KALAMAZOO RESA
Career Connect

Board Report

Month: November 2026

Administrators: Eric Stewart, Sarah Mansberger, Paige Daniels

Update:

MiCareerQuest

MiCareerQuest Southwest 2026 was our largest, most impactful event yet. We welcomed 4,900 8th graders from 45 middle schools to the Kalamazoo County Expo Center. They explored 95 different career possibilities across six pathways. Several CTE instructors and students supported the event, including those representing the Auto, Machine Tool, Horticulture, Computer Networking and Supply Chain courses. Special CTE highlights include current Auto students sharing their skills with 8th graders, and Supply Chain students providing logistical support for the event. Education for the Arts brought creative flair with an engaging display of "trading card" artworks and an opportunity for current EFA students to engage 8th graders in creating a "trading card" of their own.

Work-Based Learning Capstone

The Work-Based Learning (WBL) Capstone launched this school year as a structured, high-impact experience for students who have successfully completed a CTE course. The Capstone allows students to deepen their career readiness through internships aligned with their CTE pathway, including single-site placements and rotational experiences with multiple employer partners. Students participate in WBL during their regular CTE course time (AM or PM session), balancing time in the workplace with continued instruction, reflection, and progress monitoring at the campus with Career Connect staff.

This year, 73 students representing all nine local school districts are participating in the WBL Capstone. Employer partners hosting Capstone students include:

- Cornerstone Technologies
- Mann + Hummel
- DHE Plumbing and Mechanical
- Bronson Hospital

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- Kalamazoo Country Club
- Lounsbury Excavating, Inc.
- Beacon Health System
- Oakwood Animal Hospital
- Pro Services, Inc.
- Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet
- Buist Electric
- Duncan Aviation
- And many more

Through these experiences, students are applying the technical skills developed in their CTE programs in authentic workplace settings while building professional skills, industry connections, and confidence for their next steps after high school. Students also use Xello to document their experiences, build their career portfolios, and develop career plans that connect what they are learning in the workplace to their future goals.

Career Connect Superstar



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We're thrilled to announce our newest Superstar is Angie Melvin, Education for the Arts (EFA) Program Coordinator.

Kate Yancho, EFA Administrator, nominated Angie, sharing:

"Angie goes above and beyond to support the EFA team and our partners on accommodating students which leads to their success in our courses and programs. Her work with the Multisensory Art Project is a true testament to this in how she has crafted the opportunities for the Kalamazoo Transition Services (KTS) students to be completely immersed in the project. Not only does this project help them with communication skills, but many also develop a strong interest in the arts as a result. Angie has expanded our capabilities and EFA students will benefit greatly from her work!"

Congratulations, Angie, and thank you for all you do for our learners and staff!

Action Item: N/A

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Attachments: N/A

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