

**21st Century Workforce Study
Key Challenge Recommendations
for
Manatee and Sarasota Counties
January 2005**



Challenge 1 – Improve the Educational Performance of Suncoast K-12 Students



- 1. Coordinate Career Advisory Councils at high school and middle schools.**
- 2. Build relationships by having educators participate in the business world.**
- 3. Institutionalize joint planning in both school districts.**



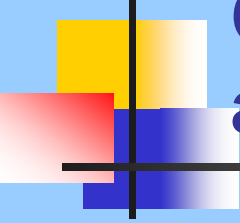
Challenge 1 – Improve the Educational Performance of Suncoast K-12 Students

- 5. Involve business in pre-school education efforts.**
- 6. Make “employability skills” a percentage of students grades.**



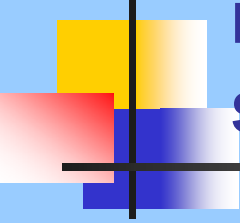
Challenge 2 – Enhance the quality of career and guidance counseling

- 1. Place a Career Advisor in each high school.**
- 2. Dedicate staff at Chamber offices to connect business people with Advisory Councils.**
- 3. Designate high school and middle school representatives to attend SWB Council meetings.**



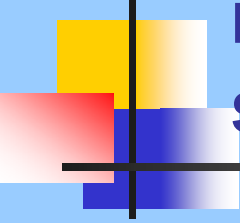
Challenge 2 – Enhance the quality of career and guidance counseling

- 4. Use Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery tests in high schools in both districts.**
- 5. Expand use of Career Choices.**
- 6. Recommend career exploration be part of middle school and elementary school curricula.**



Challenge 3 – Reduce dropout rates and raise graduation rates in Suncoast high schools

- 1. Hold a series of community conversations within the next 24 months involving a partnership among the Suncoast Workforce Board, Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse (SCoSA), Manatee Chamber Business Against Narcotics & Drugs and the two public school systems on an aggressive drug policy resulting in all students being drug-free.**



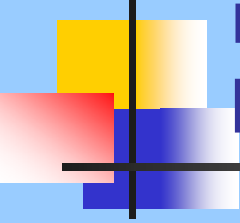
Challenge 3 – Reduce dropout rates and raise graduation rates in Suncoast high schools

- 2. Implement the GED exit option through the guidance departments and the administration.**
- 3. Encourage businesses to provide flexible work schedules.**



Challenge 4 – Align education, training, and career preparation with Suncoast’s major economic clusters

- 1. Develop a website that includes a database of career options available in the Manatee and Sarasota area linked to the educational and training requirements for each.**



Challenge 5 – Increase and improve direct interaction between educators and the business community

- 1. Develop “Career Pathways” in Suncoast middle and high schools.**
- 2. Implement a “Take Your Teacher to Work Day” program.**



Challenge 5 – Increase and improve direct interaction between educators and the business community

- 3. Produce updated Career Ladder Industry brochures that mirror the Career Hallways.**
- 4. Display power point presentation and video on LCD monitors highlighting career opportunities in demand occupations in Manatee and Sarasota schools.**



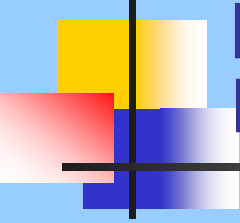
Challenge 6 – Promote and support Suncoast entrepreneurship

- 1. Institutionalize communication and coordination among service providers.**
- 2. Launch and market the entrepreneurial development website.**



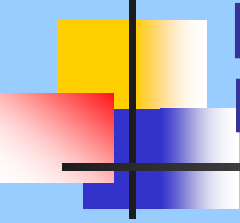
Challenge 6 – Promote and support Suncoast entrepreneurship

- 3. Work with the local Chambers of Commerce and Junior Achievement to enhance business training in Manatee and Sarasota schools.**
- 4. Hire an intern through the USF Center for Entrepreneurship to research and put together information linking service providers to new and existing entrepreneurs.**



Challenge 7 – Attract and retain young professionals as well as pre-retirement Baby Boomer professionals to the Suncoast

- 1. Monitor and support the cooperative effort of Manatee and Sarasota county in addressing workforce housing.**
- 2. Rally forces to create an environment to attract and retain workers.**
- 3. Support the Tampa AARP Symposium to educate employers about hiring older workers.**



Challenge 7 – Attract and retain young professionals as well as pre-retirement Baby Boomer professionals to the Suncoast

- 4. Rally young professionals as a political force for workforce housing.**
- 5. Research what motivates the demographic groups we are trying to attract.**
- 6. Train and re-train older workers who want to work at jobs above entry level.**



Challenge 8 – Brand the Suncoast as a place where creative professionals of all ages are valued and supported

- 1. Conduct a “Creatives Program” similar to Manatee County’s Project T.E.A.C.H. program in the 7th grade in Manatee and Sarasota schools.**
- 2. Develop a contest for students at local colleges to create a logo and marketing campaign to brand the Suncoast as a place where creative professionals can work and live.**



Challenge 8 – Brand the Suncoast as a place where creative professionals of all ages are valued and supported

- 3. Encourage the Manatee Chamber of Commerce to organize a creative group in Manatee County to work with the Creative Cluster group in Sarasota on their awareness, branding and creative summit.**