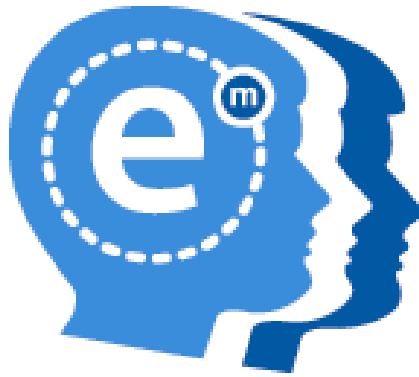


**EDUCATION
MATTERS
IN CATAWBA VALLEY**

Leveraging the **power of partnerships** with **businesses, government, and education** for the purpose of increasing the value of education in Catawba County and creating a culture in our community ***where dropping out of school is no longer an option.***



EDUCATION MATTERS IN CATAWBA VALLEY

*Thank You for Your Interest in
Supporting Education in Catawba County!*

This packet includes the following:

- I. Description of the Education Matters Certification Program
- II. Participation Levels and NC Leave for Parental Involvement Information from the NC Department of Labor
- III. Education and Government Commitments
- IV. Education Matters Application*
- V. Business Education Support Plan*
Suggested ways businesses can participate in supporting education
- VI. Criteria Verification Checklist*
- VII. Business Contacts and Materials Checklist *
- VIII. Businesses, Government, and Educational Partners:
Committed to participate in Education Matters in Catawba County

**These forms should be filled out and faxed to 828.327.7276 or mailed to Education Matters, 2550 Hwy 70 SE, Box 103, Hickory, NC 28602*

For more information contact:

***Tracy Hall, Executive Director
Education Matters***

***828. 327. 7000 x4851
828.217.1397(cell)
thall@educationmattersincatawba.org***

***Lamar Mitchell, Executive Director
Champions of Education***

***828.328.6000 x248
lmitchell@championsofeducation.org***



Education Matters Certification Program

Catawba County values education for its citizens.

The goal of the **Education Matters Certification Program** is to leverage the power of partnerships with businesses, government, and education for the purpose of increasing the value of education in Catawba Valley by creating a culture where dropping out of school is no longer an option and higher educational attainment becomes a priority in our community.

Businesses, local government, education, and their partners believe in the strength of an educated workforce. Studies consistently demonstrate that individuals who are better educated are more prepared to withstand economic downturns, increase their earnings potential over their lifetimes, and are more productive in the workplace.

This program is designed to meet future needs of the Catawba Valley by assuring that quality education is a valuable resource for all of its stakeholders through programming, accountability, investment, policy, and practice.

Education Matters in Catawba Valley is sponsored by CVCC





Education Matters Business Commitments & Certification Levels

Gold Silver Bronze

Gold Criteria for Education Matters Certification:

1. Effective in 2012 all new hires, **age 25 and younger**, will have a **minimum of a high school credential** or its equivalent (ex. GED, Adult HS Diploma, etc.). Individuals who are currently enrolled in high school or an approved program would meet this requirement.
2. **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”** and communicate the employer’s commitment to this initiative in effective and appropriate manners.
3. **Provide human and/or capital resources** in support of education annually.
4. Work with the Education Matters staff to identify potential for employees to **participate in opportunities that will bring classrooms to the real world of business** and provide students with experiences and problem solving on Catawba County business issues.
5. **Display “Education Matters” Certification** in a prominent location to demonstrate the value of education in Catawba County.
6. **Participate in Champions of Education programs.**
7. **Encourage employees to participate in educational opportunities** as a tutor, mentor, volunteer, etc.

