Increasing College & Career Readiness through Afterschool & Competency-Based Learning

Monday, December 14, 2015
Webinar Technical Support

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• A recording of the webinar and other resources will be available at www.aypf.org
Today’s Presenters

Jenna Tomasello
Program Associate, American Youth Policy Forum

Marcia Dvorak, Ph.D.
Director, Kansas Enrichment Network

Dan Tsin
Director of Data & Accountability, Urban Alliance

Joe DiMartino
President, Center for Secondary School Redesign
College and Career Readiness and the Intersection of Afterschool and Competency-Based Learning

Jenna Tomasello

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College and career readiness (CCR) is more than academic preparation for postsecondary education or work.

Young people need a range of knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions in order to be successful.

Schools cannot do this work alone.

CCR requires support from a variety of providers and programs.
Role of Afterschool

* High-quality afterschool providers help contribute to a student’s CCR through:
  * College and career exploration
  * Social and emotional learning
  * Life skills development
  * Enrichment activities
Competency-based learning (CBL) contributes to a student’s CCR by giving them engaging, learner-centered opportunities to develop and master important skills.
The Intersection of Afterschool and CBL

- Both fields emphasize preparing all students for CCR
- Logical intersection to investigate anytime, anywhere, any pace learning
Emerging Trends

- Understanding and Defining Competencies
- Competencies as Currency for Course Credit
- Badges as Translators of Competencies
Understanding & Defining Competencies

Afterschool Providers

CBL Educators

@aypf_tweets
Competencies as Currency for Course Credit

- Afterschool Experience
- CBL Experience
- Academic Credit
Badges as Translators of Competencies

**badges** = visual representations of a **skill** or **achievement**

Image: openmatt.org

@aypf_tweets
Considerations Moving Forward

- Lack of Clarity with Field-Specific Language
- Policy Environments to Support CBL and Afterschool
Considerations Moving Forward

* Cross-Sector Coordination and Building Partnerships

* Policy to Practice v. Practice to Policy
AYPF’s white paper, “The Intersection of Afterschool and Competency-Based Learning: Emerging Trends, Policy Considerations, and Questions for the Future” will be released in January 2015.
Thank You

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EPIC:
IGNITING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS, INTERESTS AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS IN ADOLESCENTS

AYPF December 2015
Marcia Dvorak, Ph.D
Adolescence— Second most critical period of brain development

Dr. David Hansen, University of Kansas, Educational Psychology
Adolescent Development

Adolescent: Why do I need to know this?
   Adults: Adolescents are unmotivated.

Adolescent: When will I ever use this?
   Adults: They just don’t get it.

Adolescent: How is this relevant?
   Adults: Trust me. You will need it when you get older.
EPIC—
Education, Practice, & Immersion for Credit

• Middle school youth
• High poverty, rural communities
• Potential dropouts, “in-place dropouts”, disengaged youth
• Will most likely remain in the communities
• Employers need work-ready, essential skills ready applicants
Strong Community Involvement

- Collective impact model
- Targeting sustainable plan and strong collaboration
- Career exploration matched to community need
EPIC Experience Framework

- **Career exploration** (technical and employer-recognized skills)
- **Field Learning Experiences** (FLE)
- **Engaging online experiences** (reflection and relevancy)

*High school elective credit – in planning stage*
Validation

Cross-walked by independent contractor

- Rose Standards (Common Core)
- Next Generation Science Standards,
- P21

Competencies ‘baked’ into the digital badges
Targeted Soft/Essential Skills

- Conscientiousness/work ethic
- Positive core self-evaluation
- Social skills
- Cognitive processes

Blended with assessment instrument language
Career Exploration, Technical and Employer-Recognized Skills

Conscientiousness and Grit
Small engine repair
FLE with Midwest Ford

Digital badge requirements:

- Successful completion of content/application
- Participation in FLE with Midwest Ford
- Reflection responses (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_72khNZhm2U)
Lessons Learned to Date

• Data sharing
• Collaboration = time, commitment, structuring and restructuring
• Businesses as youth-ready

They don’t know what they don’t know.
Next Steps

• Bringing project to scale
• High school credit for internship work
• More flexible scheduling
• Potential badging around ‘work keys’
• Youth-ready businesses
Thank You!

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Employing Youth. Inspiring Excellence.
6.7 million young people are out of work and out of school.
Each “disconnected youth” costs society over $700,000.
Youth Employment Matters
KEY ELEMENTS OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

- Skills
- Mentors
- Internships
Urban Alliance youth face a number of challenges during their high school years:

- 90% qualify for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS)
- 80% use earnings to contribute to family/household expenses
- 53% live with parents who never attended college
- 25% live with a guardian who is unemployed
Urban Alliance provides professional development to under-resourced youth through a **10-month paid internship**.
I thought I was providing real-life experiences but I learned along the way as well!

