting a job
- Value diversity and multiculturalism – embrace and celebrate
- Jobs are changing – must prepare them for jobs of tomorrow; relevance
- Benchmarks – e.g., low college and high school graduation rate
- Honoring all professionals – eliminate stigma of technical training
- Teacher retention
- Matching resources with needs
- Adult education – are you as prepared as your child is?

#### 2. Who needs to hear it?

- All stakeholders
- Parents
- Greater partnership between industry and educators
- Decision makers (central office, school board, business community, county commission, elected officials)
- Social groups, churches
- Non-parents
- Social services
- Senior citizens and retirees
- Judiciary
- Under-educated adults

- Influential students
- Colleges who teach teachers
- Young families
- Baby boomers
- ALL Tennesseans who are not engaged!

3. Tell the Story (in 2 minutes)

- “Children...A renewable energy source that benefits us all. We care for them now, they’ll care for us later.”
- “Shift Happens. It’s happening faster than we have recognized. Attitudes are shifting in society and the family which causes the students not to be engaged. Face and embrace the change and recognizing contributions of diverse community are at the heart of it.”
- “Not good enough. Standards aren’t high enough. Why? Education is the foundation upon which economic prosperity is built, both for the individual and the community. Just because I do not have children does not mean I shouldn’t be involved.”

#### IV. Making Learning Relevant

##### A. Questions asked:

1. Consider something you’ve learned since high school, what are some of the characteristics of how you learned it that made it relevant for you?
2. How might current school age students describe the relevance of their school work to their future?
3. In your work environment or every day, what are some of the resources you rely on to solve problems?
4. In training workers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what might be some challenges to making learning relevant?

##### B. Led by:

1. George Ashe, Hardin Valley Academy
2. Becky Ashe, Knox County Schools
3. Don Lawson, Knox County Schools

##### C. Summarized Notes:

1. Considering something you’ve learned since high school, what are some of the characteristics of how you learned it that made it relevant for you?
  - Hands-on learning, field experiences
  - Personal investment of instructor in the learner
  - Responsibility for impact of not learning the skill
  - Desire to please instructor/boss
  - Personal motivation
  - Understanding own learning style and how to apply material learned
    - Visual learner, auditory learner (for example)
    - Locate information and then apply it
  - Practice, trial and error
  - Team work/collaboration
  - Environmental adaptation (technology)
  - Necessary requirement for job performance
  - Easily accessible
2. How might current school age students describe the relevance of their school work to their future?
  - Majority do not see relevance – they must see connections from school to life
  - Connections can be made from: family, teachers, business sector, community at large
  - Only when in vocational/science classes
  - Learn for now, not for the future (short-term gratification)
  - Students placed in classes due to space, not relevance or interest
  - Some teachers don’t show or know real life examples of relevance
  - Some students are in school because they have to be (hate school attitude)
  - Some mentors teach that they can be who they want to be
3. In your work environment or every day, what are some of the resources you rely on to solve problems?
  - Life experiences
  - Technology skills (internet, communication)
  - Co-workers, family, friends and other experts in the field (human resources)
  - Team building, collaboration
  - Governing policies and procedures
  - Education – on-going

- Books, print material
  - Faith-based resources (“put God back in schools”)
  - Communication skills
  - Problem solving skills
  - Comparative data analysis
  - Process of elimination
  - Visualization
  - Analogies
  - Finances
  - Community resources – partnerships
  - Creativity
4. In Training workers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which might some challenges to making learning relevant?
- Technology & training for the future
  - Hands-on application
  - Accessing available resources to meet the needs
  - Providing more vocational/technical training facilities
  - Community engagement of stakeholders
    - Parental involvement and knowledge of current education
    - Teachers’ knowledge of industry
  - Understanding learning styles
  - Early identification of children who need help
  - Critical thinking skills
  - Problem solving & results-oriented work
  - Maintaining a fast-paced curriculum
  - Cross-curriculum training that makes learning content specific

