

# Fayette County Summary Report

Prepared by:



# Introduction

This report will provide a summary of the Career Readiness West Virginia discussion and recommendations within Fayette County. A considerable amount of research, meetings and breakout sessions have taken place in the past couple months to assess and evaluate the **Growth, Decline, and Opportunities** faced by both education and local industry.

Forge Business Solutions has conducted discussions with stakeholders throughout the county and region, including members of the house of delegates, the leaders within education, educators, students, parents, business leaders, non-profit organization representatives, and community members at large. We have analyzed economic data, reviewed current partnerships and collaborations, and investigated different relationships that can be created, developed or enhanced. Through this work, we have been able to analyze the Fayette County economy to determine where collaboration can be fostered in order to develop a sustainable partnership model between area industry and K-12, including Career Technical Education.

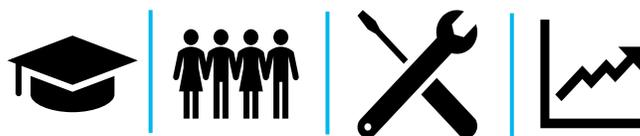
In the pages that follow, we will summarize the results of the stakeholder engagement meeting and will include county-specific and statewide recommendations. With an overview of the Fayette County education system that is as broad as it is specific, the foundation has been laid to launch the collaborative model that will arm education and industry with the necessary partnerships to forge ahead for a successful and sustainable future.

Our sincere appreciation goes to Superintendent Terry George and Chamber of Commerce President Sharon Cruikshank for their dedication to their community and support of Career Readiness West Virginia.



# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Fayette County Summary.....	4
Discovery.....	6
Top Employers.....	6
Stakeholder Engagement Meeting Comments.....	6
Recommendations.....	12
Workplace Tours.....	12
Speakers' Bureau.....	12
Job Shadowing.....	13
Job Fairs.....	13
Internships and Externships.....	13
Integrated Pathways.....	14
Additional Recommendations.....	14
References.....	16



# Fayette County Summary

Fayette County is a small community serving the town of Fayetteville and surrounding towns with a population of about 43,000. Its small size has created a close-knit community beginning to thrive from the growing tourism industry centered on locations such as the New River Gorge. Home to a variety of industries, Fayette County has top employers such as the Mount Olive Correctional Complex, Wal-Mart, and WVA Manufacturing. This range of industries has supported the community for many years.

Fayette County Schools serve over 6,000 of the community's youth with many high schools and the supporting middle and elementary schools. Seven hundred and thirty-five employers employ the residents of Fayette County, many of which are members of the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce. Currently, there is little engagement between education and industry, leaving significant opportunity for future collaboration. However, many community members communicated their support and dedication for helping develop and implement the Career Readiness West Virginia partnership model.

As part of the pilot program of the Career Readiness West Virginia initiative, Fayette County is prepared to lead the way for the state. Educating its students with skills and expertise in demand by local industry and connecting them with local opportunities will allow the county to continue to grow and thrive in the future.

Forge has identified eight activities in which industry and education can collaborate to support workforce development utilizing newly formed relationships – [Internships](#), [Externships](#), [Speakers' Bureaus](#), [Job Shadowing](#), [Job Fairs](#), [Integrated Pathways](#), [Career Exploration](#), and [Workplace Tours](#).

In addition to these activities, Forge recommends that Fayette County Schools and the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce work together to develop a local career readiness advisory committee. This committee will become the bridge that leads education to teaching desired skillsets as demanded by local industry. Together education and industry can lead West Virginia towards a stronger future.



# Fayette County Schools

111 Fayette Avenue  
Fayetteville, WV 25840  
**Superintendent:** Terry George  
**Enrollment:** 6,365



# Fayette County Chamber of Commerce

310 W Oylar Ave  
Oak Hill, WV 25901  
**Executive Director:** Sharon Cruikshank  
**County Population:** 43,018



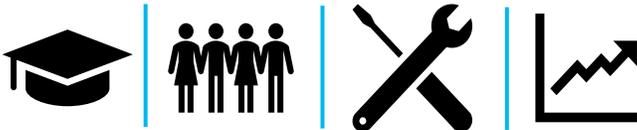
# Discovery

## Top Employers

Name	Industry	Address
Fayette County Board of Education	Education	111 Fayette Ave, Fayetteville, WV 25840
Mount Olive Correctional Complex	Government	1 Mountainside Way, Mt Olive, WV 25185
Wal-Mart	Retail	204 Town Center Road, Fayetteville, WV 25840
Montgomery General Hospital	Healthcare	401 6th Ave, Montgomery, WV 25136
WVA Manufacturing	Manufacturing	US-60, Alloy, WV 25002
ERP Compliant Fuels	Mining	P.O. Box 305, Madison, West Virginia 25130, US
Plateau Medical Center	Healthcare	430 Main St, Oak Hill, WV 25901
Kingston Mining	Mining	600 Resource Dr, Scarbro, WV 25917
Central West Virginia Aging Service	Healthcare	1799 Main St E, Oak Hill, WV 25901
Fayette County Commission	Government	100 N Court St, Fayetteville, WV 25840

## Stakeholder Engagement Meeting Comments

Forge Business Solutions collaborated with Fayette County Schools and Fayette County Chamber of Commerce to conduct a stakeholder engagement meeting. This meeting invited local educators, employers, parents, students and politicians to create an initial discussion. The following subsections include comments collected from the stakeholders. They may contain opinionated statements that do not represent the research or thoughts of Forge.



