

2004 Project Lead the Way Site Visit General Findings

The stated purpose of the Project Lead the Way site visits conducted by the Ohio Department of Education and the PLTW Ohio affiliate, Sinclair Community College, was to ascertain the level of participation of each and to find out what resources might be helpful to sustain and improve the current programs. However, as often happens, other information surfaced that may prove to be of even more importance.

The site visits covered twelve very distinctive programs, each with its own unique problems and its own innovative solutions to those problems. The programs, as distinctive as each one was, all had some characteristics in common. The following information summarizes the overall findings of the visits. We will be using the information gathered to direct future development and expansion of PLTW in Ohio.

The twelve schools that we visited include:

- Kettering Fairmont High School, Dayton
- Western Hills Design Tech, Cincinnati
- Miller City High School, Miller City
- Toledo Technology Academy, Toledo
- EHOVE Career Center, Milan
- Norwalk High School, Norwalk
- Vermilion High School, Vermilion
- Firestone High School, Akron
- Medina County Career Center
- Polaris Career Center
- Garfield High School, Akron
- Timken Career Academy, Canton

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Deb Lukjanovs at 937-512-4516 for details about the PLTW Summer Training Institute for high school teachers offered at Sinclair Community College.

The following is a list of generalized observations about ALL the schools on our visit.

- The first active year of PLTW participation is a formative one; the second year is truly the first year the program becomes fully functional.
- All PLTW programs are well enrolled and most anticipated increasing enrollments for FY 2005.
- Older programs have suffered from the lack of guidance from the state, and have had to rely up to now on guidance from the national organization.
- 100% of the schools have embraced the curriculum, the teaching strategies, and other aspects of Project Lead the Way's program.
- All are also aware of the importance of teaching soft skills such as work ethics, resume writing, getting first jobs, etc.
- 100% of students report that they are satisfied with the program
- All students are able to connect the knowledge gained in math classes to the curriculum.
- Student-centered programs work much better than programs centered around the instructor's skill and/or knowledge base.
- All the math and science requirements are being met.
- The majority of PLTW students have high self-esteem and a very solid sense of their abilities, interests, and the general direction in which they are heading. All are focused on their futures.
- All programs had good lab spaces and adequate computer space.
- Most administrators understand the program, but need further guidance on implementation.
- Most counselors are not as well informed on the PLTW program as they could be.
- Most new teachers lack resources to augment the curriculum.