

# Transforming Career Counseling:

Bridging School to Career in  
the Workforce of the Future



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# Executive Summary

At a time when much of our youth are unable to find their way in today's economy, we need to do more to help ensure their success. Educational "equal opportunity" is often equated with the need for a four-year college degree. What it should mean is an opportunity to learn what is necessary to succeed in a chosen career.

**The challenge is to help students (1) become aware of the broad range of available careers that meet the evolving needs of the workplace and (2) learn how to connect their interests and skills to an educational pathway that leads to rewarding opportunities in their career choice.** In this paper, we provide recommendations that address this challenge by outlining robust and economically viable actions to enrich the career guidance counseling system in American middle and high schools. We also highlight emerging career counseling benchmarks of success and best practices consistent with our recommendations.

First and foremost, we believe strongly that enriched **career counseling must become a high priority** in American middle and high schools. Toward this end we recommend:

- All students have an **education and career pathway plan**, approved by their parents or guardians and discussed with a career counselor or non-family mentor, by the time they are entering 9th grade.
- Special **certifications be developed and required** for all career counselors that demonstrate competency in career development counseling, analysis of career pathway requirements, understanding of industry requirements and use of technology.
- **A career counselor-to-student ratio of no greater than 1:250** to help create more time in a career development counseling process that enables career counselors to effectively serve the students for whom they are responsible.

- Career counselors help **plan career development activities** for all students as well as career information activities for teachers. At the same time, students' career plans should be integrated into college counseling, so that students can make well-informed decisions regarding postsecondary education.
- Career counselors **engage parents/guardians in the career planning process** and understand how to guide, inform and involve them in a student's future decisions.
- **State-of-the-art web-based portals be developed** that will give career counselors, students and parents access to the best information on the evolving job market, as well as the postsecondary pathways that will best help them prepare for careers. While there have been enormous improvements in such tools, more can and should be done.

**Employers must join in the effort to implement the needed enrichments** to the career counseling system. In fact, we call upon all stakeholders – school systems, government, parents and guardians, as well as business and industry, among others – to work in partnership to implement these recommendations, or those of their own design, to enable career counseling and career plans that align with and meet workplace needs.

We recognize that implementing these recommendations will especially impact school counselors, teachers, and administrators in their efforts to enrich workforce-based career awareness and planning in existing career counseling environments. But we maintain that in partnership with all relevant stakeholders, these enrichments are attainable and will result in student success in the workplace.

## Education: a critical need for change

There is a vast disconnect between the economic and productivity needs of American industry and the knowledge and skills being taught by a one-channel journey through the educational system. Today's mantra of "college for all" – which most parents understand as "four-year college for all" – has resulted in either too many four-year college graduates who end up under-employed (working jobs that don't require a four-year degree) or college dropouts unprepared for well-paying jobs in the workplace. There is more than one route to career success.

We are in the eye of a perfect storm. The U.S. economy and workforce landscape have changed dramatically over the past half-century. In 1950, 80 percent of U.S. jobs were unskilled. Today, just six decades later –

85 percent of U.S. jobs are *skilled*. Over 50 percent of skilled trade workers in the U.S. are age 45 years or older. The U.S. manufacturing industry has reported 600,000 positions open with many going unfilled.<sup>1</sup> An additional 3.5 million jobs in the industry are expected to be open by 2020.<sup>2</sup>

Rising and more defined educational requirements now exist across the labor market. In 1970, workers with a high school diploma or less represented 74 percent of the middle class. By 2007, fewer than 40 percent of workers had a high school diploma or less. By 2020, nearly 70 percent of jobs will require at least some postsecondary education and training (e.g., one-year certificate, associate degree or bachelor degree). (*Center on Education and the Workforce*)





## Education: a critical need for change (cont.)

The United States spends roughly \$1.4 trillion on human capital development each year. Yet, the latest reports on education and workforce development outcomes in the U.S. are sobering:

- The national average high school graduation rate is 74.7 percent. An estimated one million students will fail to graduate this year, a loss of 5,500 students for every day on the academic calendar. (Alliance for Excellent Education) The number one reason these students drop out is that they find high school irrelevant and boring. In other words, they see no connection between their academic schoolwork, and how it might prepare them for a good job.
- By the year 2020, approximately 13 million students will have dropped out of high school. If this trend continues, this will result in an economic loss of more than \$3 trillion, a continuing stagnated economy, struggling communities and a less globally competitive U.S. (US Chamber of Commerce)
- The national average graduation rate from postsecondary institutions (public, private and for-profit) is 38.6 percent after four years and 54.3 percent after six years. The graduation rate for two-year postsecondary institutions

is 42 percent. (NCES/IPEDS 2014) The U.S. has the highest college drop-out rate in the industrialized world.

