



Mercer County Business Advisory Council Joint Statement February 2020

The mission of the Mercer County BAC and AMBE is: Creating a connection between local schools & the local business community, assisting in the education of our local students concerning local career opportunities & the career paths available, to further establish a talented & sustainable workforce for our region. ESC officials and AMBE have partnered since 2014 and our work together meets all of the requirements of a Business Advisory Council.

As required by law, the following statements describe how the Mercer County ESC and its member districts, in conjunction with the Auglaize Mercer Business and Education Alliance, better known as AMBE, have worked and will continue to work to meet the responsibilities outlined in our BAC Plan. Currently, twelve Auglaize and Mercer County Schools, as well as both ESC's collaborate with AMBE and its nearly 50 businesses.

Summary of meetings conducted

1. Shelly Busse, AMBE Executive Director, met twice with local superintendents since August to provide an update on the work of AMBE and its impact on our member school students.
2. Shelly Busse, AMBE Executive Director, met with the Mercer County Educational Service Center's BOE to provide updates to those shared with our member school superintendents. She has also met with each member district's Board of Education to share the work of AMBE.
3. AMBE, Economic Development and ESC/School Representatives meet quarterly to review progress and work on the development of new initiatives. Meetings were held in August, October, December, January and May.

Mercer County BAC's plan and implementation progress:

Summary of specific activities

1. September 20, 2019: AMBE, with guidance from economic development, higher education institutions and administrative personnel at both the Auglaize and the Mercer County ESC held its second annual Inspire Career Concert. The purpose of the event was to focus senior students to advocate for themselves and to consider opportunities as they interacted with local business officials in our area.
2. March 4 and 5, 2020: Talent Connection Forum (TCF) this is an annual outreach program connecting businesses to students. The student focus group is current juniors, but each district has the options of inviting select seniors who may still be struggling with their plans beyond high school. Although this is only a one-day event allowing local businesses and local students to meet, much work is completed prior to the event to ensure it is valuable to both the businesses and the students. Students get answers about real-world careers from area business members. One of the greatest advantages of the TCF is the students hear directly from the business professionals. This information in conjunctions with the business connections created during the event may possibly lead to a workforce career.

Advice and recommendations on curriculum

1. Continue to investigate how to build a career counseling system similar to what is happening at Van Wert City Schools to support meaningful job shadowing opportunities.
2. Summer 2019: convened career exploration teachers for multiple sessions to develop a comprehensive curriculum with resources to provide consistency in the county/region. This has been implemented during the 2019-2020 school year and will be revised annually each summer.

Advice on economic and job trends

1. AMBE will work directly with building principals to support job readiness training. AMBE officials meet annually with all county administrators to inform education professions about economic trends, the job market and review how partnerships can be improved. Data from 2019 Talent Connection shows an increase in the number of students interested in construction and automotive, which are high demand jobs in our region. Interest has flatlined for manufacturing and logistics.
2. This June 2019, Shelly Busse will be presented at the Mercer County ESC Administrative Retreat. She provided a synopsis of the previous academic year's work, provided an opportunity for input as well as provided a tentative schedule of events for the upcoming academic year. She will do this update and gather input at the 2020 retreat scheduled for June 16-17, 2020.

Advice on enhancing relationships among business and education personnel

1. For the past four years, AMBE has hosted Summer Teacher Tours in Auglaize and Mercer counties. The tours allow educators to learn more about local businesses. They provide opportunities to view/explore local business, to learn what businesses are looking for in employees, to inform of the education/training expectations and any other essential information each business wants to share. Registration will begin in April for tours in June and July 2020. For more information: <https://ambealliance.org/summer-educator-tours/>
2. Because manufacturing is high demand in our region, we want to explore how to expose parents and students about careers in manufacturing.
3. Students are able to request Job Shadow experiences at any time during their high school career. For more information: <https://ambealliance.org/job-shadowing-opportunities/>

February 26, 2020