

Connections



Educators and
Employers:
Providing Education
with a Purpose

Volume 21-6: Promising Florida Initiatives

This is the print version of the newsletter released online.

For the online version, go here: http://www.cordonline.net/connections/21_6

Good Things Are Happening in the Sunshine State

David Bond, Director, National Career Pathways Network



Florida is focused on creating and improving career pathways for traditional students and adult learners. This newsletter shares several articles about the good things happening in the state, which is hosting NCPN's 20th anniversary

conference (Orlando, October 12–14).

This newsletter includes articles from the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Career Pathways Network, the Florida Advanced Technological Education Center located at Hillsboro Community College, Indian River State College's Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Education, and Indian River's Rigorous Programs of Study work.

The final article is not from a Florida resident, but there is definitely a Florida connection. Jim Brazell will be the keynote speaker at the conference opening general session, and his article includes some information collected at a Florida Career Pathways Network meeting.

Florida will have several presentations and a student showcase at the conference, but there will

also be presentations from around the country. Like the Florida articles, the National Career Pathways Network includes programming appropriate for those interested in career pathways for students involved in traditional high-school-to-college transitions **and** for those interested in improving the lives of adult learners.

I hope you will join us in **Transforming Lives for a Strong America!** See you in Orlando.



Transforming Lives for a Strong America

As a bonus feature this newsletter also includes an executive summary of a report recently released by the League for Innovation in the Community College titled *Significant Discussions: A Guide for Secondary and Postsecondary Curriculum Alignment*.

Florida's Gold Standard Career Pathways Project and Statewide Agreements Based on Industry Certification

Gayle Manley, Educational Policy Consultant, Florida Department of Education

In line with the State Board of Education's goal of seamless articulation and maximum access, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) has identified several objectives that focus on eliminating unnecessary barriers to student transitions from high school to postsecondary and between postsecondary institutions. In an effort to remove some of those barriers and promote student movement up the college and career ladder, FLDOE has implemented the "Gold Standard Career Pathways" project.



In 2008, the FLDOE, in cooperation with business and workforce development partners, began the process of identifying credentials that are industry-recognized and granted based on third-party testing (considered "gold standard" under Perkins IV). Through collaborative efforts with state college and career center faculty representatives, identified gold standard industry credentials have been compared to degree programs in related fields to determine where articulation agreements could be established. The goal is to strengthen educational pathways that combine academic and career and technical education components to accelerate student movement up the career ladder.

The Process

- Subject matter staff members of the FLDOE map Gold Standard Career Pathways Industry Certifications (GSCPIC) to AAS/AS degree programs.
- Mapped GSCPIC are sent out to members of the Occupational Education Standing Committee (Deans of Workforce Education

programs) representing all 28 colleges in the Florida College System.

- The committee solicits a review and evaluation of each GSCPIC by faculty who teach courses in the AAS/AS degree program to which the certification has been mapped.
- Faculty members from each college propose a number of college credit hours guaranteed to articulate based on comparison of the GSCPIC and the AAS/AS degree curricula.
- Responses are compiled, and the highest number of credits for which a consensus of colleges has submitted becomes the number of credits proposed to be guaranteed by the statewide articulation agreement.
- Upon agreement from the Council of Instructional Affairs, the proposed GSCPIC statewide articulation agreements are placed on the agenda of the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) for approval. The ACC is an appointed K-20 advising body that comprises representatives from all levels of public and private education.
- Upon approval from the ACC, the proposed agreements are placed on the agenda of the State Board of Education for approval.
- The approved GSCPIC are published at http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/dwdframe/artic_frame.asp and are entered into a database for use by school districts and colleges in the Florida College System for reporting.
- The GSCPIC statewide agreements will be reviewed every three years and updated as necessary based on changes in the industry certification and/or degree requirements.

To date, the State Board of Education has approved 102 Gold Standard Career Pathways

Articulation Agreements based on Industry Certification. These agreements permit the awarding of college credit to students enrolled in AAS or AS degree programs in the Florida College System. Agreements represent most of the career clusters and range from three credits awarded to fifteen. These agreements guarantee articulated credit and do not preclude institutions from granting additional credit based on local agreements.