## **V. Workforce Training**

### **A. Questions asked:**

1. *What are barriers to workforce training?*

### **B. Led by:**

1. Windie Wilson, Workforce Connections
2. Mike Hudson, Pellissippi State Technical Community College
3. Jeff Davis, Tennessee Technology Center
4. Preston Cloud, B&W Y12

### **C. Summarized Notes:**

#### Barriers to workforce training:

- One-size fits all
- Information about income levels not there
- Kids don’t know money values
- Lack of real-world application/relevance
- Exposure to career opportunities
  - Narrow options earlier; early identification of skills
  - More publicity about options
  - Identify students who fit criteria for certain scholarships
  - Educate teachers about today’s workforce
- Stigma of trades – parental value of those professions
  - Current terminology about training programs
- Space and what we have to offer
- Gender equity
- NCLB and other legislation (age requirement for apprenticeships, e.g., 18)
- Gap between understanding school courses and school “terms” → community
- Lack of accountability for students
- Not bringing right people to the table
- Lack of soft skills and work ethic; maturity level of students
- More non-traditional students
- Change in learning needs
- Transportation
- Priority of training for business - ROI

- Financial resources
- Motivation for employees to train
- Availability and accessibility of specialized training
- Communication among training providers, and between providers and business
- Lack of focus in school system
- Technology training should be an option v. an alternative
- Childcare
- Time – limited instructional time
- Motivation of students – no clue about future, non-supportive home life; background of students
- Identification of skills
- Too much emphasis on the goal and not enough on the process
- Keeping pace with training needs and teaching staff
- No transition plan for graduates
- Confidence level of students
- Less content and more transferable skills – teach people how to learn
  - Strong basic skills lacking
- Non-college programs worthiness and integrity
- Discrimination issues for various reasons
- Lack of apprenticeship opportunities
- Lack of workforce or job training via the internet
- Lack of training facilities
- Lack of public relations

## **VI. Attracting & Retaining a Quality Workforce**

### **A. Questions asked:**

1. *What are some ways to attract a quality workforce?*
2. *How do we retain quality workforce?*

### **B. Led by:**

1. Gene Crabtree, 21<sup>st</sup> Mortgage
2. Tierney Bates, Knoxville Area Urban League Young Professionals
3. Brandon Clarke, Young Professionals of Knoxville
4. Andrew Shafer, UT Young Alumni
5. Mary Mahoney, UT Career Services

### **C. Summarized Notes:**

1. Attracting
  - Publicize benefits of living in Knoxville
    - Lower cost of living
    - Good climate
    - Recreation
    - Friendliness
    - Natural beauty
  - Stop recruiting lower wage jobs
    - Turn OR/UT knowledge into good paying jobs
    - Be competitive with pay, benefits, vacation, bonuses, fair treatment, workplace culture
  - Improve cultural diversity
  - Need vision of future – focused effort and common message
  - Need dynamic leadership
  - Continue and expand development of downtown (condos, shops, entertainment)
  - Support the visual and performing arts; promote cultural events
  - Metro government
  - Increase investment in public schools
  - Actively recruit
  - Increase support for innovative start-ups
  - Attract mid-career changers
  - Southern culture
  - Increased partnerships between county, city, UT – public/private partnerships
  - Collaboration in technical corridor
  - Focus on specialized characteristic within Knoxville or surrounding counties (“Green City”, “Worlds Fair”)