- According to a recent study, nearly 15 percent of those aged 16 to 24 (almost 6 million) are neither in school nor working. (Opportunity Nation, October 2013)
- About 3.6 million jobs are left unfilled due to a lack of relevant knowledge and skills in the workforce. (*Pathways to Prosperity*, Harvard Graduate School of Education)

From a business and economic perspective, data shows that if the high school students who dropped out of the Class of 2012 had graduated, the nation's economy would have benefited from as much as \$154 billion in additional income over the course of these graduates' lifetimes. Moreover, according to the *Alliance for Excellent Education*, if the U.S. could achieve a 90 percent high school graduation rate, the projected economic benefits would include as much as:

- \$16.8 billion a year in additional new home purchases.
- \$1.3 billion annually in additional federal tax revenues.
- \$661 million a year to state and local tax coffers.

## Education: a critical need for change (cont.)

There are currently 29 million jobs available that require less than a four-year degree. In addition, business and industry is seeking evidence of competency and mastery of skill that often involves procuring an industry-based certificate or certification. (*Career Education: Five Ways That Pay Along the Way to the B.A.*, Technical Center on Education and the Workforce)

To establish a more robust and economically viable system for bridging "school-to-career," more exposure is needed to career pathways in the workforce at all levels so that participants can be properly motivated and prepared to seek them. Through awareness, pertinent information, and access to relevant experiences, participants can make better-informed career pathway decisions that maximize both individual capabilities and workplace needs.



# Challenge:

## Expanding the role of career counselors

Traditionally, the responsibility for helping students discover career pathway options has been in the hands of parents and guidance counselors. However, as noted by the American School Counselor Association, more than half of students today say no one in their school has been helpful in advising on these options, caused in part perhaps by the fact that the current average student/guidance counselor ratio in the U.S. is 479 to 1 rather than the recommended 250 to 1. (American School Counselor Association)

Other factors hindering career counseling include: a lack of support for career development activities by many school administrators; a general cultural assumption that students and their parents will figure out the career planning dilemma with a four-year degree being the default and “good enough” goal; school counselors lack the training to adequately perform career counseling for all students (typically receiving training in one introductory career development course within a 48-60 credit graduate school curriculum); parents are often just as confused about career planning as are their children. (Dr. Spencer Niles, Ed.D., LPC, NCC, Vice President of Research, Kuder, Inc.)

Unfortunately, many students are making career education choices blindly with no connection to reality. (*McKinsey Survey, Aug-Sept 2012*). In the U.S. approximately 40 percent of students reported a lack

of familiarity with market conditions and requirements even for well-known professions such as teachers and doctors. Career counseling conversations that do take place are typically disconnected from current labor market data and discussions of the knowledge and skills required in the workplace. Participants are left ill-prepared for a world that is rapidly changing due to

technological advances, global competition, and economic and societal issues. (Hurley, Dan and Jim Thorp, eds “*Decisions Without Direction*”)

In its paper, *Pathways to Prosperity* and the follow-up conference held on this topic in March 2013, the Harvard Graduate School of Education pointed out that career counseling is scarce in American high schools. They confirm the long-standing concern that high school counselors spend most of their time on scheduling, academic guidance,

discipline and helping students apply to college.

Students are typically on their own when it comes to identifying potential careers and the pathways necessary to enter and succeed in them. The American School Counselor Association outlines the role of the counselor as one that develops comprehensive programs delivered both directly and indirectly that focus on student outcomes and competencies.



# Research:

## Identifying the barriers and challenges

Our research was designed to identify the scope of the issues and challenges associated with the industry-education disconnect, to learn about best practices and to gather the thinking of leaders in the business and education arena. It included a survey to manufacturers, national career and guidance counseling organizations and companies, industry trade associations and national education leaders.<sup>3</sup>

The survey identified primary factors impacting the ability to put a rigorous and relevant career counseling system into place as well as potential strategies for enriching the system. In addition, a series of interviews were conducted with key individuals in industry and education. Finally, a search of the literature and media was conducted to learn more about key thinking related to the issue of connecting students to the needs of the workplace.<sup>4</sup>

As a result of research (including discussions among and between individuals and

organizations) a number of emerging career pathway barriers and challenges were identified:

### Systemic

1. The training and certification of career counselors typically does not provide the knowledge and skills necessary for them to work with **all** students.
2. The ratio of career counselors to students in high schools has grown substantially over the past several decades.
3. High school career guidance counselors today appear to be spending the majority of their time with administrative and disciplinary issues rather than career guidance counseling.
4. Career counseling is often inadequate at the postsecondary level as well.
5. Career counselors either do not have available, are not aware of, and/or are not trained in the use of effective system tools providing labor market data or information on occupational knowledge associated with career pathways.



