

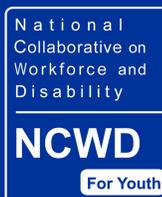
Promoting Quality

*I*ndividualized
*L*earning
*P*lans

A “How to Guide”

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PROMOTING QUALITY INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLANS: A “HOW TO GUIDE” FOCUSED ON THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

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Promoting Quality Individualized Learning Plans:

A “HOW TO GUIDE” FOCUSED ON THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

PREFACE

This Guide has been prepared under the aegis of a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). Three authors have contributed to the development of this Guide. Ms. Joan Wills, a Senior Fellow at IEL has oversight responsibilities for the work, Dr. V. Scott Solberg from Boston University’s School of Education has the lead responsibility for conducting a series of research studies centered on the effects of schools instituting individualized learning plans (ILPs), and Mr. David Osman is a consultant with deep experience in preparing career development materials for the federal government.

A total of 35 states currently mandate some form of individualized learning plans (ILPs). Each state uses a different name for these plans, but this Guide uses the generic term ILP. The growing use of ILPs also comes at a time when almost all 50 states have adopted dual educational goals – that all high school students graduate both college and career ready. This agreement was reached in a historic summit in 2005 where a bi-partisan gathering of governors and business leaders agreed that academic and career readiness would serve as the aim for all high schools.

According to the National Governors Association, college and career readiness refers to a student who graduates from high school with the skills and academic record needed to be able to successfully a postsecondary education or work training experience that leads to occupations offering livable wages¹. The Association for Career and Technical Education refers to “college ready” as consisting of strong academic foundation skills and defines “career ready” as the ability to apply those academic skills as well as 21st Century employability skills and technical skills². More recently, the Career Readiness Partner Council defined career readiness in terms of students possessing the awareness, skills, and dispositions needed to be able to “effectively navigate pathways that connect education and employment to achieve a fulfilling, financially-secure and successful career³.”

The Guide began as a result of a multiyear initiative that focused on exploring how students in 14 schools in four states – Louisiana, New Mexico, South Carolina and Washington– are using and benefiting from their ILPs. NCWD/Youth’s research indicates that engaging in ILPs provides access to quality career guidance activities and connects both college and career readiness goals by helping students create secondary and postsecondary course plans that allow them to pursue their career and life goals. The evidence indicates that students who become more competent in self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management are more motivated to attend school, become confident learners, actively set goals, and record better grades.⁴ In other words, efforts to prepare students to become career ready results in the social, emotional, and academic skills needed to become college ready⁵.

NCWD/Youth’s research substantiates the critical need for this dual goal – more than half of the 1,650 high school students surveyed could not describe the nature of the career or educational pathways needed to pursue their career interests⁶. While many of these students may possess the academic skills to be successful, it is not likely that they are prepared to effectively engage in the career navigation strategies needed to successfully manage the uncertainties of their future training and educational pathways beyond high school⁷.

NCWD/Youth’s research also indicates strong support for ILPs from parents, teachers, and students. Findings from 53 focus group interviews with 272 parents, teachers, and students indicate that all three parties perceived that engaging in ILP activities resulted in students: (a) being more strategic in selecting a program of course studies that aligned with self-defined career and life goals, which indicates that they perceive the relevance of education to their future aspirations; (b) selecting more rigorous courses that will be more attractive to college admissions officers; and, (c) establishing better communication and relational connections between their school and home⁸. The central challenge that parents, students, and teachers reported in these focus groups was difficulty of gaining buy-in for engaging in ILPs by all teachers.

A subsequent report based on surveys and focus groups of parents and teachers indicated that ILPs are perceived in many schools as being limited to a “graduation plan” and this purpose must be re-visioned in order to support student post-school transitions⁹. For example, some states refer to it as a success plan or a high school and beyond plan.

Based upon its research investigating the nature and use of ILPs in states across the United States, NCWD/Youth has merged the commonalities to provide the following working definition of a quality ILP:

A quality individualized learning plan is:

- A document consisting of a student’s: (a) course taking and post-secondary plans aligned to career goals; and, (b) documentation of the range of college and career readiness skills he/she has developed.
- A process that enhances a student’s understanding of the relevance of school courses as well as out-of-school learning opportunities, and provides the student access to career development opportunities that incorporate self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management activities.¹⁰

A lack of a whole-school buy-in for engaging in ILPs is another critical factor that study respondents reported has limited the potential impact of ILPs. In many of the schools studied, ILPs were relegated to one or two specialists who were responsible for implementation. The schools that participated in NCWD/Youth’s research attribute the challenge in gaining whole-school buy-in for implementing ILPs to a need for ILP curricula and implementation guidelines. This Guide was developed in response to requests for assistance in this area.

It is recognized that state requirements vary with respect to when students begin to develop ILPs with some beginning in elementary and middle school. This Guide centers on the high school

years because NCWD/Youth's overall project focused on investigating how and whether ILPs serve as an effective workforce development strategy that prepares youth to make effective post-school college and career transitions. This Guide will remain a work in progress as additions and deletions occur to reflect the latest ILP implementation resources identified. A key goal of the Guide is to help schools develop a bridge between college and career readiness efforts through the use of ILPs and help youth achieve prosperous and productive lives¹¹.

This Guide is intended to be as relevant as possible to a range of educators including school counselors, career and technical education educators and supervisors, special education educators and supervisors, and regular education teachers.

How to Use this Guide

Organization of the Report: The Guide is organized in four sections.

Section I identifies a range of activities and resources organized according to three career development phases: self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management. Career planning and management addresses a broad array of career development skills as well as five workforce development areas deemed necessary for supporting optimal youth development. These five areas include: (a) job search skills; (b) youth development; (c) career and work-readiness skills (i.e., soft skills); (d) work-based learning; and, (e) financial literacy. Section I also addressed the use of web-based online career information systems and the need to incorporate universal design for learning principles into the design of ILP activities. Universal design for learning (UDL) is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. See Section I for a full explanation of UDL.

Section II provides an overview of several strategies that can facilitate school-wide ILP implementation. It addresses how to organize the career development activities into a comprehensive ILP curriculum by identifying grade specific college and career readiness goals and by designing student generated products that are aligned to common core standards. It also provides information on how to engage parents in the ILP process.

Section III focuses on how to design a school-wide ILP implementation plan and offers a project management system for supporting this implementation.

Section IV provides hyperlinks to a number of additional resources, including those that are commercially available.

Criteria for Selecting and Accessing the Materials: The Guide has gathered career development curriculum and activities from a number of sources. Criteria for selecting acceptable sources include:

- State websites with open access curriculum examples that have generally been vetted by schools within the state. Schools from other states may need to make some modifications as some material will be specific to the sponsoring state.

- Tools developed through the sponsorship of federal government such as those providing labor market career information and career guidance activities.
- Materials developed or endorsed by national research and/or technical assistance organizations and professional societies.

Accessibility of the materials was another key consideration in selecting the curriculum. Preference was given to free, open access materials. Some states offer easy and open access to their curriculum materials, including Georgia, South Carolina, Utah, and Washington. It is understood that these are not the only states offering excellent curriculum. Other states are invited to submit curriculum examples that could be included in future editions by sending an email to contact@ncwd-youth.info with the subject line “State Examples for ILP How-to Guide.”

NCWD/Youth has elected to make this a web-based publication and intends to ensure that users can both access the hyperlinked activities and resources that are embedded in the online version as well as print off a pdf copy with minimal effort. NCWD/Youth will periodically check and update the hyperlinks. Any user of this guide who discovers a broken hyperlink is encouraged to notify NCWD/Youth by email at contact@ncwd-youth.info.

SECTION I: CURRICULA SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLANS

Section I provides hyperlinks to open source ILP activities. It is organized according to the three phases: (a) self-exploration; (b) career exploration; and, (c) career planning and management. Materials and resources are assigned to the single category that appears to best fit the use with students. The governmental agency or organization that is the source for these materials and resources, however, may appear in several or all of these three phases. While the Guide currently includes samples from a select number of states, other states may have useful materials available on their Department of Education and Labor websites.

SELF-EXPLORATION – Who Am I

“Know Thyself” – This admonition attributed to the Greek philosopher Socrates remains an excellent touchstone from which a student can start to explore who they are, what they might become, and how they can get there.

One of the fundamental elements of an ILP is that students align their course taking plans to help them pursue their career and life goals. In order to identify career goals, students need to develop self-exploration skills. These skills emerge when students are offered access to quality self-exploration activities. Quality self-exploration activities are ones that help them become aware of their interests, skills, and values that can then guide subsequent career exploration efforts.

By identifying future career goals that are consistent with their interests, skills, and values, students develop greater awareness of the courses needed to prepare for pursuing those careers,

which increases the likelihood that they will perceive the importance of taking those courses. Access to quality self-exploration activities serves, therefore, as the first critical step in helping students become aware of the relevance of their courses to achieving their future career and life goals.¹² Helping all students – especially those who enter high school with a history of low academic performance – become aware of how school is relevant and meaningful to future career and life goals is especially important. Research clearly indicates that course interest and grades increase among low performing students when they receive interventions that help them become aware of the relevance of their courses to achieving future goals¹³.

Sample ILP Activities

Below are sample lesson plans and other self-exploration activities that are ready to be used or adapted:

- [I Am Who I Am ... And As Others See Me](#)
- [Thinking Ahead: Preparing for a Green Economy](#)
- [Considering a STEM Career](#)
- [Barriers: What They Are and What to Do about Them](#)
- [Literacy: It Takes All Kinds](#)
- [Taking the Initiative: A Quality of Leadership](#)
- [Choosing Community Service](#)
- [Goal Setting Begins with a Dream](#)
- [Keeping Yourself Above Water in a Sea of Pessimism](#)
- [Leading by Example](#)
- [What Do Ethics Have to Do With Anything?](#)
- [No One Does It on Their Own.](#)

State-Based Self-Exploration Related ILP Resources to Consider

A number of states have generated free-use ILP activities. A sample of these follow:

- **Georgia Career Resource Network**, *Georgia Career Information System (GCIS), Teacher As Adviser (TAP) Program, Career Development Activities by Grade (9-12)*
 - [O*NET Work Importance Indicator \(Grade 10\)](#)
- **Utah State Office of Education**, [K-12 Core Lesson Plans](#), “Adult Roles and Responsibilities” and “Adult Roles and Financial Literacy”
 - [Communication Styles](#)
 - [Communication/Active Listening](#)
 - [Listening](#)
 - [Values](#)

Assessment Tools for Helping Students Engage in Self-Exploration

A number of validated, open access *assessment tools* are available free on the O*NET Resource Center website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration. These tools can be used to begin the self-exploration phase, including:

- [O*NET Resource Center](#). The gateway portal for a number of specific O*NET career exploration tools, including:
 - [O*NET Ability Profiler](#) – A self-assessment tool that helps individuals find their strengths and the occupations that match them.
 - [O*NET Interest Profiler](#) – A self-assessment tool that helps individuals discover what types of work activities they would like.
 - [O*NET Computerized Interest Profiler](#) – A computer-generated version of the Interest Profiler vocational interest assessment.
 - [O*NET Work Importance Locator](#) – A self-assessment tool that helps individuals pinpoint what is important to them in a job.
 - [O*NET Work Importance Profiler](#) – A computer-generated version of the Work Importance Locator.
- [My Next Move](#) is a 2011 O*NET career exploration tool designed for easy use by students, youth and others interested in finding out about different occupations, careers, and industries. It also features a section titled, “*I’m not really sure*”, that is designed to help users develop and match a profile of their individual interests with different kinds of careers.

CAREER EXPLORATION – What are My Options?

“Knowledge is power...” – Sir Francis Bacon, English author and philosopher

In addition to self-exploration, students need to develop career exploration skills by being provided with access to activities that help them learn how to identify career and life goals that are consistent with their interests, skills and values. Career exploration involves opportunities to learn about the skills and qualities required to be successful in various careers and the secondary and post-secondary education and training necessary to pursue each career. NCWD/Youth’s study of career planning and management patterns with over 1,600 10th and 12th grade students found that the majority of the students sampled were able to identify a career title but could not describe critical details about the occupational activities, skills, or educational requirements associated with the career. Students who had actively engaged in career exploration activities were clear in their understanding of the nature of the career. Many noted the value of work-based learning experiences that related to their selected careers and were able to describe specific post-high school educational pathways needed to pursue the career¹⁴.