Silver Criteria for Education Matters Certification:

1. Effective in 2012 all new hires, **age 25 and younger**, will have a **minimum of a high school credential** or its equivalent.
2. **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**
3. Work with the Education Matters staff to identify potential for employees to **participate in opportunities that will bring classrooms to the real world of business** and provide students with experiences and problem solving on Catawba County business issues.
4. **Display “Education Matters” Certification** in a prominent location.
5. **Participate in Champions of Education programs.**

Bronze Criteria for Education Matters Certification:

1. Similar to Silver Certification, although the difference is that Employers will set as a **preference or a goal** not to hire anyone, **age 25 or younger**, without a minimum of a high school credential or its equivalent (ex. GED, Adult HS Diploma, etc.) by 2012. Individuals that are currently enrolled in high school or an approved program would meet this requirement.

North Carolina Department of Labor

Child Involvement - Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools **§N.C.G.S. 95-28.3**

It is the belief of the General Assembly that parent involvement is an essential component of school success and positive student outcomes. Therefore, employers shall grant four hours per year leave to any employee who is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of a school-aged child so that the employee may attend or otherwise be involved at that child's school. However, any leave under this section is subject to the following conditions:

- The leave shall be at a mutually agreed upon time between the employer and the employee.
- The employer may require an employee to provide the employer with a written request for the leave at least 48 hours before the time desired for the leave.
- The employer may require that the employee furnish written verification from the child's school that the employee attended was otherwise involved at that school during the time of the leave.

For the purpose of this section, "school" means any (i) public school, (ii) private church school, church of religious charter, or nonpublic school described in Parts 1 and 2 of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes that regularly provides a course of grade school instruction, (iii) preschool, and (iv) child care facility as defined in G.S. 110-86(3).

Employers shall not discharge, demote, or otherwise take an adverse employment action against an employee who requests or takes leave under this section. Nothing in this section shall require an employer to pay an employee for leave taken under this section.

An employee who is demoted or discharged or who has had an adverse employment action taken against him or her in violation of this section may bring a civil action within one year from the date of the alleged violation against the employer who violates this section and obtain either of the following:

- Any wages or benefits lost as a result of the violation; or
- An order of reinstatement without loss of position, seniority, wages, or benefits.

The burden of proof shall be upon the employee. (1993, c.509, s. 1; 1997-506, s. 34.)

The North Carolina Department of Labor does **not** administer this law. If you have questions concerning this law, you will have to consult with a private attorney. If you do not have an attorney or know of one to contact, you can call the North Carolina Lawyer Referral Service at 1-800-662-7660. Web site: www.ncbar.org/public/lrs/index.aspx. If you cannot afford any attorney, you may be eligible for free legal advice through a Legal Aid Services office in your area. Contact their Central Office in Raleigh at (919) 856-2564 for information on local offices throughout the state. Web site: <http://www.legalaidnc.org>

For questions on other labor laws, please visit the North Carolina Department of Labor's Web site: <http://www.nclabor.com>

North Carolina Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Bureau
1101 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1101

919-807-2796 or (toll-free NC only) 1-800-NC-LABOR
Web site: <http://www.nclabor.com>



Education in Catawba County Commitments & Benefits

**Catawba County Schools
Catawba Valley Community College
Hickory Public Schools
Newton-Conover City Schools**

1. **Education Matters Future Ready Portfolio-** Every student graduating from Catawba County Schools, Hickory Public Schools, Newton Conover Schools, and Catawba Valley Community College by 2012 will leave with an “Education Matters Future Ready Portfolio”. This portfolio will include a resume, letters of reference, assessment scores (i.e. CRC, SAT, COMPASS, etc.), transcripts, writing samples, service activities, attendance records, awards and honors, extra curricula activities, personal goals, and any other relevant information.
2. **Catawba Valley Community College Graduate Guarantee-** By 2012, every **CVCC graduate** will have the Education Matters Future Ready Portfolio that will include a graduate guarantee. This guarantee assures that any employer who hires a CVCC graduate will be assured in writing that the applicant is competent in identified key areas to employers (i.e. critical thinking, problem solving, communication, etc., plus program specific technical competencies). This will be accomplished by full course and program integration of these employer critical competencies. Any employer that determines that a CVCC graduate is deficient in any of the identified competencies will be able to send their employee to additional education and training in the specific area free of charge to the employer or the graduate.
3. **Employability Training** will be provided to all students in the three school systems and Catawba Valley Community College prior to graduation.
4. **Education Matters Annual Report-** The educational systems in Catawba County will produce a collaborative annual report to **Education Matters Certified Employers** that will include items such as graduation rates, employer specific initiatives, Education Matters related initiatives, etc.



