



## Visioneering Wichita Literate Community Strategic Alliance Summary of Accomplishments to Date September 2007

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A newly-formed Alliance, the Literate Community Strategic Alliance has mobilized quickly and accomplished much on many fronts, including:

### **Overview of Adult Basic Education in Sedgwick County:**

The Leadership Team developed a flow chart for adults who want to improve their basic education or literacy. An intricate chart was devised with entry points with the following four organizations: WATC, KANSEL, Goodwill and WIC. Margaret Harris, WATC, explained the various levels on the chart and responded to questions. During the presentation, minor modifications were made to the chart. Meeting participants expressed their appreciation to Margaret and the Leadership Team for their good work and flow chart.

### **Glossary of Terms:**

It was quickly determined that a glossary of terms was needed to for the many acronyms on the flow chart. In the future, acronyms will be defined in an effort to get everyone on the same page.

### **Capacity of Existing Organizations:**

There was a discussion about the existing capacity of existing organizations to serve more adult learners. Lack of funding was identified as a barrier to providing additional services.

### **Asset Mapping:**

It was determined that the group needed to identify other community assets and organizations that provided adult education services in the Wichita MSA. The following assets were identified: *Mental Health Association (MHA), USD259, Butler Community College, Cowley Community College, Breakthrough Club, COMCARE, Wichita State University (TRIO Program) and the IAM (Union)*. This is not an exhaustive list. It was noted that some for-profit, non-profit, faith-based organizations and many other entities provide educational services as well.

### **Future Discussion Items:**

The following items were identified as needing additional discussion: *a) glossary of term; b) delivery sites; c) capacity of providers; d) waiting lists; e) need to establish a measurable 'benchmark;' f) barriers to providing more services; g) clarification on who is being served; and h) a need to survey service providers.*

### **Survey Work Group:**

A work group agreed to meet and draft a survey for service providers. The survey will be submitted to the Leadership Team for review and comment in October.

### **Strategic Alliance Strategies**

- Retain our existing and future workforce and recruit new workers from outside the Wichita MSA. A larger skilled, educated and creative workforce is imperative.
- Provide a world-class system and facility for adult basic education, technical education programs and customized training. Adult basic education will provide the soft skills and literacy necessary for potential employees to be competitive. To accomplish these benchmarks, the Literacy Alliance provides a process by which Wichita MSA groups, organizations, coalitions, and other Visioneering alliances can develop a comprehensive approach to the improvement of literacy.
- Expect all students to graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills (including basic life skills and critical thinking skills) to either immediately enter the workforce or attend certified training, technical college/community college or university.
- Understand, celebrate and embrace all cultures and racial diversity and make it evident in everything we do. Encourage interaction among all people and break down barriers.
- Reduce the earnings gap between minorities and non-minorities.
- Increase graduation rates.
- Close achievement gap.

### **Strategic Alliance Benchmark**

Under development.

### **Economic Development Foundation Vision Supported**

Before 2024, the Wichita MSA will be a leading community for retaining and expanding current businesses and creating and recruiting new businesses.

### **Education Foundation Vision Supported**

Before 2024, the Wichita MSA will have a globally competitive educational system that encourages and supports life-long learning and contributes to the social, cultural and economic vitality of our diverse community.

### **Key Benchmarks Targeted**

**Job Growth:** By 2008, exceed the highest of the annual percentage job growth rate of the U.S., Omaha, Tulsa, Kansas City and Oklahoma City.

**Per Capita Income:** Stop the 21-year decline of Wichita per capita income as a percentage of U.S. per capita income before 2011. By 2024 exceed the annual average of Omaha, Tulsa, Kansas City and Oklahoma City.

***“I am convinced that communities that strive to make their citizens “smarter” will have a competitive edge in today’s knowledge-based society. Measuring the intellectual growth of the community only by the number of post-graduate degrees conferred discounts the struggle and contributions of countless citizens to improve themselves, not only for workforce advancements but for societal and cultural awareness and maneuverability. If we are to achieve the promise of our long range strategic plan, we must provide the resources so that all citizens have a fair and equal chance to participate and thrive in our collective vision. Citizen proficiency in reading and math skills is an essential asset for the retention, recruitment and expansion of workforce talent which leads to greater job growth and higher per capita income – two important Visioneering Key Benchmarks.”***

**Commissioner Tim Norton  
Sedgwick County Government and Literate Community Alliance Leadership Team**

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