These findings demonstrate the fundamental importance of self-exploration and career exploration to the ILP process. Participating in these activities provides students and their families with information they need to make high school and post-school course planning

relevant and meaningful. In the absence of self-exploration and career exploration, students and families are less likely to value the plans.

As a result of the career exploration phase, students should develop the skills to be able to: (a) identify how their interests, values, and skills relate to careers of interest; (b) describe the skills and activities associated with those careers; and, (c) identify the postsecondary training, two-year, four-year, or graduate degree programs needed to successfully pursue those careers. Deciding on one or more careers of interest should also be based on an assessment of available labor market information (LMI).

Sample ILP Activities

Below are lesson plans and other activities that are ready to be used or adapted:

- [What's in a Name?](#)
- [Considering Labor Market Information in Your Career Choice](#)
- [Know What You Want ... and What You Have to Offer](#)
- [Exploring Customer Service Jobs in Your Own Community](#)
- [Getting Up Close and Personal with STEM](#)
- [Generations at Work](#)
- [Purposely Planned or Luck of the Draw](#)
- [One Stop Career Centers](#)
- [Planning a Visit to a College Career Center](#)
- [Connecting Education to Our Career](#)

State-Based Career Exploration Related ILP Resources to Consider

A number of states also have generated free-use ILP curriculum. A sample of these follow:

- **Georgia Career Resource Network**, *Georgia Career Information System (GCIS)*, *Teacher As Adviser (TAP) Program*, *Career Development Activities by Grade (9-12)*
 - [Occupation Sort Revisited \(Grade 9\)](#)
 - [Work-Based Learning Opportunities \(Grade 9\)](#)
 - [Labor Market Information \(Grade 10\)](#)
 - [Career Info: List of Careers \(Grade 10\)](#)
 - [Nontraditional Careers \(Grade 11\)](#)
- **Utah State Office of Education**, [K-12 Core Lesson Plans](#), “Critical Workplace Skills”
 - [Career Investigation](#)
- **Washington Department of Education**, [Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) (OSPI)
 - [Navigation 101: Lesson Plans for Grades 6-12](#) provides links to lesson plans for each of the following topics for Grades 9 through 12:
 - Exploring Careers (Lesson 4)
 - Exploring Careers (Lesson 8) (e.g., includes work-based learning activities)

- Exploring Careers (Lesson 9) (e.g., includes career comparisons)

The direct links for each of these lessons by Grade are as follows:

- [Grade 9 Lessons](#)
- [Grade 10 Lessons](#)
- [Grade 11 Lessons](#)
- [Grade 12 Lessons](#)

(The Washington State Navigation 101 Curriculum includes 20 lesson plans for each grade level from grades 6 through 12, along with a Resource Guide for lead advisors or building coordinators for each grade.)

National Open Access, Web-Based Career Exploration, and Labor Market Information Resources

Several open access career exploration websites offer easy ways for students to explore different careers in a wide-range of industries. These websites include:

- [My Next Move](#) is a new 2011 O*NET career exploration tool designed for easy use by students, youth, and others interested in finding out about different occupations, careers, and industries. It also features a section (“I’m not really sure.”) that is designed to help users develop and match a profile of their individual interests with different kinds of careers.
- [MyFuture.com](#) is a website designed to help young adults plan their next steps in life by putting together the most recently available information about colleges, careers, and military service opportunities from the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Defense, Education and Labor. This website features career, college, and military content allowing users to explore many possibilities and gain insight into each option. It was developed by the Department of Defense and includes detailed information on more than 900 civilian and military career fields and nearly 7,000 accredited colleges.

A number of U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL)-supported websites and web-based tools provide students with additional ways to engage in further in-depth career exploration as well as obtain access to other national and state labor market information (LMI).

- [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) (OOH) is a nationally recognized source of career information, designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. It provides details about hundreds of U.S. occupations. The OOH is a product of the USDOL, Bureau of Labor Statistics and is revised every two years, with the 2010-11 edition the most recent.
- [Career Guide to Industries](#) (CGI) provides information for dozens of different kinds of industries, such as educational services, healthcare, and transportation. It includes information about an industry’s occupations, training and advancement, earnings, expected job prospects, and more. The CGI also provides links to job market information

in each state. A companion to the OOH, the CGI is also a product of the USDOL, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The CGI is revised every two years, with the 2010-11 edition the most recent.

- [Occupational Employment Statistics](#) (OES) provides employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations. These are estimates of the number of people employed in certain occupations, and estimates of the wages paid to them. Self-employed persons are not included in the estimates. These estimates are available for the nation as a whole, for individual States, for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, for certain industries, and more. The OES is a product of the USDOL, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- [CareerOneStop](#) provides direct links to information on a very broad-range of self-assessment, career exploration, and career planning and management topics, such as:
 - [Education + Training](#) (i.e., planning, finding, keep learning, and pay)
 - [Explore Careers](#) (i.e., self assessments, skills, occupations, industries, and more)
 - [Job Search](#) (i.e., plan, find jobs, apply, and after an offer)
 - [Resumes + Interviews](#) (i.e., resume advice, letters, and interviews)
 - [Salary + Benefits](#) (i.e., wages and salaries, pay for education & training, relocating, and more)
 - [Service Locator: People + Places to Help](#) (i.e., state services, employment training, government and private sector resources, and more)

In addition, numerous other useful career exploration, planning, and management resources, such as Student Financial Aid Information, can be accessed from the CareerOneStop website.

Open Access Websites for Industry Sectors

Multiple employer-supported organizations provide a wealth of information for use in schools and training programs that can be used to explore career and training options within specific industries. See Section IV for examples of industry sector based open access websites. These websites often provide industry endorsed curricula, information about scholarships, and industry sponsored credentials programs.

State Open Access Resources for Career Exploration and Labor Market Information

Some examples of state websites for career, education, and job search exploration that are useful to high school students, college students, and workforce adults include:

- [California Occupational Guides](#) provide detailed descriptive information for over 800 occupations including what special training, licensing, or other requirements may be necessary to work in the state of California for each occupation.
- [Louisiana Workforce Commission](#) provides occupational and overall labor market information for the state of Louisiana.

- [Minnesota ISEEK](#) provides a comprehensive site for Minnesota residents to explore careers, to search and plan for postsecondary education opportunities, and to conduct job searches.
- [South Carolina Occupational Information System](#) provides educational and career information for South Carolina and other sites.
- [WOIS – The Career Information System for Washington](#) provides tools to explore careers, create goals for the future, make educational plans, and find the training programs and the right schools to help Washington residents achieve their goals.

As part of their web-based LMI tools, every state has online resources to help with career exploration. A comprehensive list of state-by-state online resources is available through [ACINet – State Information](#).

CAREER PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT – What Do I Need To Do Now?

“Plans are nothing; planning is everything ...” – General Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th President of the United States

Developing career planning and management skills is the third phase of the career development process. Whereas self-exploration and career exploration focus on helping students become aware of their interests, skills, and values and the corresponding career options, career planning and management is focused primarily on capacity building activities related to job-seeking and identifying learning opportunities that continue developing their potential for success following high school graduation. Due to the emphasis on capacity building in this section, an additional set of materials are provided that focus on the youth participating in special education; these are provided in the recognition that additional time or support services may be required for youth with disabilities to be successful.

Once a career goal has been identified, career planning and management supports students by helping them: (a) acquire the job search skills needed to secure employment; (b) think about how they will continue to develop career readiness skills (both generalizable, i.e. soft, and career-specific skills); and, (c) develop the traits, work habits, and behaviors associated with a lifelong commitment to seeking new opportunities for gaining skills and experiences that maximize their employability.

Participating in ILPs offers students an opportunity to engage in career planning and management by helping them in two ways. ILPs allow students to 1) describe the curricular and extra-curricular learning opportunities they will participate in during a given academic year, and 2) record their accomplishments in these activities as evidence they are developing a range of career readiness skills that can be used in the development of resumes. Note that career planning and management activities may occur during school or outside of school.

Due to the multifaceted nature of career planning and management, this section is organized into five areas: (a) job search skills; (b) youth leadership and development; (c) career and work-readiness skills (i.e., soft skills); (d) work-based learning; and, (e) financial literacy. We have

also included ideas for supporting students with disabilities and highlighted how using web-based online career systems can serve as an important resource.

Job Search Skills

Obtaining a job requires both planning and practicing the prerequisite skills that will help generate success. These skills include being able to prepare resumes and cover letters, seek out employment opportunities, and successfully conduct an interview. Being able to write an effective resume and cover letter is an important skill that will serve students throughout their lifetime. Job search skills include a range of activities including informational interviewing, using one's social networks to identify possible opportunities, and researching companies and industries of interest. Finally, conducting an effective interview includes developing one's ability to respond to questions as well as ask questions that communicate one's interest and understanding about the position being sought.

Sample ILP Activities

Selected lesson plans and other activities to use and adapt when helping students engage in career planning and management include:

- [The Art of Communicating – Without Words](#)
- [Do You Have the Universal Skills Employers Are Seeking?](#)
- [Why Should I Hire You?](#)
- [Getting to the Nitty Gritty with STEM – Informational Interviews](#)
- [Who Needs a Resume Anyway?](#)
- [Career Portfolios](#)
- [OK – I Have a Resume, Now What?](#)
- [What Have We Learned & How Do We Use It?](#)
- [Putting It All Together: The Career Development Checklist](#)

State-Based Career Planning and Management Related ILP Resources to Consider

A sample of state-based resources that can be used for career planning and management follow:

- **Georgia Career Resource Network**, *Georgia Career Information System (GCIS)*, *Teacher As Adviser (TAP) Program*, *Career Development Activities by Grade (9-12)*
 - [My Portfolio Update \(Grade 9\)](#)
 - [My Portfolio Update \(Grade 10\)](#)
 - [My Portfolio Update \(Grade 11\)](#)
 - [My Portfolio Update \(Grade 12\)](#)
 - [Refining My ICP \(Grade 9\)](#)
 - [My 411: My Calendar \(Grade 9\)](#)
 - [Paying for College: Scholarship Search \(Grade 9\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid Sort \(Grade 10\)](#)
 - [Student Planner: Student Planner Timeline \(Grade 10\)](#)
 - [GCIS School Sort \(Grade 11\)](#)

- [GA Colleges: Undergraduate Matching Assistant \(Grade 11\)](#)
- [Taking the ASVAB \(Grade 11\)](#)
- [GCIS Job Search \(Grade 12\)](#)
- [GCIS Military Employment \(Grade 12\)](#)
- [GCIS Georgia Schools \(Grade 12\)](#)
- [Smart Choices: Review of High School Opportunities and Options After High School - Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 9\): Introduction](#)
 - [Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 9\): Slides](#)
 - [Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 9\): PowerPoint \(Read Only\)](#)
- [Smart Choices: Postsecondary Credit Opportunities - Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 10\): Introduction](#)
 - [Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 10\): Slides](#)
 - [Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 10\): PowerPoint \(Read Only\)](#)
- [Smart Choices: Financial Aid 101 – Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 11\): Introduction](#)
 - [Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 11\): Slides](#)
 - [Student/Parent Workshop \(Grade 11\): PowerPoint \(Read Only\)](#)
- **Utah State Office of Education, [K-12 Core Lesson Plans](#), “Adult Roles and Responsibilities” and “Adult Roles and Financial Literacy”**
 - [Balanced Budget](#)
 - [Banking](#)
 - [Budgeting](#)
 - [Careers](#)
 - [Career Planning](#)
 - [Credit Uses and Costs](#)
 - [Decision Making](#)
 - [Excessive Debt](#)
 - [Financial Contracts](#)
 - [Financial Institutions](#)
 - [Goal Setting – Mission Statement](#)
 - [Goals](#) – First of three lesson plans on this topic
 - [Goals](#) – Second of three lesson plans on this topic
 - [Goals](#) – Third of three lesson plans on this topic
 - [Income/Cost of Living](#)
 - [Savings](#)
 - [Savings vs Investment](#)
- **Washington Department of Education, [Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) (OSPI)**
 - [Navigation 101: Lesson Plans for Grades 6-12](#) provides links to lesson plans for each of the following topics for each individual grade from 9 through 12:
 - Getting Acquainted (Lesson 1)
 - Building Community (Lesson 2)
 - Improving Academically (Lesson 3)
 - Setting Goals (Lesson 5)

- Building Community (Lesson 6)
- Improving Academically (Lesson 7)
- Planning for Life After High School (Lesson 10)
- Planning for Life After High School (Lesson 11)
- Planning for Next Year (Lesson 12)
- Planning for Next Year (Lesson 13)
- Building Community (Lesson 14)
- Planning for Life After High School (Lesson 15)
- Preparing for Student-Led Conferences (Lesson 16)
- Using Money (Lesson 18)
- Planning for Life After High School (Lesson 19)
- Making the Transition (Lesson 20)

The direct links for each of these lessons by Grade are as follows:

- [Grade 9 Lessons](#)
- [Grade 10 Lessons](#)
- [Grade 11 Lessons](#)
- [Grade 12 Lessons](#)

Specific Resources for Students with Disabilities When Developing Job Search or Post-School Transition Skills

While the resources described in this Guide are designed to support all students in preparing to make successful postsecondary transitions, it is important to address one of the primary challenges that students with disabilities will face – disability disclosure. Disability disclosure is a very personal decision, a decision that takes thought and practice. Students with visible disabilities as well as hidden (not readily apparent to others) disabilities can benefit from accurate information on disclosure. The following information provides guidance to students, families, educators, and other professionals supporting students on considerations and strategies related to disclosure.

