

**WASHINGTON STATE
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
MEETING NO. 178
May 8, 2014**

CAREER CONNECTED LEARNING

Background

Since 2011, the Workforce Board has made youth employment and career readiness a critical component of its research and advocacy efforts. This focus informed a number of activities including: federal grant applications, legislative research and policy reports, legislative work session presentations, and policy and program initiatives.

Moving forward, Board staff has continued to identify existing best practices, building partnerships with those providing quality work-based and career-connected learning opportunities for students across the entire K-12 spectrum.

At the March 2014 regular meeting of the Workforce Board, three organizations presented their efforts in career-connected learning. Those organizations were the Pacific Education Institute, Wenatchee Learns, and Cleveland High School (Seattle). At the request of the Board, staff has arranged for more panel discussions about career-connected learning opportunities.

This tab provides a summary of the suggestions made by the March 2014 panelists on how the Workforce Board could support their efforts. This tab also includes briefs for two programs providing work-integrated and career-connected learning opportunities in our state. Representatives of these programs will present to the Board and offer suggestions for advancing their efforts at the state level.

Board Action Requested: For discussion only.

Previous suggestions for Workforce Board support

At the March 2014 Workforce Board meeting, the Pacific Education Institute, Wenatchee Learns, and Cleveland High School presented their efforts in work-integrated, career-connected learning. Each organization suggested efforts that could support program growth and success.

Common suggestions included:

- Ensure graduation requirements provide student choice and connection to field studies.
- Increase integration of science education in Career and Technical Education coursework.
- Increase professional development for educators and administrators in the area of STEM-based community partnerships.
- Increase project-based learning certification for community partners.
- Provide greater incentives for industry engagement in career-connected learning.
- Coordinate connections between students and industry professionals.
- Support local management of internships.
- Provide credit and recognition for alternative learning models.

Representatives from the Pacific Education Institute also suggested:

- Including environmental sustainability in state definitions of science instruction.

Wenatchee Learns representatives suggested:

- The Opportunity Internship Program, or other paid high school internships, be reinstated.

Pro Start

Pro Start is a nationwide, two-year hospitality skills training program offered through high schools that develop culinary techniques and management skills. Pro Start uses an industry-driven curriculum that links classroom learning with hands-on experience that enables students to develop a real world understanding of the hospitality industry. In addition, students acquire leadership and work-readiness skills that can contribute to long-term career success.

Pro Start, as part of a national program, annually reaches more than 1,500 Washington students in 29 high schools across the state. Pro Start students benefit from a comprehensive program that includes an industry-defined curriculum that covers the full range of learning necessary for success in the hospitality industry, from cooking to business and personnel management.

Content mastery is measured with nationally recognized program assessments. This gives Pro Start students the ability to compete for open hospitality positions throughout the U.S. Student performance on program assessments is a component of a larger package of experiences that, once completed, lead to a national certificate of achievement. Other components necessary to earn a certificate of achievement include: a 400 hour paid internship, an internship host evaluation, and coordination through an area high school.

In addition, industry mentors provide guidance and insight to students as they work towards completion. Mentors also advise classes, speak on industry-related topics, prepare students for team competitions, and use industry experience and knowledge to encourage student success.

Technology Access Foundation (TAF) Academy

The Technology Access Foundation (TAF) has provided technology based programs in the greater Seattle area since 1996. Services provided by TAF include consulting, after school programming, and STEM focused camps. Founders, Trish Millines Dziko, and Jill Hull Dziko started the foundation to create more opportunities for students of color to engage in STEM disciplines, better preparing them for college-level study and success in the workforce. In 2008, TAF brokered a partnership with the Federal Way School District to create a small school community that serves students in grades 6-12 in a STEM-focused learning environment, known as the TAF Academy.

TAF also provides consulting and professional development for educators and administrators and after-school enrichment programs. TAF provides expertise and guidance in teacher training, leadership development, student and teacher climate surveys, project-based learning, educational technologies, and other topics necessary for the creation of a STEM learning environment.

STEM Up is the TAF after-school academic-enrichment program for middle school students. STEM Up participants learn advanced technology relevant to STEM career paths, strengthen academic and life skills, participate in STEM knowledge competitive events, and gain early college readiness. Students learn robotics, video game design, programming code, web site building, digital graphic design, and more, as part of projects that require them to formulate and answer complex questions.