

BEP Workforce/Educator Panel Questions – Combined Responses

1. Can you provide a few examples of the best ways for employers to partner with our secondary and post-secondary educational partners to increase engagement with our future workforce/ the pipeline?

Superintendent Bergstrom/Jenny Bushman:

- a. Internships
- b. Working with ISD 47 administration to continually update our staff (Business Summit idea revisited)
- c. Support with materials and supplies for courses that are or may be offered
- d. Job Fair participation

Superintendent Neubauer:

- a. School presentations, having staff tour facilities, “What qualities are employers looking for?” Apprenticeships and Internships. Presentation of skills etc. to classes for example, “How does a practitioner paint the body of a vehicle?” “What does a vehicle technician look for when servicing a vehicle?”

Angie Dahle

Take the time to get Involved in community/school career events:

- a. **High School Career presentations:** Ex. Tech month/ Healthcare Month
- b. **CareerONE Summer Youth Program:** Career tracks include Construction/ Manufacturing, Healthcare, Public Safety and Early Childhood Ed.
 - i. Employers can provide local youth work sites, mock interviews, presentations, tours
- c. **High School job fairs**
- d. **Tour of Manufacturing**
- e. **EPIC (Exploring Potential Interests & Careers)**
- f. **CEO program**

Jackie Bauer

*Provide internships and post positions on our posting system, participate in on-campus coaching events, attend career fairs, create a special event where you serve food and another possible idea might be to bring a project on campus where students could work on it as part of their curriculum.

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. Participate in advisory board meetings
- b. Offer job shadow, internship, and work-based learning opportunities
- c. Participate in career/college fairs
- d. Offer to “share your story” as part of classroom visits to trades courses and/or careers courses

2. What do you recommend is the most successful ways to engage our future workforce?

Superintendent Bergstrom/Jenny Bushman

- a. Internships work very well. It provides students with opportunities to know if this is something they are interested in or not. Will also provide them with a lifelong skill if they are not interested as a career.
- b. Working with schools to help us develop the soft skills that might be necessary for our students to be successful.
 - i. Portrait of a Graduate

Superintendent Neubauer

- a. Working to align programs to allow for “conduits” for students to travel through resulting in a capstone class opportunity and eventually an internship or apprenticeship.
- b. Working toward an “Academy” model for high school (Career Pathways)

Jackie Bauer

It's always cool when students can come on campus and see the neat things that we have in our labs. Also, being able to show data about where graduates have found jobs and the salaries for those positions. Also, sharing interesting or fun internships that our current students are doing might interest younger students. Also, what clubs or organizations are doing within their fields might connect with the students. An example would be our esports Rockets Team, esports arena and then the esports Management Minor that we offer.

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. The best engagement has come from students coming to our campus, which allows them to literally "be a student" and get a sense of how the pathway feels
 - ii. Recognizing the financial challenges with this, our local Perkins leaders continue to support travel costs

3. What, if anything, are the secondary and post-secondary educational partners doing to keep students from moving out of our region for work?

Superintendent Bergstrom/Jenny Bushman

- a. We need to keep reminding students about opportunities. There are always some that think they have to leave the area because they feel a larger city provides more opportunities.

Jackie Bauer

Sharing internships that are here within the central MN area is one of the ways, also explaining the good benefits and opportunities available at these companies. There is also less competition for some of these roles versus students wanting to leave and go to a bigger city or another state. Also, we call upon our local central MN employers to help with coaching so that they are the ones who are sitting in front of the students talking to them.

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. Any time educators help students gain awareness of employment and post-high school education/training in our area I think it helps keep them here

4. What career resources including soft skills are your students equipped with before they graduate?

Superintendent Bergstrom/Jenny Bushman

- a. Portrait of a Graduate

Superintendent Neubauer

- a. We look to our core values of “Achievement, Support, Kindness, and Respect” as well as soft skills of attendance and work habits.

Jackie Bauer

Many of our majors teach career readiness within their program classes and the Career Center teaches a course in Career Exploration 111. Soft skills are covered in these courses, but we also believe that internships can be even better preparation in the soft skills area. One of the programs that SCSU has is called Huskies Advance. Students can enroll in tracts while they attend SCSU and when they graduate, they will complete the tract and earn a badge for their transcript. Huskies Advance has tracts in Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Social Justice and Environmental Sustainability just to name a few. Students complete projects and goals through this program which leads to development of their soft skills and they are mentored by a professor or staff member to guide them through this process.