## ***Local Industry Trends***

### ***Growth***

- Tourism
- Education
- Health
- Boy Scouts
- Healthcare
- Mechanical trade
- Forestry service industry
- Building trades
- Stale, need something to boost
- Services

### ***Decline***

- Coal
- Banks
- Support from parents
- Mining
- Retail
- Coal mining
- Manufacturing



## ***Opportunities***

- Transportation
- Technology
- Rare earth metals from coal
- Small manufacturing
- All trades
- Healthcare
- Early recruitment in the lower grades
- Entrepreneurship

## ***Job Market Outlook***

### ***4-Year Degree***

- Healthcare
- Good in the medical field
- In demand, hard to recruit
- Great opportunity
- Limited in our area
- Specialty degrees- accounting, nursing, etc.
- Depends on the degree



## ***2-Year Degree***

- Healthcare
- Trades
- Computers
- Technicians
- Good in the medical field
- 2-year degrees in demand
- Technical skills
- Finding jobs at the state level
- Depends on the degree

## ***Tech Certificates***

- Healthcare
- Trades
- Good but need program like this to bridge the gap and increase awareness
- Good starter positions in industry
- Target market for recruiting
- EMT, mechanics

## ***H.S. Grads***

- Service industry
- Promising, need to figure out how to bridge the gap
- Need role models
- Limited
- Tourism
- Good as long as they can pass a drug test
- Nursing, Uber, Lyft



## ***Current Engagement***

- Internships in healthcare
- Mission of higher education
- Develop partnerships and advisory committees to serve businesses and students
- Chamber member
- Work with public sector on lending for economic growth projects
- Very community-oriented
- Hiring graduate degree students
- Partner in education with local schools
- Sponsored student savings programs in the past
- Make loans to areas of development and commercial entities
- Partnering with doctors to train and hire high school students during and after high school
- Teaching in Vo Tech
- Stacking degrees
- Partnering with schools to do prevention activities
- Implementing several programs to address opioid crisis
- Protecting public health
- Membership and participation in chamber of commerce and rotary in two counties
- Field trip co-op with Fayette County year-round Hunter Safety Education
- Co-op with WVU Tech Beckley
- Co-op WVU Morgantown
- Starting wilderness medicine courses
- Beginning conference season
- Working with NRGLC to develop private education chances for the area



## ***Top Characteristics***

- Available May-August
- Clean BGC
- Willingness to work with youth
- Willing to sleep in a tent
- Communications
- Technology skills
- Work ethic
- Reliability
- Ready to work
- Hard working
- Wanting to grow with our local business
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills
- Math skills
- Proficient in English language
- Computer skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Desire to work
- General business skills- computer basics
- Grammar skills
- On time

## ***Barriers for Collaboration***

- Privacy issues with some businesses
- Welcome collaboration with other educational institutions
- Time limitations
- Realize the importance of giving the time and making the sacrifice
- Confidentiality issues before bringing students on site (healthcare)
- Transportation
- No caring adults in kids' lives
- Need a mentoring program
- Lack of motivation for positive change



# Recommendations

The Career Readiness WV model is student-centered. In an effort to increase workforce participation and improve job growth in the Fayette County area, collaboration between education providers at all levels and the business community is imperative. The following activities and organization are recommended.

## Workplace Tours

The Fayette County School District would benefit from preparing an annual calendar scheduling workplace tours with area employers for elementary, middle and high school students that is most convenient for the participating company or place of business. The calendar will create a centrally organized master calendar.

Identifying key employers that represent a broad spectrum of jobs and careers to engage in an interactive manner provides opportunities for students to see careers at work and to gain a better understanding of the key skillsets needed for various careers by industry sector. The workplace tours should be appropriate for the schools' respective grade levels. Schools and employers should develop sustainable relationships for annual exchange of ideas and collaboration that benefits both the student and the employer.

All are best served when educators ensure that students are learning about occupations that require a variety of degrees of education from high school diplomas to certificates to 2-year degrees and higher education. Employers and educators need to emphasize the importance of a knowledge-based drug-free workforce. An emphasis should be placed on jobs in STEM-related areas.

## Speakers' Bureau

In a centrally organized manner, speakers should be scheduled to present various occupations to students all throughout K-12 education. These occupations should represent varying skillsets and levels of education. Career and technical education should be the emphasis of the speakers' bureau. Relationships should be built with related employers so that both the education provider and the employer/business have a common understanding of the skillsets and education needed for successful job placement.



