

Marion Area Workforce Acceleration Collaborative (MAWAC) Charter

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MAWAC provides an integrated opportunity for education and industry to interact to advance workforce preparedness and economic development in the Marion area.

The MAWAC partnership represents Marion area educational, business and workforce development leaders committed to:

- Developing and executing a collaborative Marion area strategy for education designed to improve college preparatory and expand post-secondary participation;
- Increasing the attainment of postsecondary credentials, including achieving admission to the U.S. military, earning a degree at a 2-4 year higher education institution, achieving a high-paying, in-demand job, or earning acceptance into a professional apprenticeship program; and
- Creating a highly skilled and adaptive workforce, supporting the Marion area and its economic development focus as America's Workforce Development Capital.

WHEREAS, post secondary credentials attainment is an urgent priority in advancing an individual's lifelong success and independence, and in growing the per capita income, economic well-being and overall quality of life in the Marion area; and

WHEREAS, the availability of a highly prepared and talented workforce is the single most critical factor in the economic prosperity of every region in the global economy; and

WHEREAS, the Marion area is home to a unique education corridor that includes Ohio State University - Marion, Marion Technical College, Tri-Rivers Career Center, and RAMTEC that is a competitive advantage on a regional and national scale; and

WHEREAS, the Marion area is home to successful city and county K-12 school districts, which work together with the education corridor to serve the interests of highly diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, Marion City Schools has implemented an innovative and scalable Graduate Pathways to Success Program that involves higher education and business partners, and that has received Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation recognition as a preferred model for workforce education; and

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WHEREAS, the Marion area's educational assets can be deployed to create a deep pool of highly educated and skilled technicians and technologists, engineers and scientists; analysts, professionals and managers; and developers, writers, artists, and creative professionals, creating a competitive advantage for the Marion area in economic development and diversification; and

WHEREAS, public funding of education must be used efficiently and effectively to maximize student, family, and taxpayer value; and

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio Department of Education requires that public school districts utilize business advisory councils to advise them on changes in the economy and job market and the area in which future jobs are most likely to be available; advocate for the employment skills most critical to business and industry and the development of curriculum to teach these skills; and aid and support local school districts by offering suggestions for developing a working relationship among businesses, labor organizations and educators; and

WHEREAS, the Marion area has adopted a focus as America's Workforce Development Capital to assist and attract current and prospective employers with economic development services, tools, education, training and related support to meet a diverse array of workforce needs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE PARTNERS OF THE MARION AREA WORKFORCE ACCELERATION COLLABORATIVE COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING:

Section 1: OBJECTIVE

MAWAC partners commit to a collective Marion County goal that **65% percent of the citizens of Marion County hold a postsecondary credential by 2025**, ensuring that the Marion area is a regional and national leader in workforce development, and providing area businesses with qualified and credentialed workers that enable them to compete globally.

Section 2: GOALS

MAWAC partners commit to an intentional strategy of cooperation to:

1. Employ different and more efficient strategies to increase opportunities for students at all educational levels and ages;
2. Increase the post-secondary credential attainment rate of first-generation college students, low-income students, and students of all ethnic backgrounds and all educational levels;
3. Dramatically increase the number and percentage of recent high school graduates who earn a postsecondary credential, including U.S. military service, workforce and technical certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees;

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4. Ensure better preparation of students at every level of further study, through internships and co-op program opportunities, as well as programs such as Graduate Pathways to Success and GEAR UP, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that all high school graduates are college and career ready;
5. Increase the number of adult learners earning degrees and certificates through educational programs and other transferable credit opportunities;
6. Increase the number of work-based learning opportunities (i.e. apprenticeships, internships, externships, co-ops, workplace shadowing) in local business and industry to prepare students for local employment; and
7. Advance other measures of strategic importance to the Marion area's educational and economic progress (i.e. management and human resource initiatives in the workplace – generational transitions in workplace, soft skill development, understanding your benefits, healthier workforce initiatives, lunch-and-learn events).

Section 3: STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

MAWAC partners commit to achieving these goals through a focus on the following strategies:

- A. **Adult Learners.** Partners will collaborate to remove educational obstacles facing adults who need postsecondary credentials to succeed in the economy. This may include working adults who want to transition to new careers, adults in need of GED training, adults who may benefit from specific employer training, and career placement assistance for military veterans. Partners will work to open and expand alternative pathways to degrees and certificates and address adult training opportunities through innovative programming design and delivery.
- B. **Shared Services and Affordability.** Partners will actively seek opportunities to maintain affordability for students, families and communities by developing and executing programs and practices that contain costs without sacrificing quality and accessibility, facilitate earlier completion of degree or certificate programs, eliminate redundancy, and promote the use of shared services (i.e. busing, personnel).
- C. **Data Sharing.** Partners will engage in active, detailed data sharing, acknowledging that the ability to track student success will enable school districts and postsecondary institutions to improve student learning and attainment in a systematic manner and ensure public accountability.
- D. **Operating Parameters.** The operating plans and agreements between specific partners within MAWAC will be driven by the local educational environment, the unique needs of students, and the unique mission of each academic institution. Institutional missions will not change as a result of this resolution; the diversity of our institutions will be leveraged to increase innovation and regional capacity. Partners will work to ensure that educational courses and programs have the content and rigor to adequately prepare students for the next steps in their educational journey. Proven and promising practices will be shared, and collaborative action will be taken, where appropriate. All MAWAC partners are

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- committed to leveraging the strengths of their institutions and to aligning their policies and practices with Marion area workforce and economic development priorities. The interdependent nature of MAWAC will enable deeper alignment of systems, policies, and procedures, ensuring seamless and concurrent transition for students.
- E. Stewardship. While this resolution is not legally binding, it is a pledge to stewardship, not only of the resources entrusted to each public institution, but also to the interests of all private sector partners and the entities they represent, of our mission to build MAWAC into the most productive educational partnership in the nation, fully able to significantly increase education attainment levels and support the area's economic growth strategies in support of developing Marion as America's Workforce Development Capital.
 - F. Story-Telling. The opportunity exists to share the experiences of the educational and business stakeholders to local, regional and state communities. The partnership opens the door for other communities to lateralize our learnings while customizing it for their local opportunities.