What students and parents need from articulation agreements and practices within Florida's education system are fairness, consistency, and

predictability. Industry certifications are an important component of career and technical education programs of study as demonstrated evidence of technical skill attainment. Students who earn industry certifications have a competitive edge upon graduation and become more marketable in the workplace during and after college and/or other postsecondary schooling.

For more information, contact the author at Gayle.manley@fldoe.org.

Adult Education Career Pathways

Lisa Williams, Adult Education Career Pathways Coordinator, Florida Department of Education

In the fall of 2010, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) issued a competitive request for proposals to promote Adult Education Career Pathways (AECP). The purpose of the funding was to build the capacity of adult education programs to increase the number of adult education students who enter postsecondary programs and earn credentials. To date, over fifty adult education providers have been awarded funding.

Providers were tasked to analyze their current programs and determine system changes needed to reach the grant goals. Providers must integrate career awareness, exploration, and planning programs, enabling each learner to develop a career and education plan. Providers must also develop and implement a Five-Year Strategic Plan to improve, expand, or create an adult education

program that includes adult education career pathways and transition to postsecondary programs.

The FLDOE is committed to improving, expanding, and creating adult education programs that include adult education career pathways and transitioning opportunities to postsecondary programs.

Florida's goal is to increase the number and percentage of adult education students who enter postsecondary education and earn degrees, certificates, and/or industry credentials.

For more information, contact the author at Lisa.williams@fldoe.org.

Adult Education Career Pathways (AECP) at Indian River State College

Anthony ("Tony") Iacono, Associate Dean of Developmental Education and Executive Director, Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Education (IPDAE), Indian River State College, Fort Pierce, Florida

In 2003, Indian River State College made a significant change in the vision and mission of its Adult Education program. Whereas the program in previous decades helped students improve their literacy skills and/or earn high school credentials,

the college decided that it was time to repurpose the program to support ESL, GED, and Adult High School students interested in transitioning into postsecondary programs. Given its new mission, the college spent nearly a year restructuring its

Adult Education program. Within two years, the number of Adult Education students who entered postsecondary programs at IRSC had increased from about 100 to better than 500. In 2006, IRSC received the National Metlife/Jobs for the Future Award for transitioning underserved students into college programs and helping them to earn college degrees and workforce certificates. Since 2005, approximately 25% of the college's AA graduates and 26% of the college's AS and professional certificate graduates have begun their educational careers in the college's Adult Education program.

While the new initiative demonstrated that Adult Education students were fully capable of earning college degrees, the structure of the program limited future growth. The Adult Education transitioning program was largely based on faculty and staff identifying students they believed were strong candidates for postsecondary programs and either enrolling them in classes while they were still enrolled in Adult Education or directing them to the College's Educational Services Division upon graduation. To serve more students with greater efficiency, the program's Adult Education administrators partnered with key individuals at the college, including the director of career pathways, instructional vice presidents, the CFO, and the president, to create an Adult Education Career Pathways (AEC) program. Today, Adult Education students find that their career goal is

addressed on the day they enter the program and that their Adult Education experience is integrated within the 16 Career Cluster model, enabling more than 700 Adult Education students to enter postsecondary programs.

In addition to reforming its own program, IRSC is actively supporting AEC across the state and nationwide. In 2007, the program's dean, the director of adult secondary education, the Florida TechNet director, and two ESL support staff members established the Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Education (IPDAE). IPDAE is active in helping states develop or expand their AEC programs, including its own state, where it played a key role in working with FLDOE Chancellor Loretta Costin and her staff as well as Adult Education administrators, teachers, and the executive directors of ACE of Florida, the Florida Literacy Coalition, and CORD to develop a five-year strategic plan designed to repurpose all of Florida's Adult Education programs into AEC programs. To support the initiative, the FLDOE made more than \$7 million available in grants to support program implementation. With more than 26% of Florida's adults in need of a high school credential, AEC is a giant step forward in helping more than one million Floridians secure better lives and strengthen the state's economic future.