- Improve on what already exists to promote long-term commitments
    - Sustainable jobs and industries
    - Young professional initiatives
    - Show growth opportunities – opportunities for advancement
    - Show community involvement
  - Follow-through and implement ideas of the community
  - Make it youth-friendly
  - Stop government bickering
  - Engage recruitment personnel
  - Who do we want to attract?
    - The “best and the brightest”
    - Creative, critical thinkers
    - Problem solvers
    - Good work ethic
    - Team players
    - Communication skills – oral and written
    - Good judgment skills
2. Retaining
- Who?
    - Engineers, accountants, teachers, nursing/healthcare
    - Losing technicians & skilled labor
    - Skilled – creativity – capital
    - Most motivated and dedicated
    - Folks doing a good job
  - How?
    - Hire the right people
    - Offer mentoring opportunities
    - Survey HS and college students – ask them why they leave or stay
    - Educate on cost of living (compared to other places)
    - Social networking Invest in organizational assessments (what employees say/think is really going on)
      - Focus groups – decision making involvement
    - Work environment
      - Flexible schedule
      - Child care and elder care at workplace
      - Family friendly
      - Consistency and fairness
      - Diversity training
    - Revitalization – continue beautification of downtown area
      - Affordable downtown living
      - Better public transportation
      - Work life balance
      - Celebrations
      - Promote benefits of cultural diversity
    - Job and residence compatibility
    - Advancement opportunities – based on performance
      - Incentives to stay with employer
      - Career development opportunities
    - Reputation of education
    - Things open later

## **VII. Engaging the Under-Utilized Workforce**

### **A. Questions asked:**

1. *What are barriers to engaging:*
  - a. Ex-Offenders?
  - b. Under-employed?
  - c. Older workers?
  - d. Military and veterans?
  - e. People with disabilities?
2. *What are solutions in engaging these groups?*

B. Led by:

1. Emily Hatfield, Tennessee Career Center
2. Barbara Monty, Knoxville-Knox County CAC Office of Aging
3. Elaine Johnson, Tennessee Eastern Probation Office
4. Karen Pershing, Greater Knoxville Area United Way
5. Ruth Brock, Tennessee Department of Human Services
6. Joe Mazzola, East Tennessee Military Affairs Council

C. Summarized Notes:

1. Ex-Offenders:

**Barriers**

- Public perception/stereotype
- Ostracized by co-workers
- Lower education, lack of “trade skill”
- Identifying their potential
- Psychological factors
  - Need to be “institutionally deprogrammed”
- Lack of self-esteem
- Lack of documentation
- Employers taking the “risk”/fear of repeat offenses
- Employers are not educated on community resources that are available for both there and the ex-offender.
- Restrictions on time flexibility
- Don't have food, clothing, shelter (“What's your home address?”)
- Lack of supportive network

**Solutions**

- Community & personal awareness
- Educate the public
- Use technology and media
- Make education available for anyone at anytime
- Psychological counseling
- CAC Neighborhood Services – expand these services
- Businesses get tax credits and have specific skill training
- Trade schools focused on ex-offenders
- Market success stories
- Have a good transition plan with a permanent job
- 

2. Under-Employed

**Barriers**

- Stigma
- Lack of skills; non-specific education and skills
- Lack of experience
- Lack of motivation
  - Lack of work ethic
  - Lack of self-esteem/support
- Lack of exposure and awareness of job markets
- Low job market
- Low expectations
- Lack of contacts/connections
- Lack of mobility, reluctance to relocate
- Adversity to change
- Lifestyle choice/family needs
- Discrimination

**Solutions**

- Community-based coordination of support services (training, programs)
  - Using public school buildings to offer such programs
- More specific business and education partnerships
  - Exposure to hands-on experience for all students/internships to gain experience, work-based learning
  - Job fairs
  - More job development

- Education-loan forgiveness
- Mentoring programs
- Transportation – rail system
- Get information from the under-employed about their needs
- Flexibility in jobs
- Affordable child care

### 3. Older Workers

#### **Barriers**

- Generational gap
  - Work culture – older worker's values are different
  - Communication between generations
  - Working under younger managers
- Must regain self worth
- Perceptions
  - Employer perceptions of older workers: assuming older workers are a liability or don't have skills; perception that learning takes longer; lack of longevity; view that they are not worth a competitive salary
  - Self perception (of older workers) of not being employable
- Where to connect with older workers
- Identify skill sets that are transferable
- Perceived unwillingness to change
- Older workers not familiar with networking barriers
- Technology gap
  - Perception that older workers don't have skills or can't learn
  - Lack of technology skills
- Family commitments
- Health insurance liability
- Expectations - salary