- [The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities](#): This guide is designed for students as a tool for learning about disability disclosure. This workbook helps students make informed decisions about whether or not to disclose their disability and understand how that decision may impact their education, employment, and social lives.
- [Cyber Disclosure for Youth with Disabilities](#): This document is a supplement to *The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities*, which helps students learn about disability disclosure and what it means for them. Search sites like Google, social networking sites like Facebook, and micro-blogging sites like Twitter have added a new element to disclosure. Now it is possible to disclose disability status on the internet without even being aware of it. This can be as simple as a picture of a person using a wheelchair, a comment on a friend’s blog about disability, or a profile posted on a disability organization’s website. The goal of this document is to provide students with suggestions on how to make informed decisions about their own disability disclosure and to manage their disclosures online.

- [The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Families, Educators, Youth Service Professionals, and Adult Allies Who Care About Youth with Disabilities](#): Educators and other adults in students' lives can use this workbook to make informed decisions about teaching a student about his or her rights and responsibilities in disclosing his or her disability, a decision that will affect the student's educational, employment, and social life. This workbook will help adults learn how to support a student with a disability as he or she takes steps in becoming more independent and self-sufficient. In fact, making the personal decision to disclose a disability can make the student more confident in himself or herself and the choices he or she makes.
- [Youth and Disability Disclosure: The Role of Families and Advocates](#): This brief explains considerations related to disability disclosure and explores the role families and advocates play in helping students understand the importance of appropriate disability disclosure.

Youth Development and Leadership

In brief, *youth development* is the process of helping prepare youth to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences that aid them in gaining skills and competencies. *Youth leadership* is the distinct area of youth development that focuses on the ability to analyze one's own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals, and have the self-esteem to carry them out. It includes the ability to identify community resources and use them, not only to live independently, but also to establish support networks to participate in community life and to effect positive social change. It includes training in skills such as self-advocacy and conflict resolution; exposure to personal leadership and youth development activities, including community service; and opportunities that allow youth to exercise leadership and build self-esteem.

Given the broad range of skills involved in youth development and leadership development, it is important to consider both in- and out-of-school learning opportunities that can be offered throughout the school year. For schools using a 9-month calendar, it is also important to consider ways to provide students with opportunities for summer work experience and other summer learning opportunities.

Some ready-made opportunities for youth development and leadership activities are already being offered in schools. For example, the requirement for student community service projects can offer students the opportunity to take the lead in the research, design, planning, and implementation of such projects with guidance and supervision from school educators and counselors. Similarly, participation in activities such as classroom debates and extracurricular high school debate team give students forums for learning and practicing youth development and leadership techniques. High school sports, fine arts programs, and various high school clubs also offer opportunities for youth development and leadership development.

A number of curriculum, models, tools, and other resources are available to help teachers and counselors implement youth development and leadership activities and programs. These include:

- [Firestarter Youth Power Curriculum](#) is a hands-on guide for young people ages 10 to 18 with sections on motivation, skill-building, issue awareness, action planning, and more. This resource is available from the National Service Learning Clearinghouse (NSLC).
- [The Points of Light Youth Leadership Institute: Curriculum](#) provides teaching modules and experiential exercises that emphasize problem-solving and goal setting.
- [Lesson Planet Search Engine for Teachers](#) offers an extensive list of youth development and leadership teaching lessons.
- [Free Management Library – Supervisory Development](#) provides links to resources for enhancing an individual’s capacity to be a supervisor.
- [Student Leadership Development through General Classroom Activities](#) provides an outline of student leadership development activities. This article was written by Ian Hay and Neil Dempster (2004).

State-Based Youth Development & Leadership Resources to Consider

A sample of the state-based resources for engaging students in youth development and leadership activities follows:

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Career and Technical Education, [Leadership Dynamics](#) course:**
 - [Course Overview](#)
 - [Unit – Who Am I?](#)
 - [Unit – Mix and Mingle: On the Road to Leadership](#)
 - [Unit – Building Bridges to Leadership](#)
 - [Unit – Personal Management: Where Am I Going?](#)

Career and Work-Readiness Skills

Career and work-readiness skills refer to the large range of soft skills that employers have identified as critical to being successful in finding and maintaining a job. These skills include general personal qualities, personal habits, good work ethic, effective communication, punctuality, self-discipline, problem solving, organizational skills, teamwork, a willingness to accept supervision, and more.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)’s 2011 publication, *Skills to Pay the Bills: Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success*, provides 30 specific soft skills activities for use by instructors and counselors. *Skills to Pay the Bills* organizes soft skills into six broad categories: Communication; Enthusiasm & Attitude; Teamwork; Networking; Problem Solving & Critical Thinking; and Professionalism. This subsection follows the same organization and provides links to the *Skills to Pay the Bills* activities.

Communication skills are important to everyone. They involve giving and receiving information, conveying ideas and opinions, and interacting with those around us. Communication can be verbal (sounds, language, and tone of voice); aural (listening and

hearing); non-verbal (facial expressions, body language); written (letters, emails, blogs, text messages, reports), and visual (signs, symbols, and pictures). Communication involves both providing information *to* others and receiving and interpreting information *from* others. Exploring and developing good communication skills are an important and appropriate part of each student's self-exploration. They also are ranked "first" by employers as "must have" skills and qualities.

Sample ILP Activities

- [What's Your Point?](#)
- [Flipping the Switch](#)
- [Oh, Puh-leeeeeze!](#)
- [Listen Hear!](#)
- [Quit Talking! I Know What To Do!](#)

Enthusiasm & Attitude are a critical component of workplace and career success as well as one key to overall success and joy in life. A job candidate who has a positive attitude and eagerness to tackle a new job usually will have an important advantage over one who is negative or disinterested. Genuine enthusiasm and a positive attitude also are easier for a person to have, sustain, and grow if they are doing work that they truly enjoy, which is why this category is appropriate to consider as part of students' career exploration.

Sample ILP Activities

- [Never Underestimate the Power of a PMA \(Positive Mental Attitude\)](#)
- [Life is Full of Hard Knocks](#)
- [A Super Ball and a Raw Egg](#)
- [Believe it or Not: Your Attitude and Enthusiasm Just Might Get You the Job](#)
- [Translating Features to Benefits](#)

Teamwork is another skill that is essential to workplace success. Employers look for workers who can develop and contribute their own ideas, but also want employees who can work with others to create, develop, and implement projects and plans. Teamwork involves building relationships and working with others through such means as contributing to groups with ideas, suggestions, and efforts; communicating and working cooperatively with others; having a sense of personal responsibility and a respect for different opinions, ideas, and preferences; and practicing the ability to participate in and support team-based decision-making.

Sample ILP Activities

- [There's No "I" in Team](#)
- [I'll Give you Some of Mine if You Give me Some of Yours](#)
- [The Good, the Bad, and the Reasonable](#)
- [How Many Shapes Does it Take?](#)
- [Teamwork on the Job](#)

Networking is central to finding a job – from a student’s summer job, to their first entry-level full-time work, and throughout their career advancement. When it comes to finding a job – it’s not what you know, so much as who you know – that is often the key to success. Networking for the purpose of finding a job or advancing a career involves talking with friends, family members and acquaintances about one’s goals, interests, and dreams. Most people actually learn about job openings through friends, relatives, neighbors, or others who are part of their personal network, and because each person in a network has a further network of their own, the potential for contacts can grow exponentially.

Sample ILP Activities

- [An Introduction to Networking](#)
- [You Expect Me to TALK to Do WHAT? Talk to People?](#)
- [Using Social Media to Network](#)
- [Text vs. Email: Does it Really Matter?](#)
- [It’s a Small World](#)

Problem Solving & Critical Thinking represent a fifth key skill that is needed and valued by employers as they seek to maintain and expand their businesses in a competitive environment that is often global in today’s world. Problem solving and critical thinking involve the ability to use formal education and training, past experience, data, and other information to assess and resolve challenges and problems, especially those that arise in the workplace. Employers look for employees who can work through problems on their own, or as part of a team; employees who can think critically and creatively, sharing thoughts, opinions, and using good judgment to make ethical decisions.

Sample ILP Activities

- [Praise, Criticism, or Feedback?](#)
- [Workplace Ethics](#)
- [Problem Solving on a Team](#)
- [Perception vs. Reality](#)
- [Tell Me About a Time When](#)

Professionalism is the sixth key “soft skill” that employers look for and value. Professionalism isn’t one thing, but a combination of qualities, including arriving on time for work and managing time effectively, as well as looking clean and neat and dressing appropriately for the job. It also involves high quality work standards, honesty, and integrity plus communicating effectively and appropriately at the workplace. Professionalism encompasses all of the other soft skills areas, but in a broader framework.

Sample ILP Activities

- [Professional in Today’s Workforce](#)
- [Professionalism Work Attitudes](#)
- [Teamwork: An Essential Element of Professionalism](#)

- [Is It Considered “Professional” to Have Friends in the Workplace?”](#)
- [Self Reflection: Professional Problem Solving at its Best](#)

Skills to Pay the Bills concludes with a section on [“A Word About Social Networking”](#) and [“Cyber Resource – Cyber Smart.”](#)

ODEP designed the curriculum in *Skills to Pay the Bills* using universal design for learning principles, recognizing that students have a wide variety of skills, talents, interests, and needs. Throughout the curriculum, attention is given to improving access and service delivery to youth with disabilities. [“Through the Lens of Universal Design for Learning in Skills”](#) in *Skills to Pay the Bills* provides suggested strategies for supporting diverse learners participating in the curriculum’s activities.

In addition to educators and other professionals who contributed to the development of this publication, recognition is also given to the more than 100 young adults who contributed their insights for this curriculum.

State-Based Career & Work-Readiness Resources to Consider

A sample of the state-based resources for teaching career and work-readiness skills follows:

- **Utah State Office of Education, [K-12 Core Lesson Plans](#), “Critical Workplace Skills”**
 - [Be Proactive](#)
 - [Choose Your Attitude](#)
 - [Conflict Resolution](#)
 - [Dress for Success](#)
 - [Formulate a Career Plan](#)
 - [Goals](#)
 - [Job Application](#)
 - [Team Work](#)
 - [True Colors](#)

Work-Based Learning

Research shows that well designed and implemented work-based learning activities contribute to both the intellectual and career development of high school students such as those recognized by the National Academy Foundation as critical to helping students develop career readiness skills¹⁵. In general, work-based learning programs have three key components: (a) school-based learning classroom instruction involving both academic and technical areas; (b) a work-based learning structured work activity; and, (c) a connecting career development activity.

Work-based learning activities often begin in elementary and middle school with career awareness, field trips, and job shadowing. By the high school years, these activities should be supplemented by more complex work-based learning experiences such as school-based enterprises and entrepreneurial ventures. By the time students are juniors and seniors, some will be branching out into even more focused work-based learning programs, such as those involving

internships, clinical experiences, cooperative education, or youth apprenticeship (or pre-apprenticeship) – which may or may not continue beyond high school. As job opportunities for high school students continue to wane, it is important for schools to begin taking responsibility for creating discussion with their local business community about the need for offering work-based learning and employment opportunities during the school year as well as throughout the summer.