UA Mentor (2014-15)
To better fulfill its mission, Urban Alliance uses program evaluation, data analysis, and performance management strategies to **understand impact, highlight strengths, and target areas needing improvement.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Job Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% College Acceptance Rate</td>
<td>80% Job Partner Retention Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% College Persistence Rate</td>
<td>215 Unique job partners across 4 regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% 1-Year Connectedness Rate</td>
<td>90% Mentors who would recommend being a UA mentor to their peers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There should be programs like [Urban Alliance] in every corner of this country. – Michelle Obama
Running programs like Urban Alliance means clearing two unique hurdles.
Should schools and districts view employment opportunities as learning opportunities?
Internship programs as distinct learning opportunities

- Soft skills improve classroom performance
- Student retention strategies
Schools should encourage career training and job experiences by linking students to employers.
Dan Tsin
Director of Data & Accountability
Urban Alliance

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Audience Q&A

Image: Joe Quint/LAYC

@aypf_tweets
About Us

• Builds on work started at Brown University by key players on the CSSR Team

• Emphasis on supporting schools to implement major changes to become student centered learning environments.

• Supports strong leadership for PERSONALIZED LEARNING

CSSR works to create a richer secondary school experience for each and every student.
Investing in Innovation Grant

• CSSR and our partners: Plymouth Public Schools, UCLA Center X, and the New Hampshire Department of Education

• Provide design and implementation support to a network of 13 schools

• Emphasis on more personalized approach grounded in a competency based approach to learning that includes demonstrating mastery through performance assessment
A continuum of assessments in a balanced system to assess student mastery along learning progressions

Examples
- Traditional Tests
- CCSS Assessments (SBAC & PARCC)
- Common Performance Tasks (Ohio, New York)
- C-PAS College Ready Assessments
- Student-Designed Projects (Envision, NY Performance Standards Consortium, Singapore, IB)

Narrow Assessment
- Standardized tests with m-c & open-ended items + short (1-2 day) performance tasks of some applied skills

Assessments of Deeper Learning
- Standardized performance tasks (1-2 weeks) that include structured inquiry and demand more integrated skills, including collaboration
- Performance tasks that require students to formulate and carry out their own inquiries, analyze & present findings, and (sometimes) revise in response to feedback
- Longer, deeper investigations (2-3 months) & exhibitions, including graduation portfolios, requiring students to initiate, design, conduct, analyze, revise, and present their work in multiple modalities

Linda Darling-Hammond
The Power of a Network

- Student Agency
- Power of a Network
- Student Driven Learning
- Leadership & Sustainability
- Culture of Inquiry
Guiding Principles of Student-Driven Learning

1. The learning and teaching is structured around the concept that students bring into the learning environment their unique experiences (tangible and intangible) and strengths to build upon and contribute to their own learning.
Guiding Principles of Student-Driven Learning

2. Each student has the opportunity to learn through flexible times and opportunities; the development of extended learning opportunities (ELO) begins with student passions and desires.
Guiding Principles of Student-Driven Learning

3. Performance assessments are at the core of putting students at the center of their own learning. At the heart of this work are projects that are student-generated.

4. The learning in and out of the classroom is collaborative in nature and includes regularly structured opportunities for reflection, feedback, and refinement.
Guiding Principles of Student-Driven Learning

5. Moderation of student scores is the vehicle to insure that the deepest learning possible is occurring; a vehicle for demonstration of knowledge.
Guiding Principles of Student-Driven Learning

6. The learning is deeper, as students demonstrate mastery through a competency-based approach. Personalized exhibitions, portfolios, and other gateways require students to initiate, design, conduct, analyze, revise and present their work in multiple ways; there is common scoring for uncommon learning tasks.
Policy Audit

• 7 school districts across five New England States

• District-level systems change to create student centered learning environments in their high schools

• Audit process designed to connect policies against existing school practices as well as new initiatives
What we’ve learned about policy:

• On a day-to-day basis, people don’t spend much if any time thinking about policies, and do not find policy work particularly interesting.

• Typically, people understand better other levers that shape, guide, and motivate thoughts and behavior in the service of improving SCL practice implementation.

• What is front of mind are the typical daily challenges, and focusing on efforts to better implement high-priority SCL practices – which does not include policy considerations.
What we’ve learned about policy, con’t:

• Policies (with a big “P”) are appreciated when it comes to those that create change opportunities and have a major impact at the state or district level that allow for adoption of high-impact practices.

• For example, the seat-time waiver (state level policy) and flexible scheduling (district level policy) to allow for any time, any place, any pace learning are major policies that everyone is tuned into and whose value is recognized.

• However, these policies are often misunderstood.

To be effective, policies need to be very clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
Audience Q&A
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*Please provide your feedback via our survey!*