Government Entities in Catawba County Commitments & Benefits

As part of their commitment to the importance of education in Catawba County, **Brookford, Catawba, Claremont, Conover, Hickory, Long View, Maiden, Newton, Catawba County, EDC, and Western Piedmont Council of Governments** agree to the following:

1. To **promote “leave for parental involvement in schools”** by matching up to four hours of time away from work (through employee’s annual leave or compensatory time) for employees to:
 - a. attend teacher conferences and school supported activities for their children or grandchildren during work time;
 - b. volunteer with tutoring programs where they can use their credentials, disciplines, or unique experiences to help in the field of education; and
 - c. be part of a school system administered “speakers bureau” to lecture on special topics.
2. **Economic incentive agreements** will require industries be an Education Matters Program Certification participant and to provide academic internships opportunities for high school students.
3. To encourage employees to participate in required high school graduation projects, serving as a mentor or a judge.
4. To **review Education Matters portfolios** of all Catawba County high school graduates who have applied for vacancies.
5. Catawba County Government will continue to financially support the public school systems and Catawba Valley Community College.
6. Catawba County will require adoptive or foster parents to have their high school diplomas or GED, and will encourage Work First clients to obtain their high school diplomas or GED.



**EDUCATION
MATTERS**
IN CATAWBA VALLEY

Education Matters Business Application

Company Name: _____

Number of Employees: _____ Circle one: (Business, Government, Education)

Level of Certification Applying For (Circle One): **Gold** **Silver** **Bronze**

CEO or Designated Representative:

Contact Information: Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address:

The aforementioned employer is applying for Education Matters in Catawba Valley Certification. The employer agrees to the criteria (for designated level) as outlined in the Education Matters Certification Program and requests a review by Education Matters staff to determine certification.

Signed (CEO or Designee): _____ Date: _____

Please send completed applications to:

Education Matters
Attn: Tracy Hall
2550 Hwy 70 SE, Box 103
Hickory, NC 28603

Or fax to: 828.327.7276
Questions? Call Tracy Hall
Office: 828.327.7000 x4851
Cell: 828.217.1397



Education Matters Application (page 2)

Education Matters Program Certification Business Participation Level

(Check one)

Gold Level _____

- **Hiring practices: High School Diploma or Equivalent for new hires, age 25 years or younger**
- **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**
- **Provide human and/or capital resources in support of education**
- **Participate in EM staff consultation**
- **Display “Education Matters” certification**
- **Participate in Champions of Education programs**
- **Encourage employee volunteerism in schools**

Silver Level _____

- **Hiring practices: High School Diploma or Equivalent for new hires, age 25 years or younger**
- **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**
- **Participate in EM staff consultation**
- **Display “Education Matters” certification**
- **Participate in Champions of Education programs**

Bronze Level _____

- **Hiring practices: Preference of High School Diploma or Equivalent for new hires, age 25 years or younger**
- **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**
- **Participate in EM staff consultation**
- **Display “Education Matters” certification**
- **Participate in Champions of Education programs**



Business Education Support Plan

Listed below are ways businesses can support education. Please check those ways your business is currently supporting education. Please note if there is a particular program your business would like to get involved with or learn more about.