Work-based learning opportunities are important to supporting college and career readiness goals of all students. By engaging in work-based learning opportunities, students develop a range of skills that employers can certify using a prepared checklist or letter that can be added to the students' ILP. Students engaged in work-based learning opportunities also learn about careers that can support their ability to make more effective career decisions as well as become aware of how current course opportunities in high school are relevant to helping them pursue future goals. For students with disabilities, engaging in work-based learning opportunities is predictive of their ability to secure post-high school employment.

Work-based learning sample curricula, lesson plans, and other activities that are ready to be used or adapted include:

- ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education. [CTE and Work-Based Learning \(ERIC Digest\)](#).
- Kansas City Public Schools, Kansas City, MO. [Quality Work-Based Learning Toolkit: How-To-Guide to Internships](#)
- Monadnock Center for Successful Transitions. [How to Build Partnerships for Career Exploration: Using Job Shadows to Explore the World of Work](#). Keene State College: Keene, NH.
- National Academy Foundation. [Guide to Work-Based Learning: A Continuum of Activities and Experience](#). New York, NY: National Academy Foundation.
- Utah State Office of Education. [Work-Based Learning Program](#).
- Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). [Washington State Worksite Learning Manual](#) and [Work-Based Learning: Applying education and skills to real employment opportunities](#).
- Work-based Learning.org. [Toolkit for Work-based Learning Programs](#).

Specific Resources for Work-based Learning for Students with Disabilities

- National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET). [Quality Work-Based Learning and Postschool Employment Success: Issue Brief](#).
- NCSET. [Work-Based Learning and Future Employment for Youth: A Guide for Parents and Guardians – Information Brief](#).

The Project Summer model uses a World Café strategy to bring key stakeholders together in order to have conversations about increasing youth employment opportunities during the school year and during summer. Stakeholders include business and community leaders, educators, parents, and students:

- Project Summer. [Tips for Transition](#).
- World Café. [World Café Signature Learning Programs](#).

Financial Literacy

As defined by the National Financial Educators Council, *financial literacy* refers to whether one has acquired the “skills and knowledge on financial matters to confidentially take effective action that best fulfills an individual’s personal, family, and community goals.” This broad definition generates opportunity as well as challenges for school personnel to find ways to include financial literacy into the curriculum. Creating deliberate linkages with the ILP initiative may be helpful. For example helping students understand that remedial courses in college or changing majors can have considerable economic implications by adding additional costs to completing one’s postsecondary degree or certificate. As students increase their financial literacy, it should be expected that students will begin making more cost-conscious decisions when choosing which college to attend. The financial literacy education resources that follow are available free from their respective organizations. Each provides an example of the kind of resources that can be found online to help educators with this special emphasis area:

Federal and State Resources

- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). [Money Smart for Young Adults](#).
- Financial Literacy and Education Commission. [MyMoney.gov](#).
- National Financial Education Network for State and Local Governments. [Financial Network Resources](#).

Nonprofit Organization Resources

- National Endowment for Financial Education. [NEFE Homepage](#).
- The Jump\$tart Coalition [Clearinghouse of Free Resources](#) contains links to a number of financial literacy tools, including:
 - [Bank It](#). Bank It is an online financial literacy program that is designed to help parents and teens understand, talk about, and manage their money. Through use of both a website and guidance on how to conduct live, local workshops, Bank It covers 12 key financial topics, including budgeting, setting goals, investing, charitable giving, earning income, credit and debt, and insurance.
 - [Budget Lesson](#). This lesson uses candy to illustrate a balanced budget plan and the importance of having a spending plan. Designed for Middle and High School students, the resource provides directions easy for use. This resource supports the grade level Michigan Educational Standards. A student handout is included.
 - [Check It Out!](#) This lesson is about checking accounts for middle and high school students. The list includes the following materials: teacher or guest speaker notes, blank checks and check register handouts, reconciliation sheets, and a True or False quiz. This resource supports Michigan Educational Standards and Benchmarks.

- [Citigroup Financial Education Curriculum](#). This free K-adult financial education curriculum, revised in 2006, is adaptable for schools, after-school programs and community-based organizations. The lessons address selected national standards in personal finance, math, social science, language arts, and economics. English and Spanish versions of the curriculum are available online, on CD-ROM, or in a 3-ring binder.
- [Building Native Communities – INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE](#). This is a workbook for Native American students, high school through adult. It provides an overview of investing in an easy-to-use format. The interactive exercises can be used in classrooms, teacher education workshops, and for self-directed learning.
- Wisconsin Education Communications Board, Media for Wisconsin's Schools. [Financial Literacy: Teach It!](#)

Specific Financial Literacy Resources for Students with Disabilities

- Disability Benefits 101. [Youth & Disabilities Benefits](#). Portal for tools and information for four states: California, Michigan, Minnesota, and New Jersey.
- VISA. Financial Soccer. [Financial Soccer](#). The National Disability Institute worked with VISA on this website to include a number of disability-related questions and answers.

ILPs as an Integral Part of Electronic Career Information Systems

Keeping track of students' ILP development given the wide range of curriculum options can be a daunting task if schools are using paper-based career portfolios. In order to manage the challenge of effectively organizing, storing, and managing the ever expanding and evolving quantity of personal exploration and planning information, many schools have moved to using online career information systems that incorporate an ILP as an electronic portfolio (i.e., e-portfolio).

ILPs in an online format make it easier to monitor student progress and allow students to access their materials both during school and after-school. An added advantage of the online ILP format is the ability to integrate the use of student information systems in ways that can link ILP engagement to key academic outcomes. In time, states can also link these ILP engagement indicators to state longitudinal data systems in order to evaluate the impact of students' participation in ILPs on post-secondary matriculation rates and employment outcomes.

There are a number of commercial vendors that offer ePortfolio ILPs, such as Bridges, CareerLocker, Career Cruising, IntoCareers, Kuder, and others. Many of these online career information systems automatically store assessment results, favorite occupations, and college opportunities (See Section IV). Many systems also offer features for creating and storing resumes, cover letters, and other job search resources.

More recently, a line of electronic systems have emerged that also track student's college preparation efforts (See Section IV). Commercial vendors such as ConnectEdu and Naviance offer the capacity for an individual to track college and financial aid application efforts. ConnectEdu has the added benefit of incorporating a career information system within the

college planning and management system. This makes it useful for both college and non-college bound students. The Universal Encouragement Program (UEP) is an open access system that provides many of these features as well.

Universal Design for Learning and Practice Considerations When Engaging in ILP Activities

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn¹⁶. UDL is a framework for designing education environments that enable all learners – including students with disabilities – to more effectively participate in learning. This is accomplished by designing activities that offer variations in learning style preferences and approaches.

Within the classroom and other learning environments, UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone, not by using a single, one-size-fits-all solution, but rather by offering options for flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted to meet individual learning needs.

The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) website section under [Teaching Every Student](#) (TES) is a good place to start to explore some of the UDL classroom applications. This TES section offers model lessons, interactive activities, tutorials, curriculum resources, and other tools. It also includes a full-text digital edition of the book, *Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age: Universal Design for Learning*, written by David H. Rose and Anne Meyer (ASCD, 2002).

Among the broad range of uses for UDL within the classroom and related learning settings is the application of its principles to career assessment and vocational evaluation of students. The Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals Association (VECAP) advocates for such application of UDL principles. In a recent position paper, VECAP focused on the value of UDL as a lens for designing assessments that are fair, equitable, and supportive of variation in learners' abilities. [The VECAP Position Paper on Universal Design for Learning for Career Assessment and Vocational Evaluation](#) makes the case for providing all students, including those with disabilities, with UDL-designed assessment and evaluation processes as means to help each student better define and realize their dreams and achieve educational, vocational, and employment success.

SECTION II: STRATEGIES FOR GAINING WHOLE-SCHOOL BUY-IN

To make the ILP a useful tool for students while in school and beyond, NCWD/Youth's research suggests that school leaders must explore how engaging in ILPs can help a school achieve key institutional goals. If the ILP is treated simply as one more state mandate then its value will be elusive for both the students and school.

This section describes three categories of strategies for helping schools and district policy makers use the ILP as a positive institutional tool:

- A. Promising practices that schools have reported as having particularly positive outcomes.
- B. Examples for how ILPs can effectively support implementation of a number of national, state, and local initiatives. These examples can be used to raise the awareness of school boards, unions, and district officials, and school level educators about how ILPs can support broader school reform goals.
- C. Strategies centered on using the ILP process as a way to engage and enhance involvement of parents and families in the process.

All three of the categories will likely require changes in school policies and practices.

Promising Strategies for Implementing ILPs

In working with the schools participating in NCWD/Youth's ILP research and demonstration project, it was apparent that three practices were especially promising in demonstrating the potential positive impact of ILPs as well as creating a context for whole-school implementation of ILPs¹⁷.

Using ILPs to Engage in Student-Led Parent-Teacher Conferences: Student-led parent-teacher conferences offer an especially promising practice for engaging in ILPs. Nearly all schools reported 100% parent involvement in the conferences and focus group reports indicated that parents found this conference especially valuable and continued the conversations about careers and career planning at home. One principal reported hearing ILP discussions occurring among parents during the high school football games. In schools that provide access to ILPs through regular advisory or home room courses, student-led parent-teacher conferences generally occur annually and were credited by parents as being a powerful way of forging strong connections between teachers, parents, and students. In schools that have only one teacher or a school counselor assigned to engage students in ILPs, these conferences occur once during the four years.

The structure for a student-led parent teacher conference presentation can highlight the: (a) self-exploration activities and results; (b) career exploration activities and results; (c) career planning and management activities and results; and, (d) artifacts that demonstrate the range of college and career readiness skills students have attained.

Key themes to highlight in the conference include:

1. Career interests,
2. Relevant learning opportunities in school (courses) and out of school that have been completed or will be completed in order to pursue those interests, and
3. Postsecondary training and/or educational options for continuing to pursue those interests.

Assigning ILP Activities to Specific Courses: Many of the schools that expressed a desire to establish whole-school buy-in use an advisory or home room course to deliver ILP content. These periods are generally no more than 45 minutes in length and vary in the frequency (from

daily, weekly, or monthly) in which they are offered. Students reported that they would like to engage in ILPs about two times per week – many reported that daily is too much and monthly not enough. A value of having ILPs implemented in an advisory or home room period is that all teachers are provided the opportunity to engage in ILPs.

Providing Course Credit for Completing ILPs: Parents and teachers alike recommended establishing a credit value to the ILPs¹⁸. Many felt this was a way of “legitimizing” the activity within the school as well as increasing the likelihood that necessary time and personnel resources will be allocated to ILP effort.

Integrating ILPs with Common Core State Standards

In order to address the Elementary and Secondary Education Act’s mandate for meeting proficiency levels in literacy and numeracy skill areas, 49 states established their own standards which resulted in a wide range of quality and rigor. To address this, a Common Core set of standards has been developed on a voluntary basis (corestandards.org). Under this effort, Common Core standards were released in 2010 for language arts and mathematics and as of April 2011, 42 states had formally adopted them. Common Core standards for science were under development in 2011. ILPs activities are well-suited to integration with Common Core standards within high schools. For instance, writing about careers or “doing the math” to determine which careers are more financially viable or more in demand offer unique opportunities to use ILPs to promote rich subject matter.

Language Arts: For language arts, engaging in ILPs can be designed to support writing, speaking and listening, and media and technology skills. With respect to writing, engaging in ILPs can be used to have students produce at least three writing types: persuasive writing, research, and fictional narratives. Persuasive writing can be achieved by asking students to choose among two or three career options with respect to how well they match with their personal exploration results, labor market indicators of job outlook and potential economic returns, or the cost of pursuing a postsecondary education. Research writing can be achieved by having students explore a career pathway in order to identify the personal interests, skills, and values associated with the career, postsecondary options for pursuing the career, and labor market information that should be considered when evaluating whether to pursue the career. A fictional, creative writing sample can be developed by having students create a life story that incorporates the career experiences of the character as they move from high school into adulthood.

Speaking and listening and use of media and technology can be facilitated by students making presentations to their class as well as incorporating ILPs into student-led parent-teacher conferences. In preparing for these sessions, students can use a wide-range of media and technology resources to personalize their presentation such as incorporating video, music, and art.

Mathematics: For mathematics, engaging in ILPs provide an excellent opportunity for helping students learn to apply math to address real world issues and improve decision-making skills. Examination of labor market information allows students to estimate the relative return on investment for pursuing one or more career options. Examining the costs of two- and four-year

postsecondary education options can help students determine the amount of debt they may accumulate by pursuing different colleges and universities. Examining national and local future job outlooks can help students estimate whether it is likely the occupation will be available when they are ready to enter the occupation.