For more information, contact the author at aiacono@irsc.edu.

Supporting Career Pathways in the Sunshine State: Florida Career Pathways Network (FCPN) Mirrors the Efforts of NCPN

Jeraline M. Marsh, FCPN President and Career Education Curriculum Specialist, Career Pathways/Criminal Justice/DATA/Special Events, Department of Choice and Career Options, School District of Palm Beach County, Florida

Much like the National Career Pathways Network (NCPN), the Florida Career Pathways Network (FCPN) is a membership organization for educators and employers involved in the advancement of Career Pathways and related education reform initiatives. For years, FCPN has brought secondary, postsecondary, and business/industry players to

the table to find common ground centered upon identifying what students must be, know, and do to succeed. Through a system of professional networking and support, FCPN assists its members across the state in planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving transition programs for secondary through adult education students by

pooling the resources of the state's educational and workforce institutions. Through an annual FCPN Symposium, educators and business/industry representatives have come together to learn, share, and take part in a professional development opportunity that allowed them to improve on the efforts of building and sustaining rigorous programs of study.



FCPN was formerly the Florida Tech Prep Network (FTPN) and has continued the legacy and foundation that Tech Prep set as it transformed to FCPN and focused on providing a more rigorous program of study for students enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs and academies.

As the needs of the state and the global economy change, FCPN has made adjustments and partnered with other state organizations to ensure that we offer the most up-to-date information and assistance to leaders and practitioners as they endeavor to turn around low-performing schools and improve the overall quality of career and technical education through the development and implementation of solid Career Pathway systems. Special attention over the past year has included

adding several consultant positions to the FCPN board of directors to address the growing need for adult education and military career pathways, as well as statewide articulation agreement initiatives.

Members of FCPN have been working diligently alongside friends from the National Career Pathways Network (NCPN) to provide you with a high-quality professional development experience in a locale where you can also enjoy the Florida sunshine! Our FCPN family is pleased to invite you to join us at the 2011 NCPN conference and encourages you to visit our Florida Best Practices in roundtables and breakout sessions. Come gain first-hand knowledge from your Florida counterparts on how to develop and implement some of the best Career Pathways programs our state has to offer. The Florida Best Practice Roundtable session will cover topics ranging from strategies for increasing career certificate completion by ELL students to developing career pathways for adult education students. Also featured as a Florida Best Practice will be an overview from the Florida Department of Education on the state's Gold Standard Statewide Articulation Agreements. And if that weren't enough, we invite you to visit the Florida Showcase of Students in the exhibit hall to speak with student representatives of Florida Career Pathways programs. Please visit us at www.fcfn.net for a list of presentations from Florida practitioners and other information on the Florida Career Pathways Network.

For more information, contact the author at jeraline.marsh@palmbeachschools.org.

FLATE: Synergy in the Sunshine State

Marilyn Barger, Principal Investigator and Executive Director, Florida Advanced Technological Education Center (FLATE)

Florida is an important hub that impacts manufacturing and production industries both locally and globally. A technically educated workforce is key to this impact. FLATE, the Florida Advanced Technological Education Center, is a National Science Foundation Regional center of

Excellence. FLATE acts as a catalyst for a statewide effort to strategically link the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) with national, state, and regional manufacturing associations. FLATE collaborates with over 400 Florida workforce development and industry representatives across

the state in implementing and promoting the Engineering Technology (ET) degree program and career pathways. This unified statewide approach to meeting the technical workforce needs of Florida's hi-tech manufacturing industry represents a synergy among these partners. How does this cooperative approach to career preparation and an educated workforce meet national emerging business and industry needs as well?

On May 8, 2011, President Obama announced a goal to credential 500,000 community college students nationwide with skill certifications aligned to manufacturers' hiring needs. This challenge is a direct fit for Florida's ET degree program model, in which core courses align with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council credential. Ten participating Florida colleges offer the degree program, and data show that the program is working. There has been a 139% increase in ET degree enrollment since ET program adoption began in 2008 (347 enrolled in 2009–2010). Data received from the FLDOE reports a 14% increase in ET and related degree enrollment (4714 enrolled in 2009–2010) and a 10% increase in total ET and related degree and certificate program enrollment (5095 enrolled in 2009–2010). Florida's ET degree program is a model for colleges all over the country.