# Research:

## Identifying the barriers and challenges (cont.)

6. Young people do not have the opportunity to experience career pathways beyond what they see and experience in their family and/or neighborhood and are not meaningfully exposed to the world of work until they enter the workplace.

### Procedural

1. Many public school systems operate with little attention to career counseling for all students. Instead, they focus their time and resources on advising students who plan to apply to college. But even these students often don't receive much career counseling. Career counseling in many, if not most institutions, is piecemeal and, in many cases, almost non-existent.
2. Career counseling, where it does exist, often begins in 10th or 11th grade in high school, well beyond the point at which students should have begun to examine their career pathway options.
3. Too little is shared or documented in the career counseling area about what works in helping students develop their pathway, and how and why it works.
4. There is little support from school administrators for career development activities.
5. There is a disconnected and weak interaction between education and industry, outcomes and school policy and innovations being implemented across the country.
6. Career counseling is largely missing from federal legislation focused on education and workforce development and funding for it has been largely deleted from the federal budget.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, there is confusion over the terminology used by education and industry. Terms such as “guidance counselors,” “career counselors,” “school counselors” and “career guidance

specialists” are used interchangeably. However, individuals fulfilling these roles often have different responsibilities, accountability factors and perspectives on their roles. For purposes of this paper, we use the term *career counselor* to define a professional who possesses the knowledge, experience and skills to guide an individual through the education-to-career process.

If we are to meet the vision and goal of a strong American economy based on a productive workplace employing individuals with relevant knowledge and skills, then we need to begin to envision and implement a new system. As employers, we know there is a problem and the impact this problem is having on our companies, industries and the American economy. Fortunately, we also know this is a problem that can be fixed and there is a solution. A national strategy is required that brings together the community of employers, educators, policy leaders and the general public.







## Partnership Response In Manufacturing Education (PRIME) School Best Practices

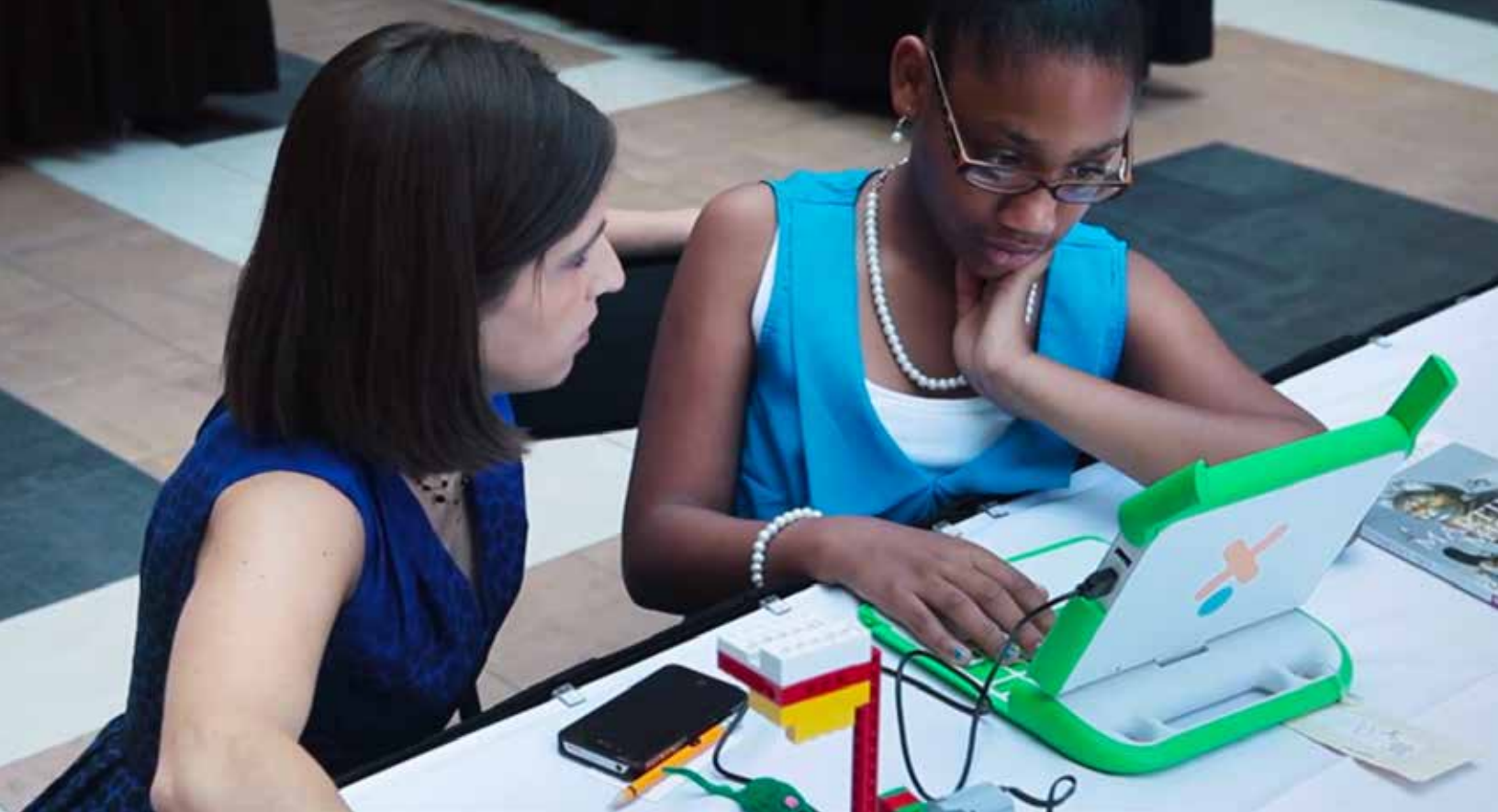
The SME Education Foundation's initiative, Partnership Response in Manufacturing Education (PRIME), actively engages and builds a collaborative network between manufacturing students, educators, and industry. Wando High School, one of 32 elite nationally selected high schools within the PRIME network, was chosen in 2012. Wando's successes are driven through dedicated administration, staff, and community. PRIME's foundation, exemplified through Wando, is built on the belief that a "community approach" to education is what truly prepares and builds our talent to propel advanced manufacturing into the future. One of the largest drivers and supporters of Wando within this framework is the SME Charleston Chapter 430.

