



Erie Together Activity Update **October 20, 2014**

Prepared by:
Mary C. Bula, Facilitator
Nicole Wethli, Assistant Facilitator

The Erie Together Community Forum, which will double as our community's GradNation Summit will be held on Tuesday, November 18th with registration beginning at 8:30 AM and the program running from 9:00 AM to noon. Please visit www.ErieTogether.org/CommunityForum to register.

The below bullets highlight notable work and accomplishments over the past two months.

Action Team 1: Early Childhood Readiness and Success

- To date, Erie Together distributed over 300 kindergarten-readiness parent training kits throughout the county, and collected pre- and post-test data to determine the impact of the kits. A task team is now strategizing distribution of additional kits and the collection of necessary data for the coming year.
- An Erie Together task team developed a kindergarten readiness home progress chart that lists essential skills and includes a way to track children's improvement. This chart is available upon request, and will also be included in the aforementioned parent training kits. To see the chart, please visit <http://www.erietogether.org/K-ReadinessProgressChart>
- Erie Together formed a task team to strategize an awareness campaign to inform parents and caregivers of the importance of quality early childhood education and third grade reading proficiency. This team's work is in the very early stages.

Other related information:

- Kindergarten registration and kindergarten readiness data for the 2014/15 school year is being collected. Data will be compared to baseline data from 2013/14.

Action Team 2: Aligning Education to Careers

- The "Are You Ready for Life After High School" checklist is being distributed by request. Additionally, Erie Together has convened a task team to develop a distribution strategy. Finally, a pre- and post-test has been developed to gauge student reactions to the resource.

*"Working together to make the Erie region a community of opportunity
where everyone can learn, work and thrive."*

www.ErieTogether.org



- The post-secondary connections task team will be drilling deeper into the needs of parents and students regarding easing transitions from high school to post-secondary education and training. The team will convene focus groups of parents, high school and college students to gain their important input.
- Erie Together's "Extended Time Programs" task team has been collaborating with United Way's Education Impact Council and Unified Erie's Family Committee to create professional development opportunities for staff at local nonprofits. The trainings are based on data from all three groups, including the survey created and deployed by Erie Together's task team. Trainings will begin in November 2014 and be held quarterly, free of charge. The goal is to help build capacity and effectively serve more children.
- Erie Together created a task team to assist with the marketing of Career Street in an effort to increase connections between local employers, nonprofits and educators to provide quality career exploration experiences for students. This team will also assist with increasing the number of businesses currently posting opportunities on the website.
- At the September Erie Together Action Team meeting, participants discussed the importance of youth civic engagement. To that end, a task team was formed to identify ways to increase youth involvement across the community.
- Erie Together is hosting a GradNation Summit as part of its annual Community Forum. The purpose of the summit, and the work leading up to it, is to develop (and ultimately implement) a plan to encourage and promote the involvement of caring adults in children's lives and educational success. This is being done to help increase local high school graduation rates to 90% by 2020, and is part of a larger national campaign of America's Promise Alliance. Please visit <http://www.erietogether.org/CommunityForum> for more information.

Action Team 3: Individual and Family Stability

- The Family Action Team (FACTs) process is being expanded through relationships with several local social service organizations and parishes. Task teams have been formed to assist with engaging target organizations and to recruit, train, and retain community partner mentors.
- Volunteers have developed a "Holistic Health Self-Assessment" and are reviewing the content for readability. Once complete, Erie Together will look for ways to pilot the tool within the community.

"Working together to make the Erie region a community of opportunity where everyone can learn, work and thrive."

www.ErieTogether.org



- The Gannon Human Services Directory (hsd.gannon.edu) and a companion Veterans' Portal (www.veteransportal.com) were launched in September. A task team has been convened to ensure community awareness of these resources.

Action Team 4: Aligning Workforce and Economic Development

- The Erie County Reentry Services and Support Alliance (ECRSSA) Planning Group continues to meet once every two to three weeks to develop a strategy for "transitioning clients" returning to the Erie community. On a related note, CareerLink has been working with the group to provide more robust services to this specific population.
- The task team focused on connecting low income and minority workers to local jobs also continues to meet. Its goal is to encourage and help local employers proactively recruit low-income workers to fill local jobs.
- Both the ECRSSA and the low-income and minority workers teams recently participated in a conference call with Cincinnati Works' co-founder Dave Phillips. The group was able to learn more about this successful program and identify best-practices that can be replicated in Erie.
- New task teams have been created to (1) measure employer and employee satisfaction with workforce development supports, (2) create better connections with stakeholders, and (3) identify best-practices for diversity trainings within the workplace in relation to barriers to employment.

Miscellaneous:

- Translation to Russian, Nepali, Spanish, and Arabic is underway for Erie Together resources including the Kindergarten Readiness Checklist, Kindergarten progress chart, Ready for Life After High School checklist, and Work Readiness checklist. All resources should be ready by December 2014.
- The Community Engagement Committee continues to share the work of Erie Together with the community. Recent presentations include Times Publishing Company and the Northwest Deanery of the Episcopal Diocese of NWPA.
- Erie Together is a co-sponsor of Project Jobs, a short survey designed to identify current and anticipated job openings within local companies and organizations. **If you are an employer in the private for-profit, nonprofit, education or government arena, please visit www.erietogether.org/news/project-jobs-survey to complete the survey.**

*"Working together to make the Erie region a community of opportunity
where everyone can learn, work and thrive."*

www.ErieTogether.org