FLATE's Florida industry partners play a critical role and have a direct influence on the degree program. They provide relevant and timely input that helps to create an effective model for the nation. Through participation in FLATE's Industry Advisory Council and feedback at ET forums, industry representatives identify the attributes that well educated workers should possess. FLDOE representatives, who also participate in these

events, acquire direct input about industry needs and engage in meaningful dialog, resulting in a career-readiness emphasis for college programs. Ultimately, both students and workers in industry benefit from this continuous dialog and injection of relevant career skills into college programs. Students acquire degrees that prepare them for technical careers as well as pathways to continue their college education. Workers benefit from the skills acquired with their certification. And industry can rely on a ready supply of consistently prepared and certified employees, regardless of which Florida college they attend.

FLATE's "synergy in the sunshine state" approach goes beyond curriculum reform at the state level. Industry partners, along with the Manufacturer's Association of Florida (MAF), also play an important role in reaching out to high school students to help ensure a steady stream of college students and present a viable career pathway in high-tech manufacturing through their sponsorship of industry tours and career advertorials in *Florida Trend's NEXT* magazine and online materials. The tours put groups of students of different grade levels in the plants to see firsthand what a technical career means. The advertorials engage graduating seniors and encourage them to make high-tech manufacturing part of their college and career plans. The student leads generated by the industry-sponsored advertorials are organized and distributed by FLATE to give colleges a quick step up in recruitment and outreach. Students indicate interest by mailing a response card or visiting a website and filling out an online response card. Students who provide valid email addresses receive personal emails from FLATE containing ready-to-use online collateral materials, including information on Florida colleges and careers in high-tech manufacturing. Since the first *NEXT* advertorial implementation in 2006–2007, 19,557 student responses have been received by FLATE and shared with Florida colleges.

Online materials include FLATE's *Made in Florida* website (www.madeinflorida.org), where students find Florida manufacturers and jobs, statewide

college degree and certificate program specifics, contact information, help using FLDOE's *FACTS.org*, and a wealth of resources to help them transition from high school to college with an eye on lucrative careers. All of these resources were developed in partnership with and provide direct resources for industry.

In summary, the "synergy in the sunshine state" approach works for Florida and will work in other regions, but it requires an adhesive agent. For Florida, that agent is FLATE, whose mission as Florida's go-to organization for high-tech manufacturing and advanced technical education is to provide leadership, best practices, and resources supporting Florida's high-performance skilled workforce. But tangible results are not possible without the energy and forward thinking perspectives of its partners. FLATE's effective partnership with government, education, and industry partners is the model for Florida's technical education and training programs. FLATE strives to meet emerging needs by serving students and the workforce and demonstrating value for industry partners as it builds Florida's 21st-century technical workforce.

"FLATE's ground breaking idea to offer a degree program which articulates credit toward the degree through the MSSC industry certification over five years ago provided a model for over 100 similar articulation agreements in Florida in 2011."

Eric Owens, State Supervisor
Adult and Career Education
Florida Department of Education

FLATE (Florida Advanced Technological Education) Center recently received STEMFlorida, Inc.'s "Best Practice Award for Excellence Integrating Needs of STEM-Enabled Programs into Engaging Curriculum and Educational Outreach Resources." The award, presented on June 24 during the STEM Florida Think Tank at the Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport, recognized FLATE's role in spearheading efforts to launch a national, industry-recognized, STEM-focused credential system that supports the educational and workforce needs of local manufacturers.

Message from the Executive Director of FLATE

This notice appeared in the August edition of the FLATE Focus, a publication of FLATE

This summer, Governor Rick Scott asked the Manufacturers Association of Florida (MAF) to submit a list of five important actions that the state could take to better support Florida manufacturers. MAF's response included a snapshot of the status of manufacturing in Florida. Here is that snapshot and the five-item "wish list" (see www.mafmfg.com). We all look forward to seeing which items on the list will be addressed in the months ahead.