Science: In July 2011, the National Research Council, Committee on a Conceptual Framework for K-12 Science Education Standards, released the report, *A Framework for K-12 Education: Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Core Ideas*. This *Framework* represents the first step in the process to develop new Common Core standards for K-12 science education. The *Framework* stresses the importance of asking questions, establishing a method for inquiring about the answers, and being clear regarding what conclusions can be drawn from the data received. ILPs offer a way to apply these skills in helping students learn how to go about career exploration and decision-making. Questions like: “What are the range of educational pathways one can take to enter a career in information technology?” can rely on the scientific method by starting with hypotheses, gathering data about the educational pathways using online career information systems such as O*Net (or a commercial product the school may already have available), and then testing the viability of each pathway by estimating the post-educational costs of each pathway. This process can help develop science-related skills that can be used to solve career related decisions that will recur throughout the student’s lifespan.

Using ILPs to Support STEM Career Interests

ILP curricula can be designed in such a way as to help encourage students’ self-exploration and career exploration related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics careers (STEM). Completing STEM coursework while in high school is valuable as experts predict more than 75 percent of jobs in America in the next decade will require some level of math, science, and technology skills¹⁹.

Strategic course planning and parent support are two critical factors in helping encourage youth to pursue STEM careers. Longitudinal research indicates that completing algebra by 9th grade and completing high school calculus are two critical academic preparation areas that differentiated individuals who as adults entered STEM careers²⁰. This research also found that high school seniors are more likely to indicate intentions to pursue a STEM career when their parents actively encourage STEM careers, provide informal science experiences, and have STEM materials in the home.

O*NET’s [Browse by STEM Discipline](#) as well as many commercially available online career information systems help students and educators explore STEM related occupations as well as the educational pathways needed to enter a STEM career.

[STEM Transitions](#) is a project led by the Center for Occupational Research and Development (COR) in conjunction with the League for Innovation in the Community College. Although primarily focused on STEM education at the community college level, STEM Transitions’ inventory of more than 60 integrated curriculum projects designed for use in six STEM-related career clusters can also serve as a source of lesson plan activities for high school STEM teachers.

ILPs and States' Career Clusters and Career Pathways

The States' Career Clusters provide a familiar, widely-accepted framework for teachers, instructors, and counselors to use for organizing career exploration activities with their high school students. Even in the various states that have modified and adapted the States' Career Clusters framework to reflect their own industry and workforce emphasis, the States' Career Clusters are the common foundation and provide the common language for career clusters and pathways use in high schools throughout the nation.

The widespread use of the Career Clusters among the states is reflected in the ILPs that are developed by the students and educators in their schools. More information on the States' Career Clusters Initiative can be found on the website CareerTech.org. Information concerning official Career Clusters products is available through the [Relevant Classroom](#) website.

Using the 16 career clusters and 79 career pathways to help students organizing results from their self-exploration and career exploration efforts provides the opportunity to become aware of the general and unique qualities associated with a specific occupational objective as well as the common course plans that provide them with the most optimal range of career possibilities.

Gaining ILP Buy-In From Key Stakeholders

Often, school reform efforts like the ILP begin with a small group of devoted educators who need to find ways to solicit buy-in from key stakeholders within their schools. This section is designed to provide ideas on how advocates for using ILPs may be able to gain buy-in from other key stakeholders.

Classroom Educators: Engaging in ILPs has been found to be associated with students engaging in goal setting and becoming more motivated to attend school because it is perceived as relevant and meaningful. ILPs also have a positive influence on grades, decision-making, and stress/health management through their impact on academic competence. These outcomes are all important for establishing a learning environment where students are focused on learning how to learn. By helping students gain understanding about the relevance of their course material, engaging in ILPs is expected to result in better classroom performance because students will become naturally more interested in the course material²¹.

Educators reported that engaging in ILPs resulted in stronger connections with students and parents²². Students perceived that teachers were more encouraging and supportive. Teachers and parents perceived students as more engaged in school and more likely to be taking more difficult classes and classes that were aligned with career and life goals. Students reported that engaging in ILPs resulted in stronger intentions to complete high school and matriculate to a postsecondary education or training opportunity.

School Counselors: The College and Career Readiness initiative is an excellent opportunity for school counselors to assert their value within the school setting. As indicated in the preface, ILPs effectively connect and bridge college and career readiness efforts. While college readiness involves a number of academic success areas related to course performance (grades, credits

earned etc), behavior (attendance, behavior reports), and achievement test scores, it also involves alignment of courses to match with the postsecondary entry requirements and for students with financial need, completion of the Free Application for federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. Career readiness involves career and postsecondary plans and the degree to which students are successfully completing courses and receiving work-based learning opportunities to maximize their opportunity to pursue those careers after they graduate from high school.

Engaging in ILPs relates to the academic, personal/social, and career planning emphases identified by the American School Counseling Association's (ASCA, 2005) National Model. Central to the ASCA National Model is designing activities that have an impact on three outcome areas: academic success, career decision-making skills, and social/emotional development. NCWD/Youth's research indicates that efforts related to developing students' self-exploration, career search, and career planning and management skills supports the emergence of important social/emotional resiliency skills that in turn produce better academic outcomes²³. NCWD/Youth found that students reporting more confidence to engage in self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management reported more engagement in goal setting and academic self-efficacy which in turn was associated with better academic grades, better stress and health management, and career decision-making readiness.

In order to implement a comprehensive school counseling program, the ASCA National Model directs school counselors to coordinate opportunities to assist individual student planning to help students identify personal goals and future plans. This is an essential element and purpose of ILPs. It is especially important to note that school-wide implementation of ILPs should be coordinated by school counselors who are expected to have some expertise in career development; however, school-wide implementation should be coordinated among all or at least a team of educators. The use of an advisory or home room period is one way to provide access to time to conduct ILPs. This structure also allows for the annual use of student-led parent-teacher conferences (see above). Relying on school counselors or other administrators with high student-teacher ratios will not allow for the level of implementation nor the quality of time needed to support effective ILP implementation.

Career and Technical Education Coordinators: The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 directs Career and Tech Ed (CTE) coordinators to link CTE course taking to positive secondary and postsecondary outcomes²⁴. The [Perkins Collaborative Resource Network \(PCRN\)](#) has developed a college and career readiness model known as the [Programs of Study Design Framework](#). This college and career readiness model identifies access to career guidance as necessary to help high school students identify the secondary and postsecondary course sequence needed to pursue their career and life goals.

ILPs support these efforts by offering a verifiable document students can use to identify and regularly update their intended secondary and postsecondary courses. Moreover, by helping students engage in self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management activities, CTE coordinators can ensure that students are selecting career plans from a thorough examination of their interests, skills, and abilities as well as an expanding list of opportunities that are organized around the 16 career clusters and related 79 career pathways. ILP curriculum

can be designed to supplement efforts to increase the number of students interested in pursuing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) careers.

Special Education Coordinators: The ILP process differs from individualized education program (IEP) requirements in notable ways including: the IEP is very structured with compliance standards drawn from federal legislation and is designed primarily to identify the accommodations students need to support their learning goals. ILPs complement IEPs in that they offer an opportunity to engage students in defining their own learning and course planning goals as a result of seeking to align their learning experiences to help them achieve desired career and life goals. ILPs further complement IEPs in high school settings because schools are being directed to help students with disabilities prepare high school transition plans. Teachers and parents have identified the transition planning function as a critical feature of the ILP process²⁵.

ILPs could prove useful because they offer a way to document compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) indicators 13 and 14. Indicator 13 refers to whether students with individualized education programs (IEPs) have identified postsecondary goals and a course of study that will support their pursuit of those goals [(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))]. Indicator 14 refers to whether students with IEPs have become employed and/or are pursuing postsecondary training and education one year following high school [20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)].

Communication with Families: Families and educators feel that more efforts can be made by schools to increase family participation and involvement in ILPs and they have offered a number of suggestions²⁶. Families were most concerned that their engagement in ILPs occurred only annually during teacher-parent conferences and they expressed a desire for more “real time” connection to their child’s ILP progress. Families requested a “syllabus” outlining the grade level ILP activities that students will be doing as well as ideas on how they as families can support these activities. Information was also requested with regard to accessing resources that can help them support their child’s postsecondary goals such as college information, financial resources, etc. In addition, families requested to have more meetings with school personnel to discuss the ILP and to have access to online career information systems in order to be more connected to the ILP content. See resources in Section IV focused on engagement of families.

SECTION III: MAKING IT HAPPEN: DEVELOPING AND MONITORING ILP IMPLEMENTATION

Creating a Whole-School Plan for Implementing a Grade Level Curriculum in Support of ILPs

Designing an ILP implementation plan will be well served if members responsible for each key stakeholder group – educators, school counselors, career and technical education, special education, and family involvement – outline the scope of curriculum content they feel needs to be delivered within each domain (e.g., self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and decision-making) and the sequence in which it will be delivered within each grade level (i.e., scope and sequence). It is important to note that the same curriculum may be used differently by each key stakeholder group or different curriculum may result in similar outcomes. This

approach is designed to create a coordinated whole-school effort that allows for unique and individualized content for a given group of students. For example, work-based learning is a critical area and staff representing regular education may identify different implementation strategies and content for implementation than those representing special education. A case in point, students with moderate or severe disabilities often need to learn specific work skills in structured settings that may require an extended amount of time to master the skills whereas some students without disabilities can participate in more informal internship experiences of short duration; however, in both instances a clear set of learning objectives and a means to track the outcomes are needed.

There are time resources that need to be provided for both the development of an ILP plan and the time to conduct ILP-related activities within the curriculum throughout the school year. The number of hours may grow each year, but it is important to start the development of the plan with a clear understanding of how many classroom periods will be devoted to ILP activities at each grade level before identifying where in the curriculum or school day ILPs will be actually conducted.

Written exercises that serve as ILP artifacts should align to the Common Core Standards or standards that the school is using to demonstrate literacy, numeracy, and science skill development. In this way, engaging in ILPs will be clearly connected to the school goals for increasing reading, mathematics, and science test scores. This also sends a clear message that engaging in ILPs is relevant to student learning throughout the high school experience.

The plan below (see Table 2) is only an example of what one could look like. It is based on the idea that self and career exploration activities should give way to an increasing emphasis on career planning and management activities after the individual has identified one or more career goals. The number of grade level activities and range of ILP artifacts should be determined based on the number of classroom periods that will be devoted to ILPs during a given year for that grade level. NCWD/Youth's focus group results indicate a consensus for engaging in ILPs two times per week throughout the academic year that would culminate in a student-led parent-teacher conference session.

To support the development of a plan, the [National Career Development Guidelines \(NCDG\)](#) can be used to identify the specific skills students should demonstrate. The career development guidelines provide a rich array of skill areas that can be selected and organized within the self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management domains described in this Guide.

As shown in Table 1, the NCDGs consist of goal statements that are organized around codes that refer to both *Domains* – PS (Personal Social Development), ED (Educational Achievement and Lifelong Learning), and CM (Career Management) – and *Indicators and Learning Stages* – K (Knowledge Acquisition), A (Application), and R (Reflection). Hence the goal “Demonstrate ability to identify abilities, strengths, skills, and talents” is represented as indicator PS1.K – referring to Knowledge acquisition within the Personal Social domain.

Table 1. National Career Development Guidelines Framework

Personal Social Development Domain (PS)	
<i>GOAL PS1</i>	Develop understanding of self to build and maintain a positive self-concept.
<i>GOAL PS2</i>	Develop positive interpersonal skills including respect for diversity.
<i>GOAL PS3</i>	Integrate growth and change into your career development.
<i>GOAL PS4</i>	Balance personal, leisure, community, learner, family, and work roles.
Educational Achievement Lifelong Learning Domain (ED)	
<i>GOAL ED1</i>	Attain educational achievement and performance levels needed to reach your personal and career goals.
<i>GOAL ED2</i>	Participate in ongoing, lifelong learning experiences to enhance your ability to function effectively in a diverse and changing economy.
Career Management Domain (CM)	
<i>GOAL CM1</i>	Create and manage a career plan that meets your career goals.
<i>GOAL CM2</i>	Use a process of decision-making as one component of career development.
<i>GOAL CM3</i>	Use accurate, current, and unbiased career information during career planning and management.
<i>GOAL CM4</i>	Master academic, occupational, and general employability skills in order to obtain, create, maintain, and/or advance your employment.
<i>GOAL CM5</i>	Integrate changing employment trends, societal needs, and economic conditions into your career plans.

