

## Regional breakout for southwest Michigan GES 2009

Facilitators:

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Realistic discussion about the various and diverse needs form the various southwestern Michigan communities.

### ***Focus for the breakout session***

*What did you notice about your community as portrayed in the Region 7 indicators?*

*Does it make sense that all of the counties Allegan, Berrien, and Van Buren are all grouped together?*

Yes, it does make sense that these counties should be grouped together. Some of the communities in the group are geographically close. Agriculture is a common factor. Cass County should also be included in this region.

*How do we define college access and identify access barriers as a region?*

- A fast track opportunity to getting through the existing barriers keeping students from attending, continuing, and completing college.
- A barrier to college access in the region is socio-economically driven.
- Working collectively with students and parents that have started and not completed college to enroll and complete a degree program
- Transportation is a barrier to college
- Dispelling myths about college affordability provide educational resources to parents and students
- Living expenses for college students in communities where there are not local colleges.
- The cost of child care for single parents attending school is a barrier for college access
- Case management would be helpful to students to assist them problem solving
- Professional development for those who work with students to educate them on resources both college and high school students
- Sharing resources among professionals
- Dispelling Misconceptions that there is no value of a college education
- Are the students prepared to enter a 4 year university after attending a community college
- Adequately preparing students academically, and socially for the college culture
- In region 7 with a large Spanish speaking community language is a barrier

What are the next steps?

- Go back to the community and determine how we can invest in early childhood using ARRA funds

- Using existing tools
- Identify stakeholders that need to be a part of this regional network
- Commitment to get together regionally to discuss
- Utilize the national college access network to identify resources
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What ideas will you implement when you go back to your districts?

At the regional meeting that will be scheduled the following will be addressed.

How do we make college more accessible?

What are the roles that session attendees in the future network?