#### **Solutions**

- Teach networking skills and have networking events
- Provide technology training
- Educate employers to the value of the worker
  - Understanding that older workers desire work
- Find out about open-minded employers
- Market the soft skills (work ethic, dependability, etc.)
- Identify and utilize available resources
  - Publish a services directory – market it
- Develop professional partnerships
- Change negative perceptions and educate
- Promote better communication at all levels

### 4. Military and Veterans

#### **Barriers**

- Recognition – employers don't recognize industry/military experience
- Misperceptions
  - Hard to work with because used to giving directions
  - Transition from disciplined world to non-disciplined world
  - Military statistics can be widely interpreted
  - Experience not labeled properly when they interview
- Varying education/training needs during non-peace time; transferable skills
  - Unless around a base, skills not always transferable to civilian world
  - Military training not looked at as public training; experience not labeled
  - Gray issues with “black/white” military training
- PTSD and unsupported/undiagnosed issues
- Family concerns
  - Base living to civilian
  - Family not used to having them around
- Financial issues

#### **Solutions**

- Educate potential employers

- Communications (to change perceptions) and overcome biases
  - Percentage of under-utilized workforce
  - Articles in News Sentinel
  - Translating military skills to civilian
- Reemployment Act
- Greater access of services
- Adequate treatment for separation; diagnosis of disorders
  - How to treat/cope/work with PTSD
  - Family support
- Reconnect America
- Corporate Grey

#### 5. People with Disabilities:

##### **Barriers**

- Perceptions - openness of companies to hire
- Not cost effective for businesses to hire
- People with physical disabilities are more likely to be hired than those with mental disability
- Requires more training (cost/time) to provide for people with disabilities
  - Work site modifications
- Unknown or unavailable resources for transportation
- Is the pay adequate/equitable?
- Discrimination & labels

##### **Solutions**

- Follow a good example (Walgreens, Kroger's)
- Educate about disabilities – teach benefits of hiring
- Knowledge about resources (job coach, voc. rehab)
  - Agencies who are involved with people with disabilities could better assist employers with training, paperwork, etc.
- Highlight success stories
- More interaction between school counselors at secondary and post-secondary institutions to know the proper procedures for transfer of information regarding disabilities.
- Equal fair treatment

### **VIII. Bridging the Gap Between Higher Ed and Business**

#### A. *Questions asked:*

1. *What are barriers in bridging the gap between business and higher education?*
2. *What are some solutions?*

#### B. Led by:

1. Teri Brahams, Pellissippi State Technical Community College
2. Leslie Fox, UT Career Services
3. Rebecca Harmon, TVHRA and DeRoyal
4. Dr. Lynn Champion, University of Tennessee

#### C. Summarized Notes:

##### 1. Barriers

- Disconnect among elected officials, educational institutions and employers
  - Different goals and expectations
  - Finding a common language
- Communication –
  - Subject matter relevance and opportunities
    - Curriculum misaligned to business needs
    - Lack of exposure to the workforce (for students and teachers)
    - Big picture – outcomes
  - Awareness and availability of internship opportunities
  - Lack of career services and guidance, both in high school and college
  - Respect of all professions
  - Communication must exist outside media
- Funding and Resources
  - Funding for community outreach
  - Time commitment

- Technology
- Staffing
- Resistance to change
- Education moves more slowly than business – unable to react fast enough
- Qualifications in tech/fields...different “speak”
- No follow through after Summits/meetings

## 2. Solutions

- Liaisons between business and education
  - Identification of future skills and how to integrate into curriculum
  - Assessment and feedback by employers and alumni
  - Teaching workplace ethics
  - Utilization of community organizations and coordinate programs across region
  - Work with Chamber to list liaisons between education, business and community
- Communication
  - Advisory Boards – connect with curriculum boards
  - More opportunities for dialogue between education and business
  - Greater emphasis on internships and co-ops (for teachers and students)
  - Alumni network
  - Community blog
  - TV/radio, newspaper, smaller publications
- Funding
- National Focus
- Teacher training (“Teacher Academy”) - work at a business for a month and company pays teacher a stipend.