- Florida is the 15th largest manufacturing state.
- There are more than 302,000 high-skilled direct manufacturing employees in Florida.
- They work in 17,722 discrete manufacturing facilities.
- Manufacturers pay 122% higher wages than other Florida employers and offer substantial benefits.
- They pay over 5% of the real estate taxes and nearly 25% of the tangible personal property tax.
- The majority of research and development dollars are spent by manufacturers.

- Manufacturers employ a large percentage of technical graduates from the state university system.
- Florida manufacturers have open jobs that they cannot fill due to one or more of the following: (a) applicants lack social skills; (b) applicants cannot pass the drug test; (c) applicants are not qualified or certified with the appropriate skills for the jobs.
- Manufactured goods make up 91% of all exports leaving Florida's 14 ports.

The five action priorities for Florida manufacturers are:

1. Designate a manufacturing advocate or liaison.
2. Improve the tax climate for manufacturers in all business models.
3. Continue to invest in workforce training.

4. Increase import and export trade opportunities.
5. Use energy policy as an economic development strategy.

For many of us, it's important to realize that high-skilled manufacturing jobs are still going unfilled due to lack of qualified candidates. The need to fill these high-tech, high-wage jobs with well qualified, credentialed candidates is one of FLATE's goals. However, our goal, and that of the National Science Foundation's (NSF) investment in FLATE, is not only to help meet current workforce needs, but also to develop and implement long-term strategies for building and maintaining attractive, relevant, strong, and flexible career pathways to support Florida's manufacturers.

For more information, contact Marilyn Barger at mbarger@hccfl.edu.

Working to Implement OVAE's 10 RPOS Component Framework One Component at a Time—Indian River State College's Career Pathways Student Reports: A Paperless Process for Transcribing Articulated Credits

Cheryl Keim, Career Pathways Specialist, Indian River State College

The *Career Pathways Student Reports* assist in meeting requirement number seven, Credit Transfer Agreements, of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education's Ten Components of Rigorous Programs of Study, which states that

college credit should be automatically transcribed at the college for high school students so that they can transfer seamlessly into the postsecondary portion of a POS without the need for additional paperwork or petitioning for credit.

In an effort to provide efficient and innovative services for career pathways students, Indian River State College, in partnership with Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, and Saint Lucie County school districts, and through the Research Coast Career Pathways Consortium (RCCPC), developed a highly

efficient paperless process for transcribing career pathways articulated credits. The *Career Pathways Student Report System* is a web-based data system consisting of secondary career pathways course completion information for all high school graduates within the RCCPC's four-county area school districts, and the corresponding articulated credits.

The *Career Pathways Student Reports* have replaced the use of Career Pathways completer certificates. The results from researching the effectiveness of the previous completer certificate method from a random selection of approximately 970 Career Pathways students enrolled at Indian River State College determined that a more efficient method was needed. The *Career Pathways Student Reports* supply accurate and

accessible information for transcribing articulated credits, provide a means for identifying Career Pathways students enrolled at IRSC and for verifying that the appropriate articulated credits have been processed, and enable IRSC to provide a backflow of data/information to its secondary partners.

The reports are viewable by IRSC academic advisors and those who assist students during enrollment and program objective determination. When students meet with advisors, they are asked if they are Career Pathways students. If the answer is yes, the advisors are able to review the students' Career Pathways articulated credit information, determine the appropriate articulated credits to be processed based on the students' program objectives, and send requests for transcribing.

Each school district supplies a "Career Pathways student list," a list of information for current high

school graduates who have successfully completed one or more secondary Career Pathways courses for programs that articulate to IRSC programs. IRSC provides the Career Pathways Articulated Credit Matrix, which outlines all secondary programs for which IRSC has articulation agreements, the secondary course completions outlined in the articulation agreements, and the corresponding articulated credits. No student-level information is transferred during this process. As of the 2010–2011 school year, IRSC and the four county area school districts have successfully articulated approximately eighty programs. IRSC remains open to establishing articulation agreements with school districts outside the RCCPC.

