

Manchester's Children, Youth and Family Master Planning Process

Committee Report

Key Focus Area: Family Economics

**Committee Contributors:**

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**Visitors & Guest Presenters:** Dr. Ann Richardson, Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Dena DeJulius, K-12 Mathematics Supervisor for Manchester Public Schools, and Richard Goll, Consultant for project.

**The single most strategic result our committee wishes to achieve:**

**“Every child, youth and family in Manchester will have access to lifelong learning and experience with financial literacy and/or resources that will give them knowledge, experience and confidence to achieve financial security.”**

**The indicators that will allow Manchester to know that our desired result has been reached:**

1. Survey given at same time of year to the same population (9-12 graders) with same questions will indicate starting point and tell us if our goals are being met as children, youth and families are given access to knowledge and experience with financial literacy.

2. Participation in programs offered to families and feedback from the program participants will tell us if we are succeeding in our goals.
3. Improvement in drop out rate in our high schools will indicate success.

**The support data that lead us to select these indicators:**

- Discussion with Board of education staff, youth on our committee who have experience with new ventures in our schools i.e. student credit union in the high school and 5<sup>th</sup> grade school stores; and the adults' parenting/career/financial experiences on our committee.
- Review of new math curriculum in Manchester.
- Review of surveys given to youth in other communities.
- Models like the Town's Police and Government Academies.

**The strategy recommendations that our committee suggests are used to ensure the result is realized:**

- Identify what we want to know and put that desire into a short one-page survey to capture a point in time picture of where our youth are at in their financial literacy. Collect this data before programs are initiated. It is critical to give the survey to the grades we want to track.
- Parents should also be given an annual survey – find a place like the mandatory driver's education classes etc. to administer survey.

The committee believes we cannot assume the level of financial literacy our community has at this time. A good survey will give Manchester a standard to measure results and can continue, adjust, abort programs and strategies as needed.

## **Justification for selecting these strategies:**

- **Read articles and searched internet for ideas in other communities (much more can be done) however, the question that kept coming up was “what do we know about our families?” And “how will we know if what we are doing is effective?”**
- **The Town’s Board of Ed’S Math Curriculum is also young (into its 2<sup>nd</sup> year) and new programs like the high school credit union appear to be working but no formal way of knowing to what degree it is successful**

## **Who needs to be a part of insuring the result is realized:**

- **Parents & Guardians**
- **Children and Youth**
- **Educators**
- **Youth Program staff & volunteers**
- **Financial Mentors**
- **Businesses**
- **Neighborhoods**

## **For our recommended strategies to be successfully implemented, will there need to be any shifts or changes to the Town’s infrastructure:**

**Math curriculums may need to be reviewed and/or altered or adjusted to include or create more financial literacy for students including but not limited to: school stores, basic budgeting, banking, balancing check books, create a Family Economics Academy etc. as it may be more successful if it is a required class vs. something offered to the community.**

## **Recommended Timeline for implementing our recommended Strategies:**

- **Discussions with Board of Education – September 2009**
- **Student and Parent Survey taken - September 2010**
- **New curriculum implemented - September 2011**

## **The cost for implementing recommended strategies:**

- **Time - would be a combination of volunteers and paid staff from the Board of Education which would have a dollar amount but could be accomplished in professional development budget.**
- **A program like the *Family Economics Academy* and budgeting classes could take the place of electives or math classes that are offered now at low (developing curriculum) to no cost (phasing it in).**

## **Additional Comments:**

**Our committee had great discussions regarding the cost of higher education, the reality that not all children can or should go to college and benefit that could come from our community's acknowledgement of that fact as well as its plan that all children, youth and families can have access to financial literacy that can give them the knowledge, skill and experience to pursue a successful lifestyle designed to meet their needs and expectations. We believe success will be measured by:**

- **how many children graduate from high school (drop out rates should decrease)**

- **how many youth secure internships/apprentices**  
**(should increase if local businesses step up)**
- **the knowledge base for financial literacy and access to financial knowledge should increase**  
**(will be tested through annual surveys)**
- **School system from K-12 should include deliberate financial literacy curriculum**  
**(would be measured by survey in time to show its success).**
- **Certificates of Completion and other public celebratory measures will increase community buy-in and excitement for financial literacy.**  
**Success stories need to be shared and have high priority in our schools, Town and Board of Education meetings and community media etc.**

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