

Virginia Western Community College

BOTETOURT COUNTY FOCUS GROUP MEETING

Mr. Stan Lanford, Moderator

Ms. Kay Strickland, Recorder

Greenfield Education & Training Center

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

1. What idea did you hear expressed today that was the most insightful about our community's needs?

- VWCC should continue to reach out to the communities and businesses around them to share their story and get input
- Strong need for lower level jobs – no workforce available
- Changing nature of the County in regards to demographics; needs of the business community in regards to training and using the community college system
- Comments about the “state of educational system” – average age of Botetourt
- Increased focus on technical training rather than 4-year degree
- Need technical job training and a way of communicating these classes to businesses
- Community colleges are and must continue to be responsive to local citizens, businesses and school systems
- Programs available through VWCC; ability to work with businesses to develop programs
- Growth in the County and how to support it
- VWCC to work more closely with the public schools in promoting and explaining value of offerings
- Interesting to hear business owner perspectives on their needs and how demographics, population, and business environment affects them
- Internship-type involvement from local businesses; great opportunity for businesses and the student

2. What would you like to see happen to follow up on today's conversation?

- Summary of action points VWCC will implement
- Changes in the information and manner of presenting the college and its wonderful opportunities to the community
- Best ideas marketed to the public
- Promotion of internships with local businesses
- Send more information about classes being offered via email/mailings
- Continue to work with businesses to develop programs specific to skills that are needed
- Better recruitment in the schools
- Establish some goals and objectives from today's suggestions

3. Would you recommend any changes to the location or to the way we conducted this discussion?

- Excellent format
- Would have liked to have seen the questions prior to meeting

4. Are there any ideas you want to share with the College that you did not get a chance to express in the group? If so, please note them here, using the back of this page as needed.

- Communicate to students and young persons in workforce; this group often states “they don’t know what is available or know who to talk to” – can be done in the schools or with employers
- Address needs of aging population by offerings at Greenfield – namely, the establishment of some kind of center for lifelong learning with credit and non-credit offerings – targeting specifically the 50+ population of the County
- Make “driver” training program more affordable
- Low income housing is not wanted in Botetourt County; need apartment housing if you are going to attract service people
- Career fairs/days for high schools
- VWCC could help supplement or expand County’s parks/recreation efforts with continuing education, folk art, recreation and other courses