



Improving the Quality of Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) Serving Older Youth

12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Friday, May 08, 2009

College and Career Ready Basics

- A 2006 ACT study concluded that **high school graduates need comparable levels of readiness in reading and mathematics to succeed in college-level courses without remediation and to enter workforce training programs ready to learn job-specific skills.** See: <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ReadinessBrief.pdf>
- According to Jay Greene at the Manhattan Institute, academically, **only one-third of those who graduate high school are qualified to attend four-year colleges.**
- With respect to workforce readiness, a recent survey of over 400 employers showed that **new workforce entrants were deficient in the most important employer-identified applied skills such as professionalism, oral and written communication, teamwork and collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving.**

During his address to Congress in February 2009, President Obama stated "In a global economy, where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity. It is a pre-requisite." He went on to announce a goal "to ensure that every child has access to a complete and competitive education." The unprecedented increases in education funding at the federal level have provided a unique opportunity to advance an education reform agenda focused on ensuring all students are college and career ready.

This forum series entitled 'Laying the Groundwork for a College-Going Culture' will provide information on leading efforts at the state, district, and programmatic level to inform our national effort to improve education. As we consider efforts to create a college-going culture, the goal is to provide options for all young people to choose to enter all forms of postsecondary education or the workplace upon earning a high school credential. Viewing education as continuum that allows all Americans to access additional education and training is critical to ensuring our ability to emerge from the current economic downturn and compete in a global society.

At today's event presenters will define critical indicators for college readiness as supported by the research and describe efforts to create statewide high school graduation standards and early assessment programs more closely aligned with expectations for success in postsecondary education and work.

As our country moves towards a college-going culture, we must consider the policy frameworks at the federal, state, and local level that provide educators, parents, and students with the skills and tools to be successful in this endeavor. Education reform efforts need to be comprehensive and consider all aspects of the systems from curricular alignment to assessments to professional development to data collection and analysis. Reform efforts must engage all educational systems from K-12 through postsecondary education.

A forum brief with this and more information will be posted shortly at www.aypf.org.