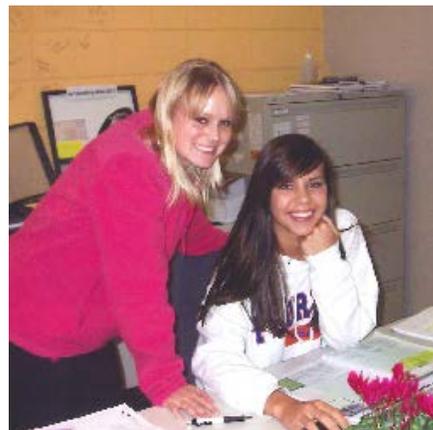


**Partners in Career Exploration
Outreach to Schools
Higher Education Career Advisor Project**

The Partners in Career Exploration (PICE) program demonstrates how an effective partnership can address a local workforce challenge of connecting youth to demand occupations. Minnesota has one of the highest high school students to guidance counselor ratios in the country. Many school districts only employ counselors on a part-time basis. Counselors are spread thin with many responsibilities and are unable to give the time needed to meet with high school students to make post-secondary plans. PICE is a partnership between workforce development and education that places interns in local rural schools districts to provide one-on-one career exploration and career counseling assistance to high school students.

The interns are first year graduate students in the Student Counseling Program at Minnesota State University-Mankato. Prior to placing the interns at area high schools, they received training from the Mankato WorkForce Center staff, Minnesota State University-Mankato, South Central College, and our local labor market analyst who provides them with information on our labor market including high growth/demand occupations in the region. The training includes tours with local businesses so that interns have hands on exposure to demand occupations.



Once the interns have been trained, they are placed at local school districts to provide career exploration and career counseling assistance through one-on-one advising and classroom presentations. The intern meets with every high school junior and senior enabling them to reach students that are not proactive about their plans after high school and would otherwise go unnoticed and fall through the cracks. The interns also provide career exploration activities for younger grade levels so that they can begin to consider their plans after high school.

Partners:

- Cleveland Public School
- Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop High School
- Lake Crystal-Wellcome-Memorial
- LeSueur-Henderson High School
- Madelia High School
- Sibley East High School
- St. Clair Public School
- St. Peter High School
- Tri-City United High School
- Minnesota State University – Mankato
 - Education Talent Search
 - Student Counseling Department
- South Central College
 - Financial Aid Outreach
 - Secondary Relations
- South Central Service Cooperative
- South Central Workforce Council
- Mankato WorkForce Center
 - Job Service
 - MN Valley Action Council
 - Regional Labor Market Analyst
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Funding:

The MN Department of Employment & Economic Development allowed for up to 20% of Minnesota Youth Program funding available to each of Minnesota's Workforce Development Areas for Outreach to Schools activities, such as the Partners in Career Exploration Program. This school year through the Higher Education Career Advisor Project, we expanded to 9 school districts.

- \$4,800 Stipends for interns (\$150 per month)
- \$1,200 Supplies (\$300 per school)
- \$1,000 Travel (\$250 per school)
- \$7,000 Total Funds

Impact:

In the 2016-2017 school year, PICE impacted a total of 1,415 students including: 266 pre-ninth grade, 362 tenth graders, 277 eleventh graders, 507 twelfth graders.

- 901 students received assistance with career exploration tools
- 736 students received one-on-one or group career planning assistance
- 376 students received post-secondary information and assistance
- 50 students received job search, interviewing, resume assistance or information on Workforce Centers.
- 212 students participated in business tours and job shadow experiences
- 440 students participate in job fairs and career fairs
- 20 students participated in field trips to the WorkForce Center

PICE not only benefits the students, it has been a positive experience for the parents, the school districts and the interns. The parents are appreciative of the one-on-one assistance that their teenagers receive with their career plans. It also gives parents a person to go to for assistance when there are questions about post-secondary planning such as admission requirements and financial aid applications.

The schools have benefited from PICE as the school counselors' responsibilities are spread so thin that they don't have the time needed to provide one-on-one career counseling. The interns have been able to assist counselors by providing quality services to reach more students.

Through participation in PICE, the interns confirmed their career choice as a school counselor while they gained hands-on experience at a high school. This experience has been beneficial to the interns in finding their second year internship and employment as they already have work experience in the field.

Business have also benefited from this partnership as youth are exposed to viable career options that are in demand industries that need to be filled with a talented and skilled workforce.

Quotes:

"Many students fall through the cracks because they do not have discipline issues, are not involved in extracurriculars or do not self advocate to make themselves known. The intern was able to reach many of these students by having time to meet with all of our juniors and seniors. She was able to give the students the information they need to make informed post-secondary choices."-Guidance Counselor

"It has been great to see the students learn from the intern. They get excited about their future after they see her and that is wonderful. Having the intern here gave the upper classmen more one on one attention (which they need). PICE also provided our school with some great career resources which we would not have been able to afford with our regular budget."-Guidance Counselor

"She helped me try and go down the right path and tried to help me learn different things about the career that I have chosen."-High School Senior

"There was a lot of new information that I could not have found on my own."-High School Junior

"I liked seeing the value of education and the reminders or heads up about what we need to know for our daughter's college education."-Parent

I liked learning about our school's website, MCIS, and information specific to Minnesota careers."-Parent

"I am very excited to be working with these schools-they seem to have plenty for me to do and even more for me to learn! I know this will be a great experience."-Intern

"PICE benefits students, parents, schools, interns and businesses. It is a win-win situation."-Assistant Director, South Central WorkForce Council