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Community, post-secondary, business/industry partners and/or families actively support and are engaged with teachers and students in the STEM program.

Munster High School is committed to partnerships with the community, businesses, families and other industries in the surrounding geographical areas. We feel it is important to include these stakeholders to be a part of the daily educational experiences of our students. Our school has actively sought to partner with the community through building internship programs, establishing mentorships with professionals, and inviting feedback from the community.

The STEM partnership with our neighbor, Community Hospital adult-world internship program has proven to be very effective. This partnership focuses on the areas for biomedical studies, health care specialties, nursing, and dental studies. It is part of the Health Science Cluster, one of the twelve career clusters recognized by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). Currently, we are meeting with deans from Purdue University Northwest to establish a partnership in the IDOE's STEM Careers Cluster, which emphasizes engineering, technology, science and mathematics as pathways to careers. This partnership is being modeled after our previously established successful partnership with Community Hospital.

In addition to the internship partners, we also collaborate with community leaders, local businesses, and other industries in the area. Our botany class is currently collaborating with a Master Gardner to establish a community garden at the school, which will distribute plants throughout the community. Munster Robotics Club's partnerships with Lear Corporation and several other adult mentors have become an integral part of the success of our extracurricular Robotics Team as well as our students, individually. The daily collaboration between the mentors and our students has proven to be invaluable. In our efforts to continually improve and expand the STEM opportunities for our students, next year Munster High School intends to partner with the SHEDD aquarium in Chicago as part of the MATE underwater R.O.V. robotics competition.

Teachers have also engaged in numerous partnerships with universities and other prestigious organizations. We currently offer thirty concurrent enrollment classes through partnerships with Purdue University Northwest, Vincennes University, and Ivy Tech College. These partnerships provide the opportunity for all our students to earn college credits before leaving high school. The collaboration and oversight provided by these universities and colleges not only helps ensure the success of our students at the next level, but also allows our students to experience college level expectations while still in high school. Prestigious organizations such as Quarknet have allowed our physics teachers to establish relationships that enhance the classroom experience. Project Biology provides students in our Environmental Science class to experience first-hand the expertise of a lecturer from the USGS while engaging in the annual living classroom experience in Big Pine Key, Florida; this partnership has been ongoing for forty-three years.

Finally, these partnerships could not be established if it were not for the regular communication with stakeholders within the school community. The Principal's Advisory Team, a committee consisting of students, parents, teachers and community members conducts monthly meetings to explore additional ways Munster High School can continue to excel through various programs and initiatives. The administration actively seeks input from all stakeholders during these meetings. These meetings allow us to regularly establish measurable goals from the ideas and suggestion put forth by this committee. Department Chair meetings are also held each month. These meetings seek the input of school leaders when new initiatives are presented. They also serve as an avenue for suggestions from both school leaders and teachers for other ways our school can improve. The

School Improvement Team is a committee consisting of five teachers and three administrators. This team reviews school data monthly and determines how improvements can be made at Munster High School. Before officially beginning the STEM accreditation process, input was also sought from the community through a STEM survey sent during first semester of this school year.

The self-assessment showed several mechanisms are in place that allow regular input with key stakeholders within the community. There is strong support in the community for internships, partnerships and collaboration with experts within their field of study. These relationships enhance the curriculum and allow our students to experience the real-world application of what is being learned in the classroom.

Although we provide opportunities for students to participate in STEM activities, we are not where we want to be with our STEM partners. Meetings scheduled this spring with our neighboring Purdue satellite campus in the adjacent city of Hammond will help further develop and expand the opportunities available to MHS students. It is also apparent that more regular meetings need to occur with our community partners to help establish clear measurable goals. We will continue to seek out these relationships with Purdue University Northwest, strengthen our partnership with Community Hospital and seek new partners that align with the STEM and Health Science clusters.