For more information, attend the session titled "Career Pathways Student Report Matrix" at the 2011 NCPN conference in Orlando, Florida, October 12–14, or contact the author at ckeim@irsc.edu.

Multiple Perspectives on 21st-Century Skills, STEM, the Arts, and Educational Innovation: Voices of Change from the Trenches of P-20 Professional Development

Jim Brazell, theartofthefuture.org, jimbrazell.com

How do we achieve change? How do we innovate? How do we keep up with technology? These are questions that virtually all institutions and individuals are dealing with in modern society. In the academic world, these questions are posed in theory and practice today under the general heading "21st-century teaching and learning." Topics that fall under this moniker include "21st-century skills," "imagination," "creativity," "innovation," "design thinking," "STEM" (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), "project-based learning," "contextual learning," "game design," "storytelling," "computational thinking," "inquiry-based learning," "active learning," "problem-based learning," "design-based learning," and "STEAM" (or "TEAMS," i.e., STEM + arts). Though highly differentiated in practice, these concepts have one common denominator—*design*. Learner engagement

through design is the hallmark of emerging pedagogical process in the 21st century.

Herbert Simon, in *Sciences of the Artificial*, defines design as the "transformation of existing situations into preferred ones." One activity designed to engage teachers in learning how to achieve this design shift in their classroom instruction asks them to frame an opportunity, challenge, or teachable moment in a question while requiring the students to answer in the form and structure of Haiku. The purpose of the exercise is to conceptualize a change as a system—a movement from something, through a shift, to what is next.

Haiku is a Japanese poetic form usually expressing a seasonal change. A Haiku consists of three lines with 5-7-5 syllables per line. Below are Haiku and Cinquain (5 lines, 2-4-6-8-2 syllables per line) poems from teachers and communities across the

United States. As poems, these designs for education express the words behind the words of human experience and imagination—the dreams of our teachers, students, and communities. The author learned this technique from master storyteller and workshop facilitator Bob Allen and the IDEAS Orlando team (formally Disney IDEAS) (<http://ideasorlando.com/ideas/profiles/bob-allen/>).

Each participating group was asked a different question. However, the questions are generally these: How do we engage students? How do we advance learning objectives through innovation? How do we integrate academic content and career and technical education (CTE)? How do we teach science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)? And how do we enhance P-20 educational outcomes across the “pipeline”?

The answers are presented here in the form of Haiku. The authors are audience members from workshops and speeches for teachers and communities across the United States. Following the poems is a conclusion (online) that summarizes the purpose of presenting this body of poetry. The author would like to acknowledge and thank all of the participants who contributed their poetry while paying homage to the collective voice of our next generation of students, dedicated teachers, and community participants.

Authors: 11th–14th Grade CTE Teachers and Administrators, Florida Career Pathways Network Conference, Ft. Meyers, October 6-8, 2010

I tweet
You must hear me
To learn is to network
If you put it on Facebook
I'll know

Talking
Creates ideas
Listening is crucial
Do not lose communication
Ever!

With technology
Students share and teachers learn
Achievement explodes

Fall dawns
Fresh trails to blaze
Minds to open and shape
Using hands success is achieved
New growth

Opening youthful minds
Achieving for great success
Movers and shakers

Sunrise
Seeds are planted
Preparing fertile ground
Crops are plentiful for harvest
Rich fields

Email, Tweet, Facebook
Global connectivity
All alone am I

Intrinsic learner
Teamwork is necessary
Metamorphosis

New day
Put together
All that works for students
Make ready for work—the future
Today!

I want to succeed
I can't if I don't relate
Please don't leave me here

Networking, teamwork think
Partnerships and systems bold
Create change reflect

A child's mind expands
Learning without barriers
No child left behind

Educating kids
Working, rewarding, changing
Successful students

**Authors, Pre-Kindergarten to 8th Grade Students
(ages 3–11), Teachers, and Parents, Evergreen,
California, March 18–19, 2011**

No mortgage, fees, fines
Just be the best you can be
Hassle, tension free

I like lollipops
It is sweet and colorful
I like to eat it

Reading, writing, math
Coloring how nice to create
A picture of life

I like computers
Playing games are fun but
It needs batteries

In class
I want to learn
Something I don't yet know

What fascinates me
Is technology and space—
The coolest subjects

Working together
Our focus is school & life
Children first always

When I grow up soon
Being a naturalist
Will be a good goal

Reading, writing, math, coloring
Oops done!
How nice...

