



DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CAREERCONNECT

MakerConnect Industry Summit – April 12, 2016

Student Exhibit

Advanced manufacturing students from different schools and districts brought their projects to the meeting and were able to explain the design, testing, and building process. Participants were able to ask questions and interact with both teachers and students.

Brainstorm Session: What project ideas do industry leaders have to bring into the classroom and do educators have project ideas to bounce off industry?

Yellow Table – Asked the question - *What is needed in curriculum?*

- Students have challenges building portfolios.
- Assignment with a relevant audience to show work to so there's motivation behind projects.
- Need to target younger students so they take an interest earlier.
- Help students understand that it's ok to start smaller and with less glamorous projects than they sometimes do in the classroom, sometimes industry is less "exciting" as the classroom projects.

Green Table

- Often kids are interested in more projects at young ages so how to target them younger
- How do schools stay up-to-date with the rapid changes the industry goes through...how to keep up with industry standards?
- There is a huge need for teachers in the industry, it's difficult to find good teachers and encourage them to stay – poaching is an issue.
- Soft skills – seems schools are doing good work to help students develop.

Question: because of the need for more manufacturing instructors, would companies be willing to lend their employees as instructors inside the school? A few companies volunteered their support and those who were willing shared their business cards.

Red Table

- They discussed the need for students to know all the basic steps of the manufacturing process. This is especially crucial in the automation process as industry needs employees that can understand the basic processes that goes into the automation (like breaking down an electric motor...). They discussed how often maintenance workers are being poached by other companies because there aren't enough people who know how to maintain and fix the machines.
- Emphasized the importance of students not only knowing basic math curriculum - algebra, pre-calc, calc, trig, geometry – but also how it's applied in the real world
- Soft skills are important, but it's also important to understand how to play to your own strengths and that you can be marketable for a job even if you don't have all the best soft skills.

Poaching is a concern, if a manufacturer puts time in to train an employee, they might be incentivized to move on. Hoping to change that idea, referenced the quote: "If you're afraid of training an employee and having them leave, what happens if you don't train that employee and they stay."



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Blue Table

- Asked for a student's opinion about the best environment to work in, he said it is important to be free to be creative and to be allowed to fail.
- Perception of manufacturing: how do you get parents to understand that these careers are important and just as needed and good as other paths?
- Trying to get more kids to see what all they could do within the industry.
- Would like to start earlier to involve middle school students and increase interest at a younger age.

Swiss Model - Discussion

Training the workforce differently. We want to push manufacturers to think more about competencies than degrees.

Markle Foundation and LinkedIn create Skillful

- Markle Foundation launched Skillful in Denver and Phoenix (www.skillful.com)
- Hope is to bring educators, companies, job seekers together to discover the skills that are needed to be successful at a job and how can teachers teach the skills to support that.
- Focus on advanced manufacturing and people with middle skills.
- Engage workers so they can figure out where they fit and how to be successful.
- Chose Colorado because it's one of the most innovative workspaces in America.
- Hoping to help address the skills gap and convince employers to hire more based on skills than simply on degrees.
- Career coaching to help job seekers to find jobs.
- Helps identify where there's movement in employment, opportunity to grow, what has a living wage at the start.
- Industry Map - shows what jobs and paths lead to other jobs and paths.
- Explore the site to learn more about middle skills jobs!