Source: [National Career Development Association](#)

Table 2. School Counseling (SAMPLE ONLY)

Domain	Skill Indicator	Activity	ILP Artifact
Year 1			
Self-Exploration	Demonstrate ability to identify abilities, strengths, skills, and talents (National Career Development Guidelines indicator [NCDG] PS1.K2) by integrating results from an interest,	Complete online career interest, ability, and values assessments using O*NET.	Persuasive writing activity (see Common Core Standards for Language Arts) in which the students make a case for why their long-term career goal is reasonable given its fit with their

	values, and skills inventory, respectively.		assessment results and strategies for using their high school learning opportunities to support their pursuit of that career. In addition to a writing sample, students will make an oral presentation using MS PowerPoint or related media.
Career Exploration	Describe short- and long-term career and life goals (e.g., education, employment, and lifestyle goals; NCDG CM1.K3).	Goal Setting Begins with a Dream	
Career Planning and Management	Identify strategies for improving educational achievement and performance (NCDG ED1.K2).	Connecting Education to Our Careers	
Year 2			
Self-Exploration	Identify positive social skills that will support your employability (NCDG PS2.K3).	Why Should I Hire You?	Research writing activity (see Common Core Standards for Language Arts and Mathematics, respectively) for students to describe: (a) the nature of two careers that were associated with their work-based learning activities; (b) soft skills they realize are needed to be successful at work; (c) a range of labor market information indicators about the careers; and, (d) the postsecondary training or educational pathways needed to pursue the careers.
Career Exploration	Demonstrate the ability to use different types of career information resources (i.e., occupational, educational, economic, and employment) to support career planning (NCDG CM3.A2).	Considering Labor Market Information in Your Career Choice	
Career Planning and Management	Identify types of ongoing learning experiences available to you (e.g., two- and four-year colleges, technical schools, apprenticeships, the military online courses, and on-the-job training (NCDG ED2.K5).	Connecting Education to our Careers	

Year 3			
Self-Exploration	Identify skills and personal traits needed to manage your career (e.g., resiliency, self-efficacy, ability to identify trends and changes, and flexibility; NCDG CM1.K4).	Do You Have The Universal Skills Employers Seek?	Conduct a student-led parent-teacher conference that describes what the student has learned about himself/herself to date, the learning opportunities needed to expand his/her range of skills, and plans for preparing to successfully transition from high school into adulthood.
Career Exploration	Develop a career plan to meet your career and life goals. NCDG CM1.A2.	Design a travel map that identifies stops along the way as one's main goals and roads identified as the learning opportunities needed to help them continue along to their ultimate destination.	
Career Planning and Management	Demonstrate the use of a decision-making model. NCDG CM2.A2.	Purposely Planned or Luck of the Draw	
Year 4			
Self-Exploration	Assess the impact of your life roles on career goals. NCDG PS4.R1.	Design a life rainbow with each color representing a different role. The half circle represents the time between birth and later adulthood. Identify what roles will be in play during one's worklife (roughly 25 – 65 years old) and discuss the ways in which these roles are perceived to support or impact one's career experiences.	Prepare a senior exit interview presentation for employers and teachers that describe the interests, skills and values the student is leaving high school with and the educational pathways he/she is planning to achieve to pursue the career objective(s).
Career Exploration	Develop a career plan to meet your career	Navigate your Future	

	and life goals. NCDG CM1.A1.		
Career Planning and Management	Demonstrate the following job seeking skills: the ability to write a resume and cover letter, complete a job application, interview for a job, and find and pursue employment leads. NCDG CM4.A2.	Career Portfolios Putting It All Together: The Career Development Checklist Resume Builder	

Creating a Professional Learning Community Focused on ILPs

One way to support the development of a whole-school ILP implementation plan is to create a professional learning community among individuals identified to represent the key stakeholder groups²⁷. The purpose of the professional learning community is to generate a rich discussion about the scope and sequence plan described above as well as to develop an implementation plan. Professional learning communities create a ground-up approach to encouraging the implementation of innovative educational strategies that promote improved student outcomes because the impetus for change is coming from educators, not administrators. Characteristics of an effective professional learning community include²⁸:

- Establishing a shared definition of the issues and challenges that need to be addressed and a collective understanding of how all educators are responsible for addressing those issues and challenges;
- Maintaining focus on improving student learning outcomes;
- Creating opportunities for reflective dialogue; and,
- Establishing a collaborative enterprise of activity between and among educators.

A professional learning community may be started as an ILP leadership team. The ILP leadership team should a) develop a common perspective and ILP definition, b) generate the grade-level career development competencies and curriculum, and c) create an implementation plan. The key challenge of any professional learning community is changing the norms and traditional beliefs in ways that improve student learning outcomes. While the leaders who initiate the ILP implementation plans may have excellent ideas and may generate innovative strategies, the strategies are likely to stall or fail in improving student learning outcomes unless the leaders gain buy-in from other stakeholders in the ILP process and involve others in generating the action plans.

Using a Project Management System

The ILP leadership team may find it helpful to use a project management system. A project management system is a strategy designed to help the professional learning community identify

how ILPs can support their school goals, establish a plan for gaining buy-in among other educators or organization members, develop innovative action plan strategies, implement the strategies, and evaluate the results. The System involves four phases:

- Defining the problem;
- Designing action plan strategies;
- Implementing the action plan strategies; and,
- Evaluating the implementation impact on student outcomes.

In addition, change management associated with communication plans and resource needs are considered for each phase. Change management refers to two essential elements of the project: communication plans and resource needs. Communication planning is necessary to initially gain buy-in by other key members of the school or organization. Communication is vital for keeping all members aware of activities, successes, and changes to the project. Resource needs refer to the technical resources, time allocations, and financial needs of the project. Technical resources refer to the professional development needs, software, computing, analysis, and/or report writing aspects of the project.

The [Project Management System](#) is designed to address five areas of resistance to change: needing a shared vision, requisite skills, resources, incentives, and an action plan²⁹. To support creating a common vision for using ILPs, the system directs educators to define the problem as to why engaging in ILPs will support the school goals, establish SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely), and create a communication plan to share with other educators, parents, and administrators about the nature of the project and provide implementation updates. Professional development needs address possible concerns about skills related issues to implementing ILPs such as how to use an online career information system and career development overview, and being aware of roles and responsibilities related to conducting ILPs. Addressing resources helps the team think about how and when ILP planning and implementation will occur during the school year. One issue related to scheduling is the use of the computer lab for schools that use online career information systems. Sometimes there are budget needs related to teacher release time for training or planning. The team also needs to think about the range of incentives that may be necessary to motivate educators to become involved. Finally, the action plan needs to articulate the implementation schedule, breakdown the actions into steps, and articulate a regular meeting schedule.

Facilitating School-Wide Discussions Using the Guideposts for Success

Use Common Language: A common framework is useful for the community of practice to use when developing and implementing plans of action. Schools or districts can create their own framework or tap into one available from national sources. To gain buy-in for engaging in whole-school ILP efforts, teachers need to become aware of how they are preparing high school graduates to successfully navigate through post-school challenges and opportunities. Becoming college and career ready goes beyond the content of a given course and provides an impetus to think about how the curriculum outcomes in each course prepare students to be successful in college or in seeking occupations that offer livable wages. One national framework, the [Guideposts for Success](#), can help educators make the connections between academic preparation

tasks and other key areas of student development. Based upon evidence-based research and vetted by over 100 national education and workforce development organizations, the [Guideposts for Success](#) outlines what all youth need to transition to adulthood through examining five critical areas: school-based preparatory experiences; career preparation and work-based learning; connecting activities (e.g., health, mental health, transportation, social services and other community supports); family involvement and supports; and youth development and leadership. All of these areas are essential for helping to make young people college and career ready. While each teacher may not feel responsible for all areas, it is important that the school as a whole adopt a collective perception of the value in creating learning opportunities that incorporate all five areas of the [Guideposts for Success](#).

One way the *Guideposts for Success* framework could be used is to divide teachers into small groups and ask them to identify how the school or organization is currently engaged in the various activities described within each of the five Guideposts areas as well as new activities that should be considered. Once it is clear that there is a collective understanding of how high school education needs to be more strongly connected to college and career readiness outcomes, it is expected that the ILP plan will be more easily accepted. This is because the scope and sequence that was generated will clearly describe both the skill that will be learned and the ILP artifact that will be used to measure whether the skill was learned.

Tracking ILP Progress and Outcomes

In order to know whether students are completing ILP activities, tracking progress is very important. Commercial career information and college readiness systems often offer tracking as part of their system. The [Universal Encouragement Program](#) is a free access system that enables counselors and other education professionals to collect, report, and analyze key guidance data on students in grades 6-12. Extensive encouragement services use student self-reports to inform guidance programming, intelligently target student sub-populations, identify students at-risk, and measure the effects of guidance interventions.

The program generates four types of reports:

- *Individual reports* summarize a student's assessment responses.
- *Parent/guardian reports* foster informed parental involvement by providing a copy of the individual report to parent/guardian(s), when requested by the student.
- *Group reports* summarize student responses for the school or program, providing guidance professionals with group summaries that inform and provide rationale for guidance interventions, program development, and advocacy.
- *Advanced reports* provide disaggregated, factor-based data reports and comparisons between different groups of students.

SECTION IV: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This section lists a series of additional resources that may be useful to the users of this *How to Guide*. It is organized around topical areas such as commercially available curriculum, assessment tools, and industry endorsed certification and credentialing products. The listings are not all encompassing in any given category but they do provide a direct linkage to the content of the prior three sections¹.

Commercially Available Products

Curriculum

These products have been vetted in a variety of venues.

Success Highways. [Success Highways](#) helps students develop six key resiliency skills that are known to promote academic success, career decision-making, and health management. The resiliency skills include: (a) Importance of school; (b) Academic Confidence (self-efficacy); (c) Academic Motivation; (d) Academic Stress; (e) Well-being; and, (f) Social Connections. Students receive individualized assessment information each resiliency skill and the 15 classroom lessons provide teachers and school counselors the opportunity to engage students in learning about how each resiliency skills relates to their future life success and helps them learn how to set goals to improve each resiliency skill. The assessment information is also used to provide schools with at-risk profiles for schools to more effectively conduct response to intervention (RTI) programming.

CurrTech Integrations (CTI). [CTI](#) is one of many businesses that have developed STEM modular curricula for high school students. Each module includes 10-12 teacher led activities and takes from three to four weeks to complete. In addition, all of the major high school educational publishing companies, such as **Pearson/Prentice-Hall** and **McGraw-Hill**, have STEM curricula materials for high school students.

American Careers. [American Careers educational programs](#) are integrated, standards-based programs designed to help students understand that what they learn in language arts, math, science, technology and other core subjects is an essential requirement for today's world of work. Career Communications, Inc., publishes American Careers programs for high school, middle school and elementary classrooms that integrate academics and careers. All the programs are designed to support a wide variety of national and state standards, including the Common Core State Standards. One of the programs, STEM It Up!, is a multidisciplinary, experiential approach to learning about science, technology, engineering and mathematics through exploration, discovery and problem solving.

Online Career Information Systems

¹ The U.S. Department of Labor does not endorse any of the products, vendors, or tools referenced in this publication. Any mention of vendors, products, or tools is for informational purposes only.

Comprehensive online career information systems should provide students with access to a wide range of validated assessments they can use to explore unique patterns of interests, skills, and values applicable to careers³⁰. The system should also provide access to career information that is organized in a number of ways, including the 16 career clusters. In addition to updated labor market information, the system should connect students to educational opportunities. More advanced systems also provide a range of tools for career planning and management including writing cover letters and resumes, interviewing skills, and decision-making strategies.