Learning about life
Needed to be a doctor
Doctors are savers

Tearing down the walls
Showing what is possible
To build foundations

Nurse patients to health
Illness, good health and well
Treatment for everyone

Math, English and art
Encouraging the students
Positive results

I will learn nature
Nature is interesting
Just like life science
Hear the music play
Dancing on stage to compete
Winning the trophy

Rocks

Rocks can make you think
Igneous, metamorphic
Sedimentary

Back to basics
Unlock the keys to your life
Inspire change and growth

Learn the building blocks
Build higher, wider, better
Create something new

Any color any size
Superficially different
Deep down we are all same

I like playing games
Video games are awesome
T.V. is cool too

Platypus' speech
Parent university turn
Robot's switch

Here, there, everywhere
Works I see, do you? Let's go...
Appreciate them

Let's play all day long
Computers and Sudoku
The more we have fun!

Artists are the best
I want to be an artist
I draw really good

Grow up
I want to be
A second grade teacher

Learning about science
Science is everywhere on Earth
Earth science is the best
Doctor—Important job
Saving lives every year
Taking care of many patients
Playing piano
Dreaming, singing peacefully
Stop! Get back to work!

To read more poems and the conclusion, please visit the whole article at the League for Innovation's Leadership Abstracts (<http://www.league.org/blog/post.cfm/multiple-perspectives-on-21st-century-skills-stem-the-arts-and-educational-innovation>).

Bonus Feature: Executive Summary of Significant Discussions: A Guide for Secondary and Postsecondary Curriculum Alignment

Laurance J. Warford, principal investigator of the Significant Discussions project and senior workforce consultant for the League for Innovation in the Community College; Marsha VanNahmen, project assistant of the Significant Discussions project and interim director at the Center for Teaching and Learning at Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus

A well-educated population is critical to the economic vitality and stability of a nation. Educational attainment is vital to our standing in the world. Currently, too few of our nation's young people graduate from high school and successfully transition to higher education. We can no longer be satisfied with the low percentage of young adults with college credentials. This issue is of great concern, so much so that President Obama was motivated to establish the American Graduation Initiative. This initiative calls for a 50 percent increase in student completion rates at community colleges over the next decade. Many private funders and numerous national initiatives like the National Governors Association have also focused resources on increasing student success and completion.

So why are too few young people completing high school and seamlessly transitioning to higher education? Youth who follow all the rules, do well in school, meet state content standards, pass high stakes exams, and complete high school graduation requirements arrive at college and learn that they have deficiencies in reading comprehension, writing, or math skills and thus require remedial or developmental courses before they are prepared

for college-level work. Coursework and curriculum between secondary and postsecondary educational levels is disconnected and misaligned. Essentially, these young people graduate under one set of rules then enter college and encounter an entirely new set of expectations.

This misaligned coursework is devastating and expensive. Currently, a majority of students entering community colleges need remedial coursework. One source (Alliance for Excellent Education's *Paying Double: Inadequate High Schools and Community College Remediation – 2006*) estimates that the annual cost to provide remedial education for community college students who have recently completed high school is \$1.4 billion. The cost continues to mount. Students required to take one or more remedial courses are less likely to continue their education and complete a degree or certificate of value than are those students who enter college without the need for remediation. According to National Center for Education Statistics data (2006), just slightly more than half of entering community college freshmen return as sophomores. When students stop-out or drop-out, it increases time to completion, potentially escalates student loan

debt, and has a demoralizing impact on confidence and motivation.