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. In nearly all our programs, students are required to take courses that examine a variety of human relations and workplace perceptions
- b. It is not uncommon for students, especially those of a traditional age, to leave with “developing” soft skills, but we hope our persistent and daily attention to “industry standards in the workplace” helps students be more prepared

5. **Angie/Jackie/Steve question – what programs/training opportunities do you offer to support our local business workforce challenges – recruitment, staffing and retention?**

Angie Dahle

Recruitment/ Staffing

- **Recruiting Resources:** Job fairs/hiring events, employer tabling, contacts for employers, job listing advice, other recruiting ideas
- **Career Solutions pool of job seeker candidates**
- **Career Solutions HR Networking Group**

Retention

- **Funding for Training:** [Incumbent Worker Training](#) to upskill existing workers, larger DEED training grants
- **Diversity & Inclusion Employer Resources:** Inclusive Workforce Employer (I-WE) designation

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. We hope that the more students we graduate from our programs, the more folks are then in our local workforce
- b. Our industry partners sometimes talk about the value of students who have gone through our programs being not just rooted in skill, but also that they are somewhat vetted and a better investment with less risk than a person coming straight from high school
- c. Our advisory board meetings often include back-and-forth dialogue about industry and education challenges, including retention, which we hope helps everyone at the table know their employees/students a little better and ways to connect with generational nuances

6. What resources can you equip our business leaders with today in effort to assist with the recruitment of future workforce?

Superintendent Bergstrom/Jenny Bushman

- a. We need to help families (parents/guardians) to understand the value of education besides a four-year college degree. Don't need to go to a four-year school to make a very good living wage
- b. Families need to be made aware of all the opportunities available in the region.

Superintendent Neubauer

- a. Provide access to students through classroom connections
- b. Potentially a periodic meeting of business partners with interested students
 - i. For example, monthly meeting between a banker and students interested in banking

Angie Dahle

Connections/ Career Events with local High Schools:

- **Discovery Days:** Welding, CDL, Healthcare
 - Welding cohort training
- **CareerONE Summer Youth Program:** Career tracks include Construction/ Manufacturing, Healthcare, Public Safety and Early Childhood Ed.
 - Employers can provide local youth work sites, mock interviews, presentations, business tours
- **Construct Tomorrow:** Hands on construction career exploration event
- **Youthbuild**

Jackie Bauer

First – know that the Career Center is here to connect you with our students and new graduates – our posting system reaches all of our students and you can post your part-time positions, internships and full-time “after graduation” positions on the system. We also offer a number of ways for you to come to campus and meet directly with the students through coaching –

resume reviews, mock interviews and LinkedIn Reviews. I can also provide you with the liaison in each of the 6 schools at SCSU who connect to the professors and students in that school:

1. Health & Wellness
2. School of Public Affairs
3. College of Science & Engineering
4. College of Liberal Arts
5. Herberger School of Business
6. School of Education

I am also happy to partner and work with you on creating stand-alone events for the students for your company. And I can connect you (or the liaisons in the schools can) to the clubs on campus that are connected to certain majors – often times you can come in and speak to the club or present a topic to them.

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. There is an open invitation for any industry folks who would like to tour our programs, engage with our instructors, and perhaps participate in advisory boards or meet students

7. How do you track the progress of your students during their education and after? – If time allows

Superintendent Bergstrom/Jenny Bushman

- a. During their time in school, we use a “data warehouse” that takes all the information we have in various electronic locations and helps us access it very quickly
 - i. Grades, attendance, behavior
- b. After graduation, able to see some information through the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System or SLEDS
 - i. Matches student data from PK – postsecondary and into the workforce
 1. Things like - where going to school, course taking patterns in high school, etc.

Jackie Bauer

Students at SCSU are assigned an advising, career and financial coach and are followed through a software tracking system that keeps their coaches advised as to their progress and alerts when additional intervention or a conversation is recommended. After students graduate, the Minnesota State System requires all of the two year and four- year colleges in the State of Minnesota to follow up with their graduates within one year to find out where they are working, what their position is and if they share, their starting salary. It also asks if they have decided to attend further college or another path after graduation. These stats are listed on the Career Center front page under “Graduate Follow-Up”.

Dean Steve Holmberg

- a. On campus, we have a variety of supports for students that literally cover almost any issues, like tutoring, food insecurity, mental health, FAFSA assistance, transportation costs and more
- b. After graduation, our process is all over the board, but in my division (trades), most of our students retain contact information for our instructors and frequently reach back for assistance or just give life updates