

**Des Plaines Valley Region
Business Committee
Final Report - 2019-2020**

Please note: The DVR Business Committee was scheduled to meet May 7, 2020 @ West Leyden High School. Due to COVID-19, this meeting did not occur. Below you will see some of the discussions from our mid-year meeting - as well as some topics that were discussed via email between some committee members throughout the end of the 19-20 school year.

Conference Discussions and Outcomes

Committee members attended the School College Alliance Workshop and IBEA during the first half of the year. Main themes taken away and discussed were Cybersecurity/Data Protection, College/Career Pathway Advancements and Essential Skills. Members stressed the need at all schools to pursue essential skill training and Cybersecurity. Leyden and Ridgewood are moving forward with Cybersecurity offerings while others are continuing to investigate the option at their schools. Member schools will attend other conferences during the second half of the year.

Further: Given our current situation, some committee members will be attending virtual conferences when opportunities exist. The [Certiport Virtual Conference](#) will be held June 15. Members will look for other opportunities to learn online this summer.

Dual Credit and Triton Updates

Gretchen Reyes went through an update of all the current dual credit opportunities at Triton through the lens of DVR. While most members knew their current offerings, there were several areas to investigate moving forward. In the second half of the year, member schools will be looking at:

- MobileMakers opportunity for dual credit
- IncubatorEDU opportunity for dual credit
- Industry certifications that may qualify for dual credit at Triton

In addition, many questions were asked about teacher qualifications. While many schools want to pursue dual credit opportunities, teacher qualifications continue to be an obstacle for many. All members will continue to look to excel in this area where appropriate.

Further: Some schools have begun discussion with Triton over select industry credentials possibly counting towards dual credit. These discussions have been ongoing throughout the second half of the year and will likely continue. Industry certifications will help both Triton and DVR Schools in terms of moving students along their career paths post high school.

Industry Certifications in Business

The committee members discussed if there are missing opportunities for business industry certifications. While many understand the value of tech certifications, business certifications are a question mark in terms of their value to a student. Member schools offer certifications in QuickBooks and Entrepreneurship; but other possible areas have been ignored. A main discussion to continue is the value of business certifications to potential employers and college admissions counselors.

Further: Some DVR Business Departments have started working [directly with Stukent](#). Leyden specifically has been looking into certifications and programs that include Social Media Marketing and Search Engine Optimization (SEO). These areas do not usually require a Bachelor's Degree to gain employment and are purely skill based. These efforts will continue into the 20-21 school year.

Employability Skills

Member schools have been toying with various options to enhance employability skills. The outside marketplace tells schools that this is one of the biggest factors in hiring (not content knowledge), yet there is not a priority on providing these skills. Members discussed implementing ideas such as professional dress day, Ask the Expert Day and others that will expose students to skills that will be needed.

Further: Per some discussion at the IBEA Conference in November 2019, this area is one that is ignored by many business departments. The DVR Committee will make an effort to focus on this in 20-21.

Independent Study Options

Member schools feel there are many students who want to go further in business areas where there are no class offerings. Some are using independent study as an option to provide those opportunities to students. This "next level" option would likely be seen through a MOOC or other online avenue where students could enhance their skills further. Member schools will continue to discuss these options.

Further: Some schools have looked at this for 20-21, as possibilities here are endless. This will be a focus point in 20-21.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tony Pecucci
Business Committee Chairperson