

**NEW Manufacturing Alliance  
K-12/STEM taskforce meeting**

May 13, 2026

Teams

8:30 a.m.

*Minutes*

**ATTENDEES:** Cynthia Pavelski, CESA 6; Pete L'Empereur - AK Crust/Pep's Pizza; Amber Smetek - Green Bay Packaging; Christina Stelter - Alliance Laundry Systems; Ann Franz - NEWMA; Valerie Brooks - CESA 8; Cyndi Pavelski - CESA 6; Lindsay Allen - CESA 7; David Gordon - CESA 7; Christi Lemery - Appleton Area School District; Cindy Bailey - NWTC; Anne Troka - Sargento; Karen Gibbs - GPS Ed; Brian Conrad – Great Northern; Danielle Dale – KI; Kurtis Butrymowicz - HART Design & Manufacturing

**Topic 1: Recap of the 2026 All Stars & Future All Star YA Awards on 5/6/2026**

- The recent All-Star & YA Awards event was a success, with positive feedback from attendees.  
Key Features:
  - YA Scholarships: \$1,000 scholarships for college-bound students (2-year decision window).
  - All-Star Recognition: Acceptance speeches and jumbotron features for 2026 All-Stars.
  - Parent Engagement: The event successfully showcased manufacturing as a viable career path.
- Decision: Replicate this format for next year's 2027 All-Stars.

**Topic 2: Plan Excellence in Mfg./K-12 Partnerships Awards**

- **Nominations:** 30 nominations received in the first week (deadline: June 5).
  - New categories (Elementary Teacher, Core Subject Teacher, Manufacturer Mentor, K-12 Coordinator) are all represented.
- **Promotion:** Ann will create a shareable email template and LinkedIn post to encourage more nominations.
  - NEWMA LinkedIn Post: [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/newmanufacturingalliance\\_2026-excellence-in-manufacturingk-12-partnerships-activity-7458215843080953856-TPYP?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_desktop&rcm=ACoAAA\\_12lkBkoGVI4oGAbtOxfS1I5Xt-5bJApQ](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/newmanufacturingalliance_2026-excellence-in-manufacturingk-12-partnerships-activity-7458215843080953856-TPYP?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAA_12lkBkoGVI4oGAbtOxfS1I5Xt-5bJApQ)
- **Venue:** Great North Commons was selected over Lambeau Field for its atmosphere and easier navigation.
  - Ann will arrange for additional lighting to spotlight speakers.
- **Voting:** Taskforce members have until July 7 to send Ann their top picks in each category: educators review manufacturer nominations, and vice versa.

**Topic 3: Discuss October is Manufacturing Month – ACP Roundtable & Made in Our Community plant tours**

- **ACP Roundtable (Oct 27):** The event will shift from a general discussion to a strategic focus on talent pipeline development.
  - **Student Engagement:** Explore a mix of student panels and small-group discussions.
  - **Key Topics:**
    - **Individual Career Plans (ACPs):** How industry can support student ACPs, framed as an Individual Development Plan for common business understanding.
    - **"Portrait of a Graduate":** An update on this initiative to align education with business needs.
    - **All-Star & YA (alumni too) Stories:** sharing their career paths and best practices in their work experience.
  - **Promotion:** The agenda will include specific topics to attract more industry attendees.
- **"Made in Our Community" Plant Tours:** The goal is a more coordinated, impactful experience for students.
  - **Process:**
    - **July:** Ann surveys companies for tour availability.
    - **Mid-August:** A packaged schedule is delivered to CESAs for distribution to schools.
  - **Support:** David Gordon offered CESA support for companies needing help structuring their tours.

#### Topic 4: Guide for successful engagement for industry at career fairs, plant tours and hands-on activities handbook

- **Goal:** Create a "playbook" for effective K-12 engagement.
- **Plan:** The finished product will be shared at a half-day summit, targeted for March 2027.
  - **Teaser:** A session at the December quarterly meeting to promote the summit.
  - **Small workgroups** working on a specific topic to share at the March event.
- **Potential Topics:**
  - Meaningful plant tours (e.g., culture, young employees engaging students, call to action).
  - Effective career fair engagement including hands-on activities.
  - Engaging classroom presentations.
  - How to create an engaging YA program and navigating common barriers to YA:
    - **Age Restrictions:** Clarifying how Youth Apprenticeship (YA) rules enable placements in roles normally requiring age 18+.
    - **Unionized Facilities:** Debunking the myth that YA is impossible in union shops and providing navigation support.
    - Invite **YA alumni** to share their story.
  - **Keynote:** A speaker on engaging Gen Z/Alpha.
- Creating a K-12 strategy that is more than one engagement with the schools.
- Try to get plant tour materials ready before the October 2026 tours
  - Full work to begin after Summer

#### Topic 5: Upcoming NEWMA events

June 11: All About Boats Tech Ed Teacher Tour & Dialogue at Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding:

<https://form.jotform.com/261125179216151>.

- **Location schedule:** 9:30 AM Bay Ship Building, 11 AM at Door County Maritime Museum for lunch, 1:30 PM at Berger Boat
- Tech Ed teachers can still sign up – 8 slots open

June 17: 20 Year anniversary & Quarterly Membership meeting from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at Great North Commons:

<https://form.jotform.com/260905681475161>. Please attend – we will be strategizing around the next 20 years

- Ann is pursuing a government contract (not a grant) for over \$100,000 to expand the Sea Perch program.
  - Proposed Expansion:
    - Free Sea Perch kits.
    - A high school version building advanced ROVs.
    - A partnership with maritime museums and a shipwreck organization for students to explore Lake Michigan shipwrecks.
  - A decision is expected next month.

#### Topic 6: Next agenda for **July 8 at 9 a.m.** via Teams