

Community Sustainability Partnership  
**Fostering Social Responsibility**  
Attendee Discussion Comments 1/12/07

*Definition: attitude, spirit, and willingness of people to engage in collective civic activities*

Outcome Area

1. Improve Education Attainment Levels  
e.g. beginning at birth
- Continuous lifelong learning
  - Building of Skills
  - Better use of inter-generational wisdom
  - Roles for all despite limits
  - Roles for ex offenders
  - Functional use of the English language
  - Attract and retain to West Michigan

Potential Indicator or Measurement

- School readiness or preparedness
- Professional Development e.g. Individuals/hours/courses taken
- Awards or recognition
- Graduation/drop out rates
- Student achievement on standardized tests
- Parent involvement
- Student environment/student population ratio
- Measure communication skills (employee/employee or employee/supervisor)
- Measurement of employees with/without degrees
- Certification for teaching skills
- Peer training, mentoring programs
- Inventory of skills and assets
- Provision of transportation, daycare for parents
- Community volunteer aids by program or activity
- Entrepreneurship education
- Tracking lifelong learning
- Transition to jobs from CED
- CRC Certifications/GED's secondary
- Enrollment workforce development programs
- ESC graduation enrollment
- Minimum attainment standards
- Measure collaboration across boundaries (i.e. school district to school district) (private and public sector)
- Number of mentoring programs e.g. institutionalize i.e. tax abatement
- Intellectual capital

## 2. Increasing Knowledge Competitiveness Through Life-Long Learning from Birth to 12<sup>th</sup> grade (age 0-18)

- Focus on transferable skills
- Start as early as possible e.g. Headstart
- Correlation between higher education and available opportunities
- Need to enable whole people
- Build on the Chamber of Commerce programs and activities e.g. Center for Healing Racism
- Ability to use mass media to gather and/or use information
- Patterns for upward career mobility
- Look for and build on “sparks” that motivate people and encourage their learning
- Correlation teacher interest/qualifications and working in LEED buildings
- People need jobs and employment first
- Affordable and accessible education
- Alignment MEAP and no child left behind

## 3. Building Community Capital and Cultural Awareness

- Need for balanced diversity in our region including cities and neighborhoods
- Social interaction between groups
- Sustaining community members
- Measuring social equity
- More affordable services
- Need for increased amount of resources to be made available e.g. public, non-profit, private, etc.
- Meeting basic local needs and addressing sustainability issues
- Increasing roles of neighborhood associations
- Promotion civic engagement
- Efforts to promote inclusion
- Opposition to discriminatory policies, institutions, and behaviors
- Utilizing expression plays/theatre/documentary of ideas/spoken and written music

- Training and development e.g. individuals/hours/type of program
- Credentialing technical qualifications
- Number of parents in continuing education programs
- Leadership development and training
- Aptitude testing to reveal skills
- Percent of local business support for continuing education for employees
- Number of students in specialized advanced learning programs
- Number of ~8 year olds being taught how to read
- Sustainability certificate programs and certificate e.g. GRCC
- Number of sq. ft. “Green Schools” “Better Learning Environment”
- Literacy levels
- Number of libraries/books checked out
- Number of people in advanced degree programs
- Number of bookstores
- Productivity Measurements for LEED buildings
- Critical thinking skills (speaking/writing)
- Number of youth programs/activities

- Population/ethnic group demographics
- Net increase/decrease of workforce e.g. citizens leaving/coming to Grand Rapids
- Home ownership vs. rental occupancy
- Benefit and offering choices: health, education, others, etc.
- Availability and number of jobs that pay above the living wage
- Encouragement of international learning/relationships-international living
- Programs to bridge language barriers, particularly in health care
- Diversity training/cultural awareness facilitator training
- Charitable contributions e.g. cash/in-kind/activities – where dollars go!
- Individual dollar donations/volunteer hours
- Requirement of high school students in community work e.g. number and hours
- Number of cultural celebrations and events
- Number of students in vocational training (schools and universities)
- Number of collaborations (e.g. schools and non-profits)

- More visible diverse leadership
- Utilizing churches, museums, libraries and schools to promote diversity
- Celebrate Creativity

- Non-profits per capita
- Hours/activities of volunteering
- Measure time off given for community service
- Quality/effectiveness of volunteers using skills for the good of the community

4. Other outcome areas to address:

- Health and wellness
- Quality of Life

### Overall

- What's limiting us?
- Importance of Trust (agree to disagree and be respected)
- What are the rules of engagement for community challenges and issues?
- Make more visible what is really going on
- More networking events combining social, economic, and environmental perspectives
- More involvement of organizations and individuals
- Intentionally, personally, and globally we can not be separated from one another
- Why is the context of this discussion always framed around the issue of poverty and educational/economic attainment? These issues are symptomatic of the core issue – social disparity or inequality of treatment and behavior due to exclusion, discrimination, or other socially dysfunctional behaviors.
- Persons of means that are minorities (racial, ethnic, gender, etc.) do not commonly experience socially equitable treatment. Their issue is not poverty or education. It is about social behavior. This element needs to be discussed with more concentrated focus on the core issue of inequity