**CEO Forum**

**Tuesday, July 7, 2009 A.M.**

Attendees:

Les Simpson, Amarillo Globe News Paul Matney, Amarillo College

John Teague, Amarillo Chamber Buzz David, Amarillo EDC

Neal Weaver, WTAMU Gary Molberg, Amarillo Chamber of Commerce

Anette Carlisle, Panhandle 20/20 Smith Ellis, First Bank Southwest

LeAnn Estep, AISD

Shawn Fouts, AC

Ron Faulkner, AC

Lori James, City of Amarillo Bill Mayfield, Highland Park ISD

Kyle Sanders, NWTHS Rod Schroder, AISD

Eddie Scott, Greenways Ross Wilson, TX Cattle Feeders

Sam Spradlin, Tejas Industries John Salazar, Amarillo Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Jill Dana, McDonalds Hassan Dana, McDonalds

Keith Willis, Chase Bank Scott Bently, First United Bank

Warren Chisum, TX House of Rep. Mark Wingate, Maxivolt

David Eaves, Xcel Energy Bobby Cooper, Amarillo Truck Center

What is the drop out rate in AISD? Highland Park has low drop out rate—has a student recovery program.

Annual dropout rate is fairly low—but completion rates is the real measure—completion rates are alarming- 15% of the kids don’t make it in 4 years.

25% of economically challenged students don’t finish in 4 years.

Diploma plus partnership- for students who lack 3 credits or less to finish—will send them to AC campus to finish high school and teach them how to be successful in college.

Can AC and WT create enough capacity to produce the workforce our community needs?

WT did not get funded for summer nursing courses- NWTHS

Economic downturn has helped employee turnover

How does a student learn about different careers? There is a website with the information—but typically face-to-face communication works better. Best to talk to principal or counselor.

City of Amarillo mentor program has helped students find careers- they built a bond with mentors that they worked with.

Awareness on the east and north side of town is the key—students don’t know about the opportunities they have to get a better education and a better job.

ACE program- try to create hope for some students. ACE is funded by the community. Provides free tuition and books from AC or WTAMU.

Trying to begin a project to create a culture of expectation in our community- Panhandle 20/20.

Teachers have a tough job—have to be a teacher, counselor, parent, mentor and still try to meet the State requirements.

It’s a constant effort to keep students enrolled in school.

Do we reach out to parents and explain to them why education is important? AISD says yes—but it is challenging.

Need power engineers in Amarillo—students are not going into that field. Schools are not graduating them.

Getting plenty of applications.

Other places in the US don’t look so good right now—unemployment as high as 25%.

Engineers willing take less money to work.

Amarillo seems to be a sheltered area from the economic crisis.

There is not enough capacity for RNs—only a portion of those applying to the program get accepted due to capacity.

AC- new nursing building opening up this fall which will help with capacity

Important to keep our best and brightest students here in our community.

Need employees to pass drug test and the desire to show up on time.

Students need to see they can make a good living with their hands.

The legislature wanted everyone to go to college and implemented 4x4—but now are focusing on life skills and will put a lot more money into vocational education.

Need to be diligent in training our future workforce and determining what types of careers will be needed.

Public schools are more responsible to Austin than they are to you.

There doesn’t seem to be a clear route for students who want to go into vocational careers.

Students don’t have a course to take to learn about vocational careers.

Parental involvement is missing—schools have filled that gap but business community must also fill that gap.

The success has to be one-on-one—mentorships are important.

Xcel has an apprenticeship program—4 year program.