As an ePortfolio, the ILP serves as a repository of the self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management activities that students have completed. In addition, online systems allow for the attachment of skill-based evidence in a number of formats. Most importantly, such systems should provide the opportunity for students to share their ILP with admissions counselors or potential employers. Online career information systems offering fee-based access include:

- [Bridges](#)
- [Career Cruising](#)
- [CareerLocker](#)
- [IntoCareers](#) (Note that IntoCareers is a consortium of 20 states that may offer access as a school subscription or may be free to all students within the state. See [IntoCareers: State Operators](#) for a list of participating states.)
- [Kuder Career Planning System](#)

Assessment Inventories

There are a number of commercially available products for providing assessment information. See **Quintessential Careers**, [QC Online Career Assessment Tools Review Ratings](#), for a review and ratings for over two dozen popular commercial and free-access self-exploration assessment tools involving personality, aptitudes, interests, values, career assessment, and more. Some of these include:

- [The Strong Interest Inventory](#), which helps students to understand their personality and related interests, identify careers related to their interests, select matching education and training options, understand leadership, risk-taking, and teamwork preferences, and more.
- [The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator](#), which provides a personality assessment designed to measure psychological preferences in how individuals perceive the world and make decisions. This assessment uses a matrix of sixteen different personality types to interpret results.

More National and State Sponsored Open Access, Web-Based Resources

Every state has various online resources to help with self-exploration and assessment, career exploration, and career planning and management as well as other labor market information (LMI). For a comprehensive list of such state-by-state online resources please visit [ACINet State Information](#).

An example of the kind of useful student self-assessment interest tools available on state websites is Texas' Oscar Interest Profiler described below:

- [Texas Cares](#) is a useful, student-friendly interest profile and work importance indicator tool based on O*NET and operated by the Texas Workforce Commission/Labor Market and Career Information.

The CareerOneStop website also offers help to job seekers:

- [CareerOneStop – Job Seeker Tools](#) provides a list of 10 or more top-rated sites in six job-seeker categories: (1) General Job Boards; (2) Niche Boards; (3) Career Exploration Tools; (4) Career Planning Tools; (5) Social Media Job Search; and (6) Other Tools (including interview preparation, labor market information, training grants, and more). These rankings are based on the February 2010 results from the USDOL “America’s Job Seeker Challenge” in which workforce development professionals, job seekers, businesses, and other public users participated.

Industry Sponsored Websites

As noted in Section I, there is a wealth of websites centered on occupations in specific industry sectors. What follows is a sampling of some of the largest ones.

Healthcare: For the healthcare industry, there are several websites to assist career exploration, including:

- [AMA Careers in Health Care](#) – This American Medical Association (AMA) website provides a comprehensive directory to over 60 different allied health, medical, dental, and other related healthcare careers
 - [ExploreHEALTHCareers.org](#) – American Dental Education Association (ADEA) website provides career exploration information for a broad range of dental, medical, allied health, veterinary, and related occupations
 - [Lifeworks – Explore Health & Medical Science Careers](#) – This website from the National Institutes of Health, Office of Science Education offers over 100 health and medical care career descriptions, including many that require bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degrees.
- [VCN.org](#) – The Healthcare Virtual Career Network is sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges ([AACCC](#)) and offers in-depth profiles for 82 healthcare careers, including a breakdown for those that require only a high school diploma or some college, an associate’s degree, or a bachelor’s or graduate degree.

Information Technology: For the information technology (IT) and telecommunications industry, the Computing Technology Industry Association ([CompTIA](#)) provides a Career Compass which offers tools to help users define career goals and learn what training and industry-based certifications are available:

- [CompTIA Career Compass](#)

Manufacturing: For the manufacturing industry, including advanced manufacturing, check out:

- [National Association of Manufacturers](#)
- [National Council for Advanced Manufacturing](#)
- [National Council on Competitiveness](#)

In particular, the National Association of Manufacturers' [Dream It, Do It](#) website introduces young people to exciting career opportunities in advanced manufacturing and the education and training needed for these careers. In particular, the [Career Toolkit](#) section includes such helpful tools as a Dream Career Quiz, Career Calculator, Career Profiles, and more.

Restaurant and Food Service: For career and jobs information on the restaurant and food service industry, see the [Jobs & Careers](#) section on the National Restaurant Association website.

Retail: For information on career opportunities in the retail sales industry, check out the National Retail Federation Foundation's [Retail Careers Center](#).

Work-readiness Credentials

The 2009 Achieve report, [Measures that Matter – Work-readiness Certification and Industry Credentials: What Do State High School Policy Makers Need to Know?](#) listed five additional sample career readiness soft skills assessments that educators and counselors might want to consult and consider as part of their approach to work-readiness soft skills instruction:

- [Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems \(CASAS\)](#): This system assesses adult basic reading, math, listening, writing, and speaking skills within a functional context. CASAS is approved and validated by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor to assess both native and nonnative speakers of English. The assessments (Workforce Skills Certification Program) cover reading comprehension, math, critical thinking, problem solving, applied performance, and basic technology.
- [National Career Readiness Certificate](#): Developed by ACT and linked to WorkKeys (job skills assessment system), candidates are assessed in applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information. Based on scores, they are awarded gold, silver, or bronze-level certification that indicate readiness to succeed in different kinds of jobs.
- [National Work-Readiness Credential](#): This is a certification of work-readiness for entry-level work as defined by employers based on the nationally validated Equipped for the Future (EFF) applied learning standards created by the National Institute for Literacy. This credential is sponsored by seven “development partners” (District of Columbia, Florida, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Washington, and Junior Achievement Worldwide).

- [Work Certified](#): This program assesses reading comprehension, mathematics, business writing, computer literacy and business tools, customer service, work maturity, and other skills. It was developed by the Treasure Coast and Palm Beach workforce development regions in Florida, and has been adopted by other Florida districts as well as some districts in Illinois and Texas.

During 2010, the [National Association of Workforce Development Professionals \(NAWDP\)](#) launched a new national youth work ethic certification program known as "[Bring Your A Game to Work](#)". This program is designed to teach youth the workplace values that employers are seeking, and then to provide a national certification to prove that they have competencies in these values.

Family Engagement

The [Coalition for Community Schools](#) hosts a network of national, state, and local organizations; one is a community of practice centered on improving the linkages between schools and the family. There are two types of resources they have identified. The first category includes promising resources focused on how to develop solid systems that can be developed, monitored, and evaluated (the Harvard resources) and then some tools and strategies being used in communities.

- [Seeing is Believing: Promising Practices for How School Districts Promote Family Engagement](#). Harvard Family Research Project. 2009.
- [Taking Leadership, Innovating Change: Profiles in Family, School and Community Engagement](#). Harvard Family Research Project. 2010.
- [How to Develop a Logic Model for Districtwide Family Engagement Strategies](#). Harvard Family Research Project. 2009.
- [Tools for Latino Family Outreach: Supporting Student Success in the Middle-grades and Beyond](#). Postsecondary Access for Latino Middle-grade Students (PALMS).
- [Title I Parental Involvement: A Self-Evaluation Tool for New Jersey Schools](#). Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey/New Jersey State Parent Information & Resource Center. 2010.
- [Boston Public Schools](#). Parent University.
- [Charleston County School District: Parent University in the 2011-2012 Academic Year](#).

Connecting to Other Youth Planning Processes

Some students may be receiving treatment and/or have a treatment plan for services they are receiving for any number of reasons, including mental health needs, substance abuse, disabilities, health problems, involvement with the juvenile justice system, and/or involvement in other systems of care.

The following resource is designed for youth to help them understand and participate fully in the planning process for any treatment they receive. This resource emphasizes a strengths-based treatment planning approach that aligns the treatment plan to the young person's personal goals

in various life domains. This guide could be used to help youth connect the goals they set as a part of their Individual Development Plan (IDP) to any treatment plans.

- [A Youth Guide to Treatment and Treatment Planning: A Better Life](#). Developed with support from the Child, Adolescent and Family Branch, Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2011.

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY

[Note: Definitions without citations were developed by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth)]

Apprenticeship is a system of training that combines learning about theory in classrooms with practical “hands-on” learning on-the-job at the worksite, so that apprentices know not only how a given task is performed, but why it is done that way. Apprenticeship training provides learners with opportunities to combine learning and earning. In the United States, apprenticeship is primarily financed, sponsored, and administered by the private sector. (George H. Bliss III (Director of Training, United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the U.S. and Canada), *American Apprenticeship: An Enduring System Adapting to Change*. Washington DC: Conference Paper. May 2000. Pp. 2-3).

Assessment refers to the process of analyzing information to make judgments about the skills and learning of individuals or groups. In the context of career and workforce development, the purpose of assessment is to determine the capacity of people to effectively work on processes that deliver organizational value. (Work-Based Learning.org).

Assessment also may be described as the initial step of information gathering and needs determination. Assessing involves gathering information, identifying issues, and clarifying personal and environmental resources in relation to the issues. Assessing/assessment helps individuals to increase self-awareness, understand their career development, establish work, learning and/or life balance goals, and provide a foundation for taking action. (Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Assistive Technology under the Americans with Disabilities Act, refers to “any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” Assistive technology helps people with disabilities complete daily living tasks independently, assists them in communicating with other individuals, and provides access to education, employment, and recreation.

Blended Learning refers to the situation where a student takes classes, at least in part, at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home while also using, at least part of the time, an online delivery system with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace. Blended Learning is sometimes identified as “hybrid learning.” (The Innosight Institute and the Charter School Growth Fund, [Michael Horn and Heather Staker]. *The Rise of K-12 Blended Learning: Profiles of Emerging Models*. January 2011. White paper; As cited in “Education Daily,” May 27, 2011, page 3).

Career Assessment refers to a comprehensive process conducted over a period of time, involving a multi-disciplinary team with the purpose of identifying individual characteristics, education, training, and placement needs. Such assessments provide educators and others with the basis for planning an individual's school and career development program. Career assessment may use both formal and informal methodologies and should provide the individual with insight into his or her vocational potential. (Leconte & Neubert, 1997).

Career Cluster refers to a grouping of occupations and broad industries based on commonalities. The 16 Career Clusters developed by the U.S Department of Education and the States provide an organizing tool for schools, small learning communities, academies and magnet schools. (U.S. Department of Education, [Career Clusters: Focusing Education on the Future](#)).

Career Counseling refers to an individual or group process which emphasizes self-exploration and understanding, and facilitates persons to develop a satisfying and meaningful life/work direction as a basis to guide learning, work, and transition decisions, as well as to manage responses to changing work and learning environments over the lifespan. (Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Career Development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future. (Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Career Development Services refer to a wide range of programs and services provided in many different jurisdictions (i.e., education/government) and delivery settings (i.e., schools/community agencies/private practice settings) which have, as their purpose and objective, individuals gaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors to manage their learning, work, and transitions in self-directed and meaningful ways over their life-spans. The nature/content of career development services fit “broadly” into the following:

- ***Information-Based:*** Information-Based Services provide information related to learning and work.
- ***Learning and Skills-Based:*** Learning and Skills-Based Services include information, but with a focus on learning to apply and evaluate information in personally relevant ways and develop skills to research and manage learning and work decisions and transitions over the lifespan.
- ***Identity-Based:*** Identity-Based Services include and emphasize the importance of self awareness and understanding as a basis for learning and work decisions and the seeking of purposeful and meaningful ways in which each individual wants to contribute over the lifespan.
- ***Change-Based:*** Change-Based Services include a problem solving focus on resolving issues/barriers, either personal or systemic, which are interfering with an individual or

group's capacity to effectively and optimally manage learning and work over the lifespan.

(Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Career Exploration is the process by which a student examines different careers and career pathways – as fit their interests, skills, and abilities – and the education and training needed to attain them. (NCWD/Youth).

Career Information refers to information related to the world of work that can be useful in the process of career development, including educational, occupational and psycho-social information related to working (e.g., availability of training, the nature of work, the status of workers in different occupations). (Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Career Pathway is a coherent, articulated sequence of rigorous academic and career/technical courses, commencing in the ninth grade and leading to an associate degree, baccalaureate degree and beyond, an industry recognized certificate, and/or licensure. The Career Pathway is developed, implemented, and maintained in partnership among secondary and postsecondary education, business, and employers. ([National Career Pathways Network](#)).

Career Planning is the process of establishing career objectives and determining appropriate educational and developmental programs to further develop the skills required to achieve short- or long-term career objectives. ([Human Resources – Glossary](#)).

Career Readiness includes three major skill areas: *core academic skills* and the ability to apply those skills to concrete situations in order to function in the workplace and in routine daily activities; *employability skills* such as critical thinking and responsibility that are essential in any career; and *technical, job-specific skills* related to a particular career pathway. (Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). *What is "Career ready"?* Alexandria, VA: ACTE. Definitions paper. April 2011. 2 pp).