Connecting with Schools & Students

- Adopt a School
 - Business Speakers Bureau in Schools
 - Field Trip/ Site Visit Opportunities for Students
 - Graduation Project
 - Internships/Job Shadowing
 - Reading Buddies
 - Lunch Buddies
 - WatchDOGS (Dads of Great Students)
 - Mentoring
 - Tutoring
 - Program Involvement: Project Potential, Leadership 2000, etc.
 - Educational/ Recreational/ Sports Programs for Children
 - DonorsChoose
 - Futures 4 Kids
 - Other: Please list _____
-

Financial Support & Provision of Resources

- Scholarships for students or teachers
- Teacher Recognition Programs
- Materials and Supplies
- Sponsorship for programs and events

Financial Support & Provision of Resources (continued)

- Donations to School Fundraisers (PTA/PTO)
- In-kind Services you can provide to the schools – technology support, landscape design, etc.
- Support for athletics, music, drama, etc.
- Staff development and training opportunities for school faculty and staff
- Other: Please list _____

Leave for Parental Involvement (Education Matters Certification Requirement)

- Employee involvement in their child’s education and activities – academics, parent-teacher conferences, lunch buddies, sports, band, PTA/PTO, etc.
- Other: Please list _____

Champions of Education Programs

- COE Breakfast Sponsorships
- COE’s Preschool Advancement
- COE Board representation
- COE Committee Participation: Marketing, Family Involvement, Leaps and Bounds (Preschool Advancement), etc.
- Involvement in other Educational Support Groups
- Other: Please list _____

Is there something you would like to help with or get involved with in a school, but not sure how to go about it or who to contact?

*Please fill out and return this form to Education Matters,
2550 Hwy 70 SE, Box 103, Hickory, NC 28602 or fax to 828.327.7276*



Education Matters Criteria Verification

Gold Level

Business Name _____

Please show examples or demonstrate how the criteria below are being met by your business...

_____ **Hiring practices: High School Diploma or Equivalent Required**

_____ **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**

_____ **Provide human and/or capital resources in support of education**

_____ **Participate in EM staff consultation**

_____ **Display “Education Matters” certification**

_____ **Participate in Champions of Education programs**

_____ **Encourage employee volunteerism in schools**

*Please fill out and return this form to Education Matters,
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**EDUCATION
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Education Matters Criteria Verification

Silver Level

Business Name _____

Please show examples or demonstrate how the criteria below are being met by your business...

_____ **Hiring practices: High School Diploma or Equivalent Required**

_____ **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**

_____ **Participate in EM staff consultation**

_____ **Display “Education Matters” certification**

_____ **Participate in Champions of Education programs**

*Please fill out and return this form to Education Matters,
2550 Hwy 70 SE, Box 103, Hickory, NC 28602 or fax to 828.327.7276*



Education Matters Criteria Verification

Bronze Level

Business Name _____

Please show examples or demonstrate how the criteria below are being met by your business...

_____ **Hiring practices: High School Diploma or Equivalent Preferred**

_____ **Promote “Leave for Parental Involvement in Schools”**

_____ **Participate in EM staff consultation**

_____ **Display “Education Matters” certification**

_____ **Participate in Champions of Education programs**

*Please fill out and return this form to Education Matters,
2550 Hwy 70 SE, Box 103, Hickory, NC 28602 or fax to 828.327.7276*



**EDUCATION
MATTERS**
IN CATAWBA VALLEY

Education Matters Business Contacts & Materials

Business Name _____

Business Contact Person _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Education Matters Representative _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Materials:

_____ **Framed Education Matters Certificate**

_____ **Business Window/Door Decal #** _____

_____ **Fleet Vehicles Decals needed? #** _____

_____ **Online Logo for Business website/application**

_____ **Alternative entry Education Matters identification piece (plaques, countertop stand, etc. if window decals are not permitted)**

_____ **Other** _____

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2550 Hwy 70 SE, Box 103, Hickory, NC 28602 or fax to 828.327.7276*

Education Matters

Business Partners

Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources

Humane Society of Catawba County

Architecture & Construction

Flowers Baking Company

Hickory Mechanical

Arts, Audio/Video Technology, & Communications

Allen Finley Advertising

Fanjoy Labrenz Photographers

Deluxe Printing Company

Jackson Group Interactive

Jon Eckard Photography

Hickory Daily Record

Hickory Printing Group

PixelSpace

Scans, Inc.