The national spotlight on completion goals inspires us to develop or search for ways to make secondary and postsecondary student success the norm. For this reason, the League for Innovation in the Community College, with generous funding support from the MetLife Foundation, led a year-long action research project that has resulted in the *Significant Discussions Guide*—a helpful tool for local educators who are well-positioned to guide a grass roots movement to improve student success by improving student transitions from one education system to another.

Nine community colleges were selected to lead *Significant Discussion* groups. Listed here are the participating community colleges:

- Anne Arundel Community College (MD)
- Central Piedmont Community College (NC)
- Lehigh Carbon Community College (PA)
- Maricopa Community Colleges (AZ)
- Miami Dade College (FL)
- San Diego Community College (CA)
- Southwestern Oregon Community College (OR)
- Sinclair Community College (OH)
- St. Louis Community College (MO)

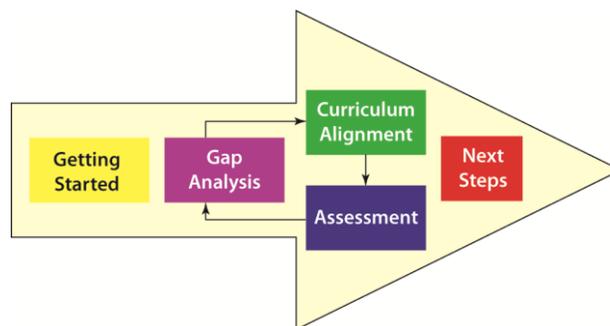
The project was further advised by a national review panel of six prominent professionals with expertise in secondary and postsecondary education.

The resulting publication, titled *Significant Discussions*, is a culmination of the work of discussion groups at these community college sites and promising practices identified through research. More than 150 secondary and postsecondary faculty and administrators along with business and community partners were involved. These collaborative partnerships provided content for the guide and advice on the value of the guide as a useful tool.

The *Significant Discussions Guide* is designed to help local partnerships collaborate to improve

curriculum alignment between their secondary and postsecondary education systems, reduce the need for remediation, and improve student success leading to employment opportunities.

This diagram illustrates the major components of the *Significant Discussions Guide*:



Major components of the *Significant Discussions Guide* are described here:

- **Getting Started.** This section offers assistance to identify the right people to bring together for this important work. These collaborative groups must understand the issues and challenges and have the support of high level leaders to establish and achieve goals.
- **Gap Analysis.** During this phase, partners review curriculum to identify when and where (secondary or postsecondary level) the knowledge, skill, or standard is delivered. This process exposes gaps, when critical elements are missed along the instructional continuum.
- **Curriculum Alignment.** Results of the gap analysis are examined in this phase as curriculum is revised to close gaps in knowledge, skills, or standards. Overlaps or duplications are acceptable as long as depth of knowledge becomes more complex and of a higher order of thinking.
- **Assessment.** In this phase, the curriculum is evaluated to determine whether or not the revisions produced the intended outcomes – to close curriculum gaps. Results of this assessment phase will inform subsequent Gap Analyses and Curriculum Alignment work creating a continuous improvement cycle.

- **Next Steps.** This section offers recommendations at a systems level as well as action steps for institutions and individual stakeholders.

To be successful in improving the current conditions, it will take the work of many – from the grass roots instructional level to the policy level. Additionally, it will require that business and industry become more invested in and engaged with educational systems. Accountability across systems cannot be left to volunteer or ad hoc committee work. It will take the time and dedicated efforts of faculty members, curriculum specialists, and community partners. This is hard work that will involve incremental steps over time before noticeable changes will become apparent. *Significant Discussions* provides a context within which to accomplish this work.

None of this can occur without support from the highest-level college and community leadership. This high-level support sends a message that this is important work and justifies the dedication of time and resources.

Significant Discussions describes next steps that must be taken in order for the results of this important work to be realized. Roles are described for both institutions and individuals including faculty members, counselors and advisors, administrators and business and community partners.

To access the *Significant Discussions Guide* go to www.league.org/significantdiscussions. Contact the authors at warford@league.org and mvanahmen@iupuc.edu.

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Connections

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The 2011 conference will be held October 12–14 at the Orlando (Florida) World Center Marriott. Visit ncpn.info often for the latest information.

