

## Visioning 2026 Education Focus Group Notes

November 15, 2006

11:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Chamber of Commerce

Present: Greg Heineman; Norm Jedlicka, Jim Brewer, Bill Woepfel, Brian Nordby, Dan Mauk, Mark Hall, Nancy Brozek, J. Paul McIntosh, Cindy Baum, Pam Carlson

Introductions were made. The last meeting was quickly reviewed.

The group started in with the next question:

### 4. What trends or weak signals do we see now that will cause us to alter the way we think about education?

Trends that were identified were: declining and aging population; change in “Midwest values”; travel ; access to more and different kinds of information: i.e. Al Jazeera is in English now; more information and less discernment about what is “good or legitimate” information; and having less teachers.

### 5. What types of technology should we use to give us an advantage in our education system?

Participants discussed distance learning, internet and interactive video to make one on one mentoring possible. An example of Ray Kurzweil using holographic technology to give seminars was given. There was also discussion about what is taught and what is learned, sometime they are not the same – an example of a saw sharpening class where the instructor made them do it again and again – learn that they would never sharpen a saw. Use technology to learn and adapt in positive ways – just because it is on the internet, doesn't make it accurate or true. Need some education on discernment – fact and opinion etc. and how that affects the culture as children grow up in it. Technology should be used to help manage education and expand opportunities – such as entrepreneurship, having business more involved with the schools and what is taught.

### 6. What changes should we make to education systems to make us “World Class”, and set us apart from other communities and cities?

Participants defined world class as an educational system that would create, enhance and increase opportunities for the school and the community. Build a culture of lifelong learning and exploration – create a structure/community to promote that – Third Millennium center concept paper idea where people who are interested live, work and play in that kind of environment. Educating students and parents about careers and opportunities – scholarships for example. Counselors are seriously understaffed, so it is up to the students and parents to prepare and apply for careers and scholarships. What are “good practices, programs” how could they be integrated into the community/educational system. What incentive to stay would there be even with a World Class education system? Jobs are fluid. Live cheaply here and visit and be connected with others outside area. How do we use existing infrastructure to bring this about – schools, labs etc for after hours training? Get over stigmas of too old (with technology) or too young (not enough knowledge).

### 8. Of the trends listed, including the new ones added; identify the five (5) trends most likely to impact Education.

Trends 3 – Global Economy; 15 – New Technology; 5-Virtual Workforce/Work Place/Life style changes; 9-Communication and Innovation Network; 11- Cultural Diversity

There are a lot of interrelationships between all the trends.

## 9. How will these five trends affect Education?

The 3<sup>rd</sup> listed trend – global economy will impact language, how trends impact and when and at what pace, also with diseases – everything is affecting us faster. The 5<sup>th</sup> listed trend – virtual workforce/life style changes – we are ‘on’ 24/7/365 – can work for anyone anywhere at anytime. There has to be life long learning. There is also a change in leisure – less time to just “hang” out. There seems to be more organized activities and less just relating to people. Another trend is the more technology the more people need human contact – social interaction. Security in the technical world also becomes an issue, which tie into trend 9 – communication and innovation networks and trend 15 – new technology.

What is next? The discussions from the focus groups will be condensed and then used as polling options in the next phase of the Visioning 20206 process. Members are encouraged to go to the visioning website [www.visioning2026.com](http://www.visioning2026.com) and blog with comments.

The three themes that came out of the educational focus group were:

- 1) The need for experiential learning – hands on; on the job; this is what we do and how it looks – not just theory, but practical practice as well.
- 2) Norfolk/Madison County need to develop a culture of learning – motivate citizen to continue learning and innovating in their schools, jobs and at home and tap into the creative side of themselves.
- 3) Build relationships in the community to ensure success – provide support through mentoring and scholarship or monetary incentives.