Wando High School, in Mt. Pleasant, SC, places a high value on its students who are provided the necessary resources to achieve individual success beyond high school with the support of Wando's Career Counseling Program. The goal is to help students make the most informed decisions possible about their future education and career choices.

With three full-time guidance-certified career counselors on staff dedicated to the goal of ensuring students graduate from high school

with viable, individualized career/college plans, along with a brand new career center, Wando High School has "put its money where its mouth is" in regard to student college and career preparedness. Using the most current resources available (Naviance, Hollands assessment, and the Myers Briggs Personality Inventory, to name a few), career counselors guide students through a variety of career and college activities through developmentally appropriate individual and group based counseling.

Beginning in the ninth grade, students engage in career exploration and research activities including college planning, career assessments, and academic goal-setting. Year-by-year, students update their goals and continue to build upon their body of career and college research. The capstone assessment of the Career Counseling Program at Wando is the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, which is given to seniors and used to connect to careers by personality profile. This system has resulted in students being better prepared as they leave high school to enter either post-secondary education or jobs. It is a win for the entire community.



## Recommendations: Creating a relevant career counseling system

**We envision a robust and economically viable career counseling system in American middle and high schools** that successfully bridges “school-to-career.” One that provides more exposure to career pathways in the workforce at all levels, including the concept of on- and off-ramps, so that students can be properly motivated and prepared to seek them. A career counseling system that enables awareness, pertinent information, and access to relevant experiences for students will help them make better-informed career pathway decisions that maximize and align individual desires, capabilities and workplace needs.

Ideally, this process should begin at the elementary school level (career awareness) and continue to the middle school level (talent, interest and skill assessment), but **career counseling gains preeminence at the middle and high school level** where a career major

and an individual career pathway plan can be formalized.

We understand, support and promote the fact that career counseling is a community responsibility and education and career/life planning is a life-long process. At the same time, we contend that our **immediate first step should be to focus on career counseling in American middle and high schools.** This is a crucial time to facilitate a student’s career journey – one that concentrates equally on the academic, interpersonal and career development needs and desires of each student.

**Benchmarks of success and best practices needed to enrich the middle and high school career counseling system are emerging** to help implement the changes needed.

## Recommendations: Creating a relevant career counseling system (cont.)



**School System Career counseling in American middle and high schools must become a high priority.** At some point – whether immediately after high school, after a two-year postsecondary program or a four-year or more college degree – all students will enter the workforce, even if only as an unemployment statistic. The preparation for this life-changing inevitability needs to be an outcome priority for middle and high schools as well as all postsecondary institutions. Career development is a specialized area and needs to have a plan, including metrics, and should be integrated into all areas of the curriculum. It is clear to us that at present career counselors, especially in high schools, are committed to helping all students navigate their learning pathways. This is understandable and laudable. However, career counselors often handle multiple responsibilities and cannot prioritize career pathways as an activity or set aside time for it with students.

A 2001 survey of high school counselors conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics found that only 8 percent saw their primary role as “to help students plan and prepare for their work after high school” and 51 percent ranked this as their lowest priority. We were unable to find more recent research to suggest that these findings would be much different today.<sup>6</sup> **Therefore, the roles and responsibilities of high school career counselors need to shift** to an increased focus on helping students identify and plan for their life’s work.

