

Spring 2017

Suggestions to complement and supplement the “Our Plan” section of the Education and Workforce Development Action Team initiative

Dear Action Team members:

To clear up any misunderstanding, it is obviously the working class and the lower middle class want jobs; they want workforce development. The issue, from our perspective, is that the Action Team’s name (Education and Workforce Development) and mission must reflect and represent the standpoints and interests of *all* south side residents.

Due to the recent discussions with the Southside Quality of Life (SSQoL) representatives of the Education and Workforce Development Action Team, the Southeast Working-Class Task Force is suggesting that the team add “Workforce Empowerment” to that title.

As a member and supporter of the working-class here in the Southside, from our standpoint, the orientation of the plan is that of the business owners and business groups of the SSQoL who obviously want workforce development in order to provide them employees so they can run their business and make a living.

If this group was defined by the workers as well, it would then be “Education and Workforce Development and Empowerment.” This begs the question: What is workforce empowerment? This issue has to be discussed and needs to be open for debate. Three suggestions SEW-CTF propose are 1) provide training to help prepare workers to look out for the own self-interests by understanding such concepts as organizing, negotiating, bargaining, reading contracts, or understanding employee/employer rights and responsibilities 2) revive the spirit and legacy of the worker-owned Consolidated Soup Co. which was located here on the southeast at the belt railroad and Churchman Ave.

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/The-Columbia-Conserve-Co.-A-southeast-Indianapolis-business-owned-and-managed-by-workers.pdf> and, 3) empower the working class through providing southeast students and families a course in their public schools called “A History of Labor.”

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SEW-CTF-Keeping-urban-students-in-school-Adding-a-history-of-labor-course-to-the-curriculum.pdf>

We also suggest the following additions to the wording use to identify the team as stated in <http://soindy.org/education-workforce-development/>

“We are a group of educators, local business **and labor** leaders, and residents in South Indy focused on trades education and local job creation and retention. We are looking for opportunities to partner with neighborhood schools, trades training programs, and industry **and labor** leaders to foster job opportunities and **worker empowerment** for residents in our area. In spring 2017, we’ll launch our community career fair series with a focus on trades education.”

Thank you,

John Harris Loflin

Chair

SEW-CTF

john.loflin@seindy.org