

# ENGAGE. CONNECT.

TIPS & TRENDS FROM THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR COLLEGE & CAREER TRANSITIONS

April 2017

## Greetings!

I don't use the word "stunned" very often. But I was actually stunned recently when I learned that someone had opened "[The Adulting School](#)" in Portland, ME, which teaches young adults the kinds of basic life skills they had somehow had missed up to that point, including managing your time, paying your bills, setting your own dentist appointments, hanging a picture, and following a recipe. (Interesting articles [here](#) and [here](#), or take their "Adulting IQ quiz" [here](#).)

Here at NC3T, we believe strongly in the need to prepare young people with the career and life skills they'll need after they leave school. And I have to wonder: How are there enough people growing up without even basic levels of self-sufficiency to populate a program like this?

To be clear, I'm not blaming schools: Most of the skills addressed by this program were historically taught in the home, and schools are already overloaded from their ever-expanding to-do lists coupled with their increasingly tight budgets. But the question remains: How have we as a society gotten to the point that adults need to take a class in following a recipe or paying their bills? And where do we go from here?

It is something we need to think about. Because if an employer hires someone with technical skills, but then finds out that person doesn't know how to manage his or her finances or manage his or her time, that employer will soon be looking for a replacement. And the future of our country - not to mention the future of those individual employers - is on the line, whether it's supposed to be our responsibility or not.

Best,

Brett

## The Pathways Sherpa

### [Engage.Connect Webcast Series](#)

Through my travels, consulting and participating in various education conferences, I've met some wonderful people who are doing some amazing work. We decided to start a webcast series highlighting important innovations in education relating to the pathways movement. Hearing what others are doing around the country can help us gain important insights and real life examples that we can use in our own state and local work; and just as important, it can also motivate us to continue our efforts to make the biggest possible difference for our youth and young adults that we serve.



In my first webcast, I interviewed Sonja Wright-McMurray, Associate Director for Career and Technical Education - Special Projects for The Arkansas Department of Career Education. She and her team are doing some fantastic work through their Arkansas Career Coaching Program. In this webcast, we explore Arkansas' innovative approach to getting college and career specialists into the schools to supplement the counseling department and help students develop plans and strategies for accessing postsecondary education with a solid career plan.

To ease the burden of a busy schedule, you can view/listen to these webcasts anytime day or night!

[Watch it here!](#)

And here's a sneak peak. In the next webcast we release, we'll learn about the exciting efforts of Illinois' High School District 214 to take work-based learning to scale. Stay tuned for the next installment!

Check out the [Pathway Sherpa website](#) and receive the first chapter of Hans' new book when you subscribe. Look for the orange starburst.

## NEW- Engage.Connect Webcast Series

*NC3T began conducting a series of webcasts highlighting important innovations in education relating to the pathways movement. To ease the burden of a busy schedule, you can view/listen to these webcasts anytime day or night!*

**Title:** Webcast: Arkansas Career Coaching Program

**Description:**

Hans Meeder, President of NC3T discusses The Arkansas Career Coaching Program with Sonja Wright-McMurray, Associate Director for Career and Technical Education - Special Projects for The Arkansas Department of Career Education. In this webcast, we explore Arkansas' innovative approach to getting college and career specialists into the schools to supplement the counseling department and help students develop plans and strategies for accessing postsecondary education with a solid career plan.

[Watch it here!](#)

## FYI - Information You Can Use

### [Fifteen Essential Skills They Don't Teach in College](#)

This is what I wish: that my daughters don't go to school. I offered my oldest the very prestigious "Altucher Fellowship." Never awarded before. Only awarded to her. Basically, it says, Do exactly what I tell you to do for a year and don't go to college. I'm not sure she's going to take it. Here's my ideal program: Spend some time each day learning the skills in the graphic. Watch one movie a day with me and discuss. Publish a book of essays by the end of the year. You can take time off to travel. And, by the way, this will be cheaper than you going to college. Her answer, begrudgingly: I'll think about it.

<http://www.cnb.com/>



### [As Construction Projects Heat Up, a Scramble for Apprentices Builds](#)

Nate Simms scooted into the crane operator's seat and began manipulating a panel of levers. Within a minute, and with some advice from an instructor, the junior at Monessen High School had guided the crane's load hook smoothly to the left and lowered it into a garbage can. Not bad for Nate's first time at the helm of a towering crane - or really any construction machinery. "