# To make progress in this direction, we recommend:

**1 All students be required to develop an education and career pathway plan**, approved by their parents or guardians, by the time they enter 9th grade. This should be done in conjunction with both their career counselor, and a caring adult – a teacher or mentor – who can help them think through their choices.

**2 Career counselors plan career development activities** for all students as well as career information activities for teachers.<sup>7</sup>

**3 A career counselor-to-student ratio of no greater than 1:250<sup>8</sup>** be established to help create more time in the career development process so that career counselors can assist students, teachers and parents with career development activities.<sup>9</sup>

**4 Career counselors receive training and informational resources** regarding postsecondary job markets and continuing/ higher education options for students consistent with their career pathway plans.<sup>10</sup>

**5 Integration of real-world workplace examples into classroom instruction** to assist students in career decision-making.<sup>11</sup> This will require extensive professional development for teachers, as well as the modification of curricula to incorporate career-relevant examples and information. For example: instead of just studying algebra as an abstract subject, students would learn how it helps solve problems in the real world, and in which careers it is most important.

**6 Community-level involvement** (employers, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, community based organizations, school districts, parents, policymakers and non-profit organizations) be established to strengthen community support for career counselors in local high schools.

There is a consensus by organizations representing career counselors (*ASCA The Role of the Professional School Counselor*, National Career Development Association, Kuder, Career Cruising) and amongst industry leaders (interviews conducted for this paper) that career counselors need to have dedicated and specialized training. Such training should focus on how to align career counseling with labor market data and industry standards.

We also maintain that career counselors should:

1. **Obtain a certification** that demonstrates competency in counseling, analysis of career pathway requirements, understanding of industry requirements and use of applicable technology.<sup>12</sup>
2. **Undertake a formal externship** with local industry partners at least once every three years.
3. **Maintain a roster of local business and industry contacts** and communicate (individually or as a group) with them at least once annually.<sup>13</sup>
4. **Be evaluated on their success** in transitioning the student through their individual graduation and career pathway plan.

Finally, additional recommendations for consideration put forth at a convening of education and industry leaders, counseling organizations and policymakers in December 2014 are deserving of further exploration and vetting:

1. Consider renaming career counselors to both help clarify the role and break stereotypes associated with career counseling as practiced in schools today.
2. Establish “career engagement centers” at the local level working closely with workforce development boards to identify ways to engage a large community of career development supporters such as parents, retired workers, etc.
3. Encourage state policy mandates for educator work externships.
4. Encourage a requirement that every student graduate with at least three (3) work-based and/or virtual-learning opportunities.
5. Encourage a requirement that every high school student graduate with an industry-recognized credential.
6. Encourage industry-led organizations to prioritize career development in their message to members and seek input from career counselors in developing them.

## Inspire Rock County

Inspire Rock County is sponsored by a collaboration between the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board and Rock County 5.0. It is a web-based career and readiness platform that leverages career development tools, social media elements and workforce data into a seamless system. Job creators, students, educators and parents can connect efficiently as well as effectively. The system, which is powered by a licensed product called Career Cruising, provides a customized information sharing and resource gathering environment. Anchored by an approved academic and/or career plan, the platform provides a direct linkage between employers and future employees. This pathway creates a comprehensive engagement vehicle to accelerate, develop or extend recruitment and/or preparation related activities to an increasingly higher level. The online platform improves the alignment of career readiness and preparation applications to match the needs of the local or regional business community, scales successful business and education programming to reach a wider or targeted audience, reduces the communication and engagement cycle time by removing participation barriers and nurtures future employees by connecting and mentoring with them early in their career development phases. As a result of the platform initiative, the Beloit school district in the County has obtained start-up funding from the Hendricks Family Foundation for a full-time career advocate who will work with students at Beloit Memorial High School to help create career pathways. The career advocate will help students with resumes, conduct mock interviews, explore potential careers suited for students, and make sure they are equipped to fill skilled labor openings in the Greater Beloit area.

## Competency Models

As the leader in manufacturing training and development, Tooling U-SME is known for having deep manufacturing content, and has utilized this expertise and partnered with industry experts to design the Competency Framework. With more than 60 new job role competency models, the Competency Framework, validated by industry, helps manufacturers achieve stronger performance from their workforce through structured competency use, leading to successful training and job progression as well as workforce assessment and planning.

The models could potentially provide career counselors with clear, concise career information to share with students as they make decisions about their future.

The models help manufacturers identify competency gaps accurately and initiate precise training to address those gaps, positively impacting production, quality, innovation and the ability to meet customer demands. Each job role competency model includes mapping to relevant training resources from Tooling U-SME's vast portfolio. The main differentiator is the focus on job roles and their associated competencies and behaviors.