Business Management & Administration

BrainWorks Learning Center

Catawba Chamber of Commerce

Clater Kaye Theatreworks

DL Tee Golf

Freedom Shopping

Hickory Best Sellers, Weichert Realtors

ReMax A-Team

Sharp Business Systems

Sylvan Learning Centers

The Jackson Group

Education & Training

Appalachian State University Center at Hickory

Catawba County Schools

Catawba Valley Community College

Hickory Public Schools

Lenoir-Rhyne University

Mountain State University

Newton Conover City Schools

NC Center for Engineering Technologies (ASU)

The Spa Athletic Club

Finance, Philanthropy, & Foundations

Aquesta Insurance

Bank of Granite

Beaver Family Investments

Blue Ridge Wealth Services

Catawba Valley Community College Foundation

Davidson, Holland, Whitesell & Company

Greater Hickory Classic Foundation

Martin Starnes and Associates

Mountain 1st Bank & Trust

Peoples Bank

RBC Bank

Shuford Federal Credit Union

Sig Holcomb State Farm

Spectrum Financial

Government & Public Administration

Catawba County Economic Development Corporation

Catawba County Government

City of Conover

City of Hickory

City of Newton

Town of Catawba

Town of Maiden

Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Health Science

Catawba Pediatrics
Catawba Valley Medical Center
Crouse Chiropractic
Frye Regional Medical Center
Graystone Eye
Home Instead Senior Care

Entertainment, Museums, Hospitality & Tourism

Catawba Science Center
Hickory Community Theatre
Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority
Hickory Dickory Dock
Hickory Museum of Art
McDonald's
Texas Roadhouse Restaurant
United Arts Council of Catawba County
Western Piedmont Symphony

Human Services

Catawba County Parenting Network
Catawba County Partnership for Children
Catawba County United Way
Hair Concepts of Hickory, Inc.
Hickory Housing Authority
Richard Anthony Hair
The Counseling Group
The Children's Resource Center
YMCA of Catawba Valley

Information Technology

CenturyLink

Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security

Hickory Fire Department
Hickory Police Department
NC Alcohol Law Enforcement
Patrick Harper & Dixon
Young, Morphis, Bach & Taylor, LLP

Manufacturing

Benco Steel
Century Furniture
Concept Frames
Corning Cable Systems
C.R. Laine Furniture
Hamco Manufacturing & Distributing (Tufco)
Hickory Business Furniture
Hickory Springs Manufacturing Company
Poppelmann Plastics
Shurtape Technologies
Steele Rubber Products
Timmerman Manufacturing, Inc.
Vanguard Furniture
von Drehle Corporation
Wesley Hall, Inc.

Marketing

Fast Signs
Hickory Furniture Mart
JC Penney

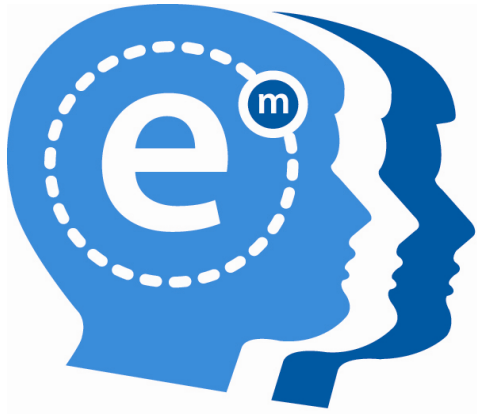
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics

Duke Energy
General Dynamics SATCOM Technologies
H.K. Research
Piedmont Natural Gas

Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics

Alex Lee, Inc.
Clark Tire & Auto
Dale Earnhardt Chevrolet
Dedicated Transportation Group, Inc.
Mike Johnson's Hickory Toyota
Pepsi Cola Bottling Company
Target Distribution Center

Business List Updated December 2010. Contact Tracy Hall to find out how your company can become an Education Matters Partner at thall@educationmattersincatawba.org or call 828.327.7000 x4851.



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Because we care
about
our children
and the
future of our
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