When available, involving parents who are subject-matter experts in their field of practice should be utilized. For areas where parents don't have the expertise, other speakers should be sought out to ensure students are getting a wide range of occupational exposure.

## Job Shadowing

Each school should have an opportunity to engage in job shadowing for a wide range of occupations where safety can be ensured, and job scenarios are presented in a manner that is appropriate for the student. Job shadowing should not be limited to parents and their occupations. Many students may not have parents that are employed and making sure that everyone has a fair opportunity is essential.

## Job Fairs

All middle schools and high schools should participate in at least one annual job fair and/or reverse job fair. Job fairs should be age-appropriate and, when possible, on school premises. The idea behind job fairs is not only to offer jobs to high school graduates but to expose students to as many occupations and industries as possible.

Additionally, relationships between employers and future employees can be established at an earlier level thus allowing students to focus on career opportunities with unfiltered knowledge and a clear understanding of what it takes to get a specific job and excel in a specific occupational area.

Interview skills with an emphasis on communication should be established as soon as possible. Elementary schools should offer career day opportunities where subject matter experts visit the classrooms to discuss a variety of occupations and industries. Feedback from participating employers should be collected at all points of engagement and utilized by educators to develop student understanding and success.

## Internships and Externships

Area employers should be invited to participate in and offer internships/externships (paid or unpaid) as long as safety is ensured and tasks are age appropriate. All internships and externships shall be approved by the school district. Feedback should be collected and evaluated from both the employer and student perspective. Such feedback should be considered and utilized to drive student understanding and success.



Internships/externships should represent a wide range of occupations and varying degrees of education required. Special attention should be paid to ensure that students with fewer resources have an equal opportunity to be considered. A recognition program should be established to recognize participating students for their work and success.

## Integrated Pathways

K-12 public education, community and technical colleges, and higher education should collaborate to ensure that students have an efficient and secure way to obtain varying levels of qualified education necessary to secure a job and to advance within their career field. All education providers should be embedded in all levels of workforce development and career readiness. This will ensure their awareness of the skillsets, knowledge, and degrees required by industry and employer thus closing the loop on wasteful spending.

## Additional Recommendations

Fayette County should consider its top employers as a primary resource for career readiness. Those employers are:

- Fayette County Board of Education
- Mount Olive Correctional Complex
- Wal-Mart
- Montgomery General Hospital
- WVA Manufacturing

Fayette County Schools and the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce should apply the Career Readiness WV model and provide leadership to the local career readiness advisory committee that is established from its local stakeholders. Strategic partnerships should be developed with existing businesses but also with emerging industry leaders. The small business community should be engaged as well as the larger employers.

The career and technical education centers should offer open houses to employers of the Fayetteville area and surrounding counties. This showcases the programs and skillsets being developed and deployed. An annual employer-sponsored professional etiquette workshop should be offered to students and parents.



As part of the district's professional development program for teachers and administrators, Fayette County should include employers and occupational specialists as speakers for its professional development program. This will assist educators with a better understanding of the demand for skillsets and key employee characteristics of the local economy.

All participants in the collaborative should be surveyed on an annual basis for input and ideas. This will allow for continued growth and development of the model. The success of West Virginia's economy greatly depends on diversification. Local districts should not limit themselves to the current industry landscape and should ensure that students are being exposed to careers from a global perspective.



# References

United States Census Bureau

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/waynecountywestvirginia,monongaliacountywestvirginia,fayettecountywestvirginia,hardycountywestvirginia/PST045218>

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkml>

West Virginia Department of Education

<https://wveis.k12.wv.us/essa/dashboard.html>

Workforce WV

<http://lmi.workforcewv.org/EandWAnnual/TopEmployers.html>

United States Department of Labor

<https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj>

WV Executive

<https://www.wvexecutive.com/west-virginias-largest-employers/>

National Intelligence Council

[https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/GlobalTrends\\_2030.pdf](https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/GlobalTrends_2030.pdf)

U.S. News and World Reports

<https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/west-virginia>

<https://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/area/wv/west-virginia-university-hospitals-6350007>

Fortune

<https://fortune.com/100-fastest-growing-companies/2018/search/>

Forbes

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/12/19/14-hiring-qualities-that-are-more-important-than-experience/#73cedf7f7b73>

WV News



[https://www.wvnews.com/news/wvnews/w-va-health-care-industry-continues-fast-paced-growth/article\\_926ebc8a-b444-5a9b-a5d8-c584acf12b8f.html](https://www.wvnews.com/news/wvnews/w-va-health-care-industry-continues-fast-paced-growth/article_926ebc8a-b444-5a9b-a5d8-c584acf12b8f.html)

U.S. Small Business Administration

<https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/advocacy/2018-Small-Business-Profiles-WV.pdf>

Bureau of Business and Economic Research; Dr. John Deskins

SmartAsset

<https://smartasset.com/checking-account/fastest-growing-job-in-each-state-2019>

