

Dear Michigan Educator,

As Michigan residents, we have endured a structural transformation in our state's economy over the last decade. Its impact has resulted in a large-scale shift in the career prospects for many of our young people and the way they must now prepare for their futures. Many 20<sup>th</sup> Century career paths are waning, and yet to a large degree the institutional mindset that has formed around them persists.

The state has become increasingly focused on responding to this shift to better drive future employment growth in Michigan. Specifically, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) has worked to encourage the growth of entrepreneurship as well as the promotion of STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), both of which have been found to have a disproportionately large impact on job growth.

One of the MEDC's primary focuses has been on efforts to ease the path for innovators and entrepreneurs to start their own businesses. These efforts have included funding to support university R&D activity, services to accelerate start-up businesses, and greater access to capital for entrepreneurs. Much of this activity has been concentrated on high-growth businesses in the STEM fields. While these efforts have been productive, they have only focused on the present workforce. To truly generate a cultural shift in Michigan, we must focus on educating the next generation of effective entrepreneurs, engineers, scientists and technicians.

As a result, the state has formed a groundbreaking partnership between the MEDC, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Workforce Development Authority (WDA), and other local partners, centered on entrepreneurship and STEM education. The "K-to-Jobs Team" is currently working to gain an understanding of the efforts that are already underway within the state. It recognizes that there are already successful programs in multiple school districts teaching both entrepreneurship and STEM to students in various forms. Our goal is to create a database of these programs that can be accessed by students, parents, and educators, to allow for the identification of best practices to better inform future plans.

We are requesting that you, or the appropriate employee, provide pertinent information about programs that currently exist in your school district. The K-to-Jobs Team has created databases for both entrepreneurship and STEM programs that allow you to easily enter relevant programs and their general parameters. To access the entrepreneurship site, click [here](#). Upon entering entrepreneurship program information, it will populate a statewide database that you can view by clicking [here](#). To access the STEM site, please click [here](#). You may find that some of your district's programs have already been recorded by another source or district. If so, please simply confirm that program's availability in your district.

Your participation in this effort is critical to its success. We are hoping to have an initial listing of all programs by **October 31, 2012**. We very much appreciate your time and attention.

Thank you,



Michael Finney  
President & CEO  
Michigan Economic Development Corporation



Mike Flanagan  
State Superintendent  
Michigan Department of Education