## Business and Industry

Business and industry can be extremely productive and impactful when they actively participate to influence the enrichment of career counseling in American middle and high schools. Leo Reddy, Chairman and CEO of the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council, maintains that “The only force strong enough to move the education pendulum towards an educational system that responds more directly to the skill needs of industry is industry itself.”<sup>14</sup>

It is encouraging that some members of the business and industry community have become more actively engaged by supporting school career counselors in **providing the information and experiences needed for students to explore careers** and begin to follow their pathway.

In its report, *Managing the Talent Pipeline: A New Approach to Closing the Skills Gap*, The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Center for Education and Workforce outlines a plan for business and industry to play a new and expanded leadership role as the “end customers” of education and proactively organize and manage the talent supply chain partnerships, measures and incentives. ([www.talentsupplychain.org](http://www.talentsupplychain.org))

Business and Industry has increased data and information on occupational trends, industry standards, industry-recognized national certifications and job profiles, including level of education required. These elements can help educators, career counselors, policymakers and parents and guardians provide meaningful direction and support to student career pathway plans.

The increasing availability of national industry standards and certifications has provided a strong and effective roadmap for education to use as it works to align its programs to the needs of industry.

Business and industry has a critical role to play in increasing opportunities for work-based learning. These experiences can begin with such “light touch” activities as speaking at career days to offering workplace tours and job shadows. Ideally, as students enter high school, opportunities expand to internships, apprenticeships and actual jobs.

Research has consistently demonstrated these work experiences are the gold standard, both for preparing students for the workforce, as well as for helping employers identify promising potential employers.

## Government

The role of government at all levels in middle and high schools is to help local educators successfully implement changes needed to establish and maintain a career development and counseling system in their high schools.

For example, several states have already taken positive action by **enacting legislation that recognizes the role of the career counselor** and establishes policies that outline the activities they are expected to undertake as well as those they should not be required to perform.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, an increasing number of states have passed legislation or implemented policies requiring every high school student to have an individual graduation or career pathway plan.<sup>16</sup>

## Parents & Guardians

No career pathway planning can be successful if parents and guardians are not an integral part of the process. Parents need access to information and tools that enable them to learn about the possibilities in the workplace and also guide their child through the career pathway decision process. They need to understand the difference between “college readiness” and “life/work readiness.” Information such as required knowledge, education and experience for occupations as well as salary ranges and growth potential should be provided to all parents, just as school rules and information on college admissions is provided.

It is critical that parents/guardians meet annually with their child’s career counselor and share and discuss any challenges and concerns. Other ways to become engaged include helping children make independent decisions, encouraging exploration of all kinds of postsecondary education opportunities, involving yourself in your child’s future planning, encouraging job awareness and being flexible as the decision-making process evolves.<sup>17</sup>

## Inspire Illinois

Participation in tours and externships offered by local employers help school career guidance counselors, as well as teachers and administrators, experience the workplace and better understand the needs of employers – the knowledge and skills needed and the opportunities available. The Oklahoma Duncan Area Economic Development Foundation is an example of a workforce intermediary that is introducing the education community to local employers and helping them understand local industry through tours and a proliferation of information.

Inspire Illinois, is a culmination of the efforts of the Illinois Business Roundtable, Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University and the managing entities of the STEM Learning Exchanges. It is a robust collaborative initiative that creates bridges between industry and education and will help improve the workforce pipeline in the state for years to come. Across the state, over 925 schools and colleges are using the Career Cruising career planning system that powers Inspire Illinois. It is creating the perfect opportunity to develop successful partnerships between industry and education. Inspire Illinois is making these goals attainable by:

- Providing employers with mechanisms to develop talent from local human resources.
- Scaling existing work-based learning and career-readiness programs.
- Providing efficient points of contact between employers and the future workforce.
- Educating students, parents, educators and job seekers about employers' current and projected needs.

## Legislative Power

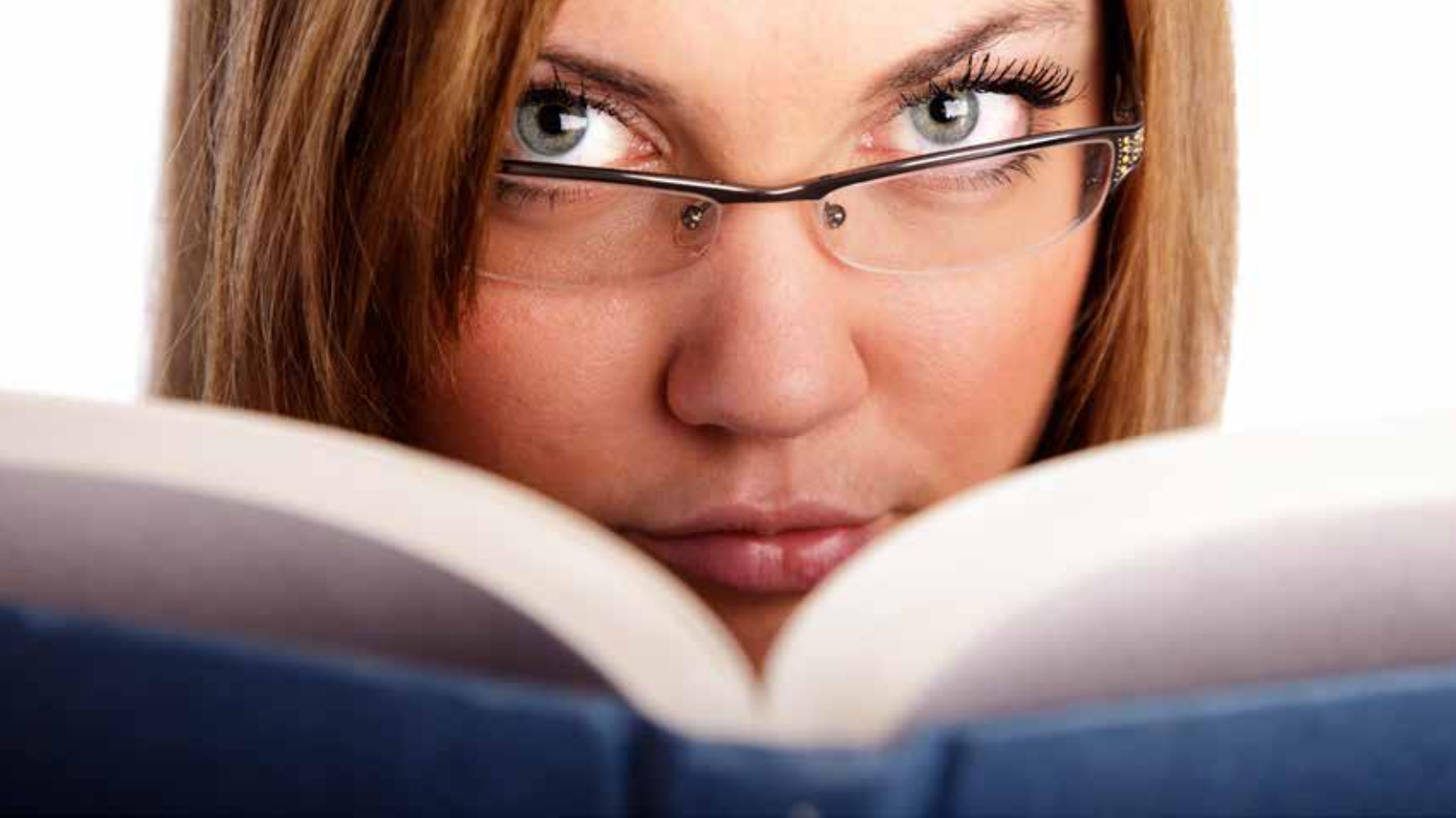
In 2009, the Virginia Board of Education included a provision to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia for each middle and high school student to have a plan of study that aligns to his/her academic and career goals. Beginning in middle school, all students must have an Academic and Career Plan that is reviewed before a student enters the ninth and eleventh grades. The provisions of Virginia House Bill 96 confirmed the implementation of this requirement in the 2013-2014 school year.

The South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA), *Personal Pathways to Success* is a program designed to better prepare South Carolinians by improving career, workforce and economic development through early career planning and an individualized curriculum. Students in grades 8-12 are required to meet annually for an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) conference with their counselor and a parent/parents to plan courses related to college and career readiness. Students have access to a Career Guidance Center and the Occupational Information System to:

- Take career assessments.
- Discover occupations and industries that best match personal interests.
- Explore jobs and industries, browse colleges and universities of interest.
- Learn the essentials of getting a job and keeping it (writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, professional behavior).

In addition, the Learning Express Library provides a collection of test-preparation tools, tutorials, and ebooks to prepare for college, a job, or to improve reading, writing, and math skills.

We applaud the leadership shown by legislators in these states and request others to follow suit with these and other innovative reforms to career counseling systems.



## Conclusion

Education and career/life planning is a lifelong process that requires all learners to be flexible and able to adapt to changes in themselves and the world around them. The rapid pace of change and the infusion of technology in all economic sectors continue to change the very nature of jobs. We will need a portfolio of resources many online and virtual - to keep pace and to be influential in the decisions and lives of the students. This new dynamic requires a new vision of career counseling in American middle and high schools if we are to meet this need. Career counseling is indeed a community responsibility that needs to be intentional and woven into the education system, with support and engagement from industry, government and parents among others.

This paper has identified the importance of enriching the career counseling system. Some of the recommendations to enrich this function have already been implemented in areas around the country. Others need more

consideration and action, including state and federal legislation and funding.

More in-depth analysis is needed of what is working and how to best to replicate these practices. Ultimately, we may need a national strategy and mindset to fully implement and support this new vision. But for now the career counselor in America's schools remains the key to success in beginning this quest.

As noted by Jeannie Bowden, Duncan (OK) Area Economic Development Foundation, "Don't wait until the process is all figured out. Get started and learn along the way." This paper exemplifies our agreement with this advice. We call for a national movement and dialogue to identify strategies and tactics to replicate best practices and develop new programs and services to enrich the career counseling system.

The time to take action is now. We owe it to the growth of our youth and American economic strength.



# References

- 1 Deloitte, "Manufacturing Opportunity Executive Summary." March 20, 2014
- 2 Carnevale, Anthony P., Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl. "Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020." Center on Education and the Workforce. (2013).
- 3 Individuals interviewed included Rich Feller, National Career Development Association; Bill Rayl, Jackson Area Manufacturers Association; Stephen Tucker, Partners for a Competitive Workforce; Jennie Bowden, Duncan Area Economic Development Foundation; Phil Jarvis, Career Cruising; and Tracey Puckering, Conexus Indiana.
- 4 A summary of the research focused on the connection between student learning and career development practices can be found in the paper, *The Contributions of Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs to the Career and College Readiness of all Students*, published by the Guidance and Career Development Division of the Association for Career and Technical Education.
- 5 Funding for career information resources is included in the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act under Section 118, "Occupational and Employment Information." Since 2005, no funding for implementation of Section 118 has been allocated. Funding for career guidance activities are allowable expenditures under the basic state grant funds.
- 6 In 2009, a study of school counseling programs found that about 48 percent of 9th-graders had counselors who reported that the counseling program's primary goal was helping students plan and prepare for postsecondary education, and 35 percent had counselors who reported that the primary goal was helping students improve their achievement in high school. See *Higher Education: Gaps in Access and Persistence Study*, National Center for Education Statistics, August 2012.
- 7 See *The Role of the Professional School Counselor*, American School Counselor Association. The career guidance counselor should be the hub of career guidance counseling activities in the school system. The school career guidance counseling core curriculum is delivered throughout the school's overall curriculum and is systematically presented by school career guidance counselors in collaboration with other professional educators in the classroom.
- 8 The American School Counselors Association recommends this ratio. See also ASCA National Model, <http://www.ascanationalmodel.org/>
- 9 Regulations and, if necessary, legislation should be passed in every state prohibiting the assignment of counselors to activities outside the scope of their job descriptions such as South Carolina EEDA legislation, Section 59-59-120 that states "School guidance counselors and career specialists shall limit their activities to guidance and counseling and may not perform administrative tasks." *The South Carolina Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program Model* states that examples of non-counseling activities include performing disciplinary actions, chairing student intervention team meetings, serving as a school testing coordinator, building the master schedule and supervising study halls and detention halls.
- 10 Fortunately many of these resources exist online including *Seek Skills Assessment*, *Motivational Assessment of Personal Potential (MAPP)*, *Kuder Journey*, *Career Builders*, *Career Cruising*, *America's Career InfoNet*, *O\*Net Online*, *CareerOne Stop*, *Monster.com*, *NationJob*, *CareerJet*, *Simply Hired*, [www.cdminternet.com](http://www.cdminternet.com), [www.youscience.com](http://www.youscience.com). A comprehensive list of resources can be found in A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessment Instruments by Chris Wood and Danica G. Hays at [http://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/product/1177/\\_PARENT/layout\\_products/false](http://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/product/1177/_PARENT/layout_products/false)
- 11 Examples of successful integration include High Tech High schools, P-TECH in New York City and National Academy Foundation programs implemented in over 555 schools.
- 12 *According to American School Counselors, Who Are School Counselors, 2008, while most systems required at least a Master Degree in school counseling, many do not have specialized education/training in career guidance counseling. Also, our survey of, and interviews with, industry leaders recommends specialized certification in career pathway planning for all school counselors.*
- 13 The subject of these communications can include industry curriculum guides, externships for counselors to experience the workplace, use of technology for information, videos and webinars for use by counselors, etc.
- 14 *Closing the Skills Gap*, Leo Reddy, Manufacturing Leadership Journal, October 2014.
- 15 The American School Counselor Association has outlined the role of the counselor as being one that develops comprehensive programs, focuses on student outcomes, student competencies and delivery that is both direct and indirect.
- 16 The Department of Labor navigation map on ILPs <http://www.dol.gov/odep/ilp/map/shows> 25 states with mandated ILPs and 11 with ILPs in use, but not mandated.
- 17 *Careers: Building Your Child's Future Together*, American School Counselors Association, July 2011