Being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and/or education necessary for their chosen career (i.e. community college, technical/vocational program, apprenticeship or significant on-the-job training). ([Achieve, Inc.](#) *What is College- and Career-Ready?* Fact Sheet. 1p.).

Certification is the process of documenting the competence of an individual who meets predetermined qualifications or performance standards of an industry group, agency, or association. It is essentially the documentation of the results of an assessment process and is affirmed through the award of related credentials. Certifications are commonly sponsored and administered by industry trade organizations and are *voluntary* for an individual to acquire in conjunction with a designated role, trade, occupation, or profession. Certification is required for some kinds of legal licensure. (XPAND Corporation [Butler, Mark and Osman, David]).

Selecting the Right Industry Skill Certifications. XPAND Corporation: Reston, VA. February 2007. Selected Definitions; p. A-1 & A-2).

College Readiness means that a student is prepared for any postsecondary education or training experience, including study at two- and four-year institutions leading to a postsecondary credential (i.e. a certificate, license, Associate's or Bachelor's degree). Being ready for college means that a high school graduate has the knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework. ([Achieve, Inc.](#) *What is College- and Career-Ready?* Fact Sheet. 1 page).

ACT, among others, has developed and published benchmark standards for determining college readiness in five academic areas. ([ACT](#). *College Readiness Standards for EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT*. Iowa City, IA: ACT. 2010. 36 pp).

Co-op Education refers to “Cooperative Education” and is a program that integrates work experience in a student's field along with academic studies. The term reflects the cooperative relationship between students, schools and employers that allows students to alternate periods of study with periods of employment. (Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Co-op Education programs normally provide academic credit to student participants. (NCWD/Youth, 2011).

Credentialing refers to the granting of a diploma or other certificate in recognition that an individual has completed a defined body of work that is required for employment in certain occupations or professions (or for legal licensure); e.g. professional skill certificates issued by professional associations that may be based on work experience and/or test results. For example, licensure may be based on successful completion of program that grants certification, which signifies mastery of defined objectives. ([Achieve, Inc.](#) [Muller, Robert D. and Beatty, Alexandra]. *Measures That Matter – Work-readiness Certification and Industry Credentials: What Do State High School Policy Makers Need To Know?* 2009. Measures That Matter Series. Definitions, p. 4).

eLearning refers to the use of interactive electronic technology (e.g. Internet, CD-ROM) in developing learners' knowledge and skills. ([Work-Based Learning.org - Glossary](#)).

Employability refers to having the capability to gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment if required. For the individual employability depends on: their assets in terms of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they possess; the way they use and deploy those assets; the way they present them to employers; and, crucially, the context (e.g., personal circumstances and labor market environment) within which they seek work. (Institute for Employment Studies, UK [Hillage, J. Pollard]. *Employability: Developing a Framework for Policy Analysis*. United Kingdom: Department for Education and Employment. November 1998. p.1).

Employability Skills are skills that enable people to perform tasks required by their work, paid and unpaid; provide a foundation to learn other skills; and enhance the ability to adapt to workplace change. (Canadian Career Development Foundation, *Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Internship/Externship refers to a temporary, project-oriented, supervised, on-the-job learning experience in which an intern has specific learning goals. Internships and Externships may be paid or unpaid, and normally result in academic credit. (NCWD/Youth, 2011).

Interpersonal Skills refers to the ability to communicate with another individual or group on a social or professional basis. Level of aptitude is based on the ease and comfort of all parties involved. (NCWD/Youth, June 2004. Glossary, pp. 22-23.)

Job Shadowing is a work experience option where students learn about a job by walking through the work day as a shadow to a competent worker. The job shadowing work experience is a temporary, unpaid exposure to the workplace in an occupational area of interest to the student. Students witness firsthand the work environment, employability and occupational skills in practice, the value of professional training, and potential career options. Job shadowing is designed to increase career awareness, help model student behavior through examples and reinforce in the student the link between classroom learning and work requirements. Almost any workplace is a potential job shadowing site. Job shadowing is limited in that it allows students to observe only; direct work experience, responsibility, and skills are not acquired. (Paris and Mason, 1995.) (Paris, K., & Mason, S. *Planning and implementing youth apprenticeship and work-based learning*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, Center on Education and Work. 1995. p. 47).

Labor Market Information (LMI) refers to data on economic activities that describes the relationship between labor demand and supply. Specifically, it can include the number of people employed, the wages they are earning, their occupations, the location of their workplace in relation to where they live, the number of people available to work in a given area, and the occupations that will be in demand in the future. ([Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information](#)).

Labor Market Information (LMI) research and analysis is concerned with the nominal market in which workers find paying work, employers find willing workers, and wage rates are determined. Labor markets may be local or national (even international) in their scope and are made up of smaller, interacting labor markets for different qualifications, skills, and geographical locations. They depend on exchange of information between employers and job seekers about wage rates, conditions of employment, level of competition, and job location. ([Business Dictionary.com](#)).

Licensure refers to the granting of permission to practice a particular occupation or profession, usually by a state (though often the process is operated by a professional accreditation board). States/legal licensing bodies often rely on the credentialing developed by professional associations— usually requiring passage of a test plus specified experience.

([Achieve, Inc.](#) [Muller, Robert D. and Beatty, Alexandra]. *Measures That Matter – Work-readiness Certification and Industry Credentials: What Do State High School Policy Makers Need To Know?* 2009. Measures That Matter Series. Definitions: p. 4).

Mentoring refers to a learning partnership between a more experienced and less experienced individual. (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007). Mentoring involves a trusting relationship, formalized into a program of structured activities, which brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee. (NCWD/Youth HS/HT Glossary of Terms, pp. 11-1 to 11-4).

Occupation refers to a set of activities or tasks that employees are paid to perform. Employees that perform essentially the same tasks are in the same occupation, whether or not they work in the same industry. Some occupations are concentrated in a few particular industries; other occupations are found in many industries. ([U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Glossary](#)).

On-the-Job Training (OJT) refers to human resource development or ongoing training for workers on the job. It includes ongoing staff development in business and can cover everything from literacy training to management training. Most training programs fit into one of the following general types of training activity: technical skills training; organizational skills training; or basic skills training. (*Career Development: A Primer and Glossary*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2002. Part B: Career Development Glossary – Alphabetical, pp. 9-18).

Open Source refers generally to information or material that is freely available for use or modification by users. This term originated within the information technology (IT) software development industry in the late 1990's. The software development organization Open Source Initiative (OSI) has trademarked the term "Open Source" with its definition principally directed to understandings concerning the available distribution and use of IT software. (NCWD/Youth, August, 2011).

Resiliency refers to the ability and wherewithal to recover from adverse situations through having learned how to avoid such situations in the future and how to maintain a positive way of coping. (NCWD/Youth, June 2004. Glossary, pp. 22-23).

Sector is a term that refers to a grouping of industries or occupations that share certain common characteristics. (NCWD/Youth, 2011).

Self-Knowledge is the ability to realistically recognize and gauge one's own skills, tastes, capabilities, needs, etc. (NCWD/Youth, June 2004. Glossary, pp. 22-23).

Service-Learning is a method by which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community; that is integrated into the students' academic curriculum, or provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what the student did and saw during the actual service activity; that provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own

communities; and that enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community; and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others. (National and Community Service Act of 1990).

Soft Skills refers to skills other than technical skills and basic knowledge that are valued by employers in the workplace. These include behaviors such as good work habits and attitudes, dressing appropriately, the ability to communicate and get along with others, and the ability to work in teams. (NCWD/Youth 2007. Chapter 11: HS/HT Glossary of Terms, pp. 11-1 to 11-4).

Soft Skills are sometimes referred to as employability skills, and include personal management skills, interpersonal skills, and leadership skills. These are qualitative skills that relate to a person's ability to interact with customers and employees. ([Work-Based Learning.org](#)).

Supports are ongoing relationships through which young people become connected to others and to community resources. Supports can be motivational, emotional, and strategic. The supports can take many different forms, but they must be affirming, respectful, and ongoing. The supports are most powerful when they are offered by a variety of people, such as parents and close relatives, community social networks, teachers, youth workers, employers, health providers, and peers who are involved in the lives of young people (Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, 1996).

Universal Design (UD) is a strategy for making products, environments, operational systems, and services welcoming and usable to the most diverse range of people possible. Its key principles are simplicity, flexibility and efficiency. Most people benefit from UD on a daily basis whether they recognize it or not. Originally developed in response to the needs of the aging population and people with disabilities, UD has much broader applicability. It increases ease of access to products, places and services for multiple, diverse populations. Using UD means that facilities, programs, and services take into account the broad range of abilities, ages, reading levels, learning styles, languages, and cultures in their diverse workforce and customer base. (USDOL, Office of Disability Policy. [ODEP Disability Employment Policy Resources by Topic – Universal Design](#)).

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is defined by the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) as a framework for designing education environments that enable all learners to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. UDL is accomplished by simultaneously reducing barriers to the curriculum and providing rich supports for learning. UDL involves providing multiple and flexible methods of presentation, means of expression, and means of engagement.

Universal Design for the Workforce Development System (UD4WDS)” refers to the design of environments, products, and communication practices, as well as the delivery of programs, services, and activities to benefit the greatest number of people served by the workforce development system. (NCWD/Youth: HS/HT Glossary of Terms, pp. 11-1 to 11-4)

Validation is a process. It uses objective evidence to confirm that the requirements which define an intended use or application have been met. Whenever all requirements have been met, a validated status is achieved. The process of validation can be carried out under realistic use

conditions or within a simulated use environment. In the context of this standard (as used for business and industry quality assurance), the term validation is used in at least two different situations: design and development and production and service provision.

Design and development validations use objective evidence to confirm that products meet the requirements which define their intended use or application. Production and service provision processes must be validated whenever process outputs cannot be measured, monitored, or verified until after the product is in use or the service has been delivered (by then it's too late to do anything about output deficiencies and defects). In this case, validations use objective evidence to confirm that production and service provision processes are capable of producing planned results. ([ISO 9000, 9001 and 9004 Quality Management Definitions](#)).

Work-Based Learning (WBL) refers to an individual's acquisition and construction of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to obtain, maintain, and increase meaningful employment. ([Work-Based Learning.org](#)).

Work-Based Learning gives students the opportunity to learn a variety of skills by expanding the walls of classroom learning to include the community. By narrowing the gap between theory and practice, Work-Based Learning creates meaning for students. WBL provides opportunities for students to learn a variety of skills through rigorous academic preparation with hands-on career development experiences. Under the guidance of adult mentors, students learn to work in teams, solve problems, and meet employers' expectations. ([Utah Office of Education, Career and Technical Education](#)).

Youth Development refers to a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences that help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent. Youth development spans five basic developmental areas in which all young people need to learn and grow: *learning, connecting, thriving, working and leading*:

- **Learning** — The area of development that focuses on developing positive basic and applied academic attitudes, skills, and behaviors (Ferber, Pittman, & Marshall, 2002).
- **Connecting** — The area of development that focuses on developing positive social behaviors, skills, and attitudes (Ferber, Pittman, & Marshall, 2002).
- **Thriving** — The area of development that focuses on developing physically healthy attitudes, skills, and behaviors (Ferber, Pittman, & Marshall, 2002).
- **Working** — The area of development focuses developing on positive attitudes, skills, and behaviors around vocational direction (Ferber, Pittman, & Marshall, 2002).
- **Leading** — The area of development that focuses on developing positive civic attitudes, skills, and behaviors (Ferber, Pittman, & Marshall, 2002).

Positive youth development addresses the broader developmental needs of youth, in contrast to deficit-based models that focus solely on youth problems (NCWD/Youth, June 2004. Glossary, pp. 22-23).

Youth Leadership refers to an internal and external process leading to (1) the ability to guide or direct others on a course of action, influence the opinion and behavior of other people, and show the way by going in advance, and (2) the ability to analyze one's own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals, and have the self-esteem to carry them out. It includes the ability to identify community resources and use them, not only to live independently, but also to establish support networks to participate in community life and to effect positive social change. It includes training in skills such as self-advocacy and conflict resolution; exposure to personal leadership and youth development activities, including community service, and opportunities that allow youth to exercise leadership and build self-esteem. (NCWD/Youth June 2004. Glossary, pp. 22-23; Wehmeyer, Agran & Hughes, 1998; Adolescent Employment Readiness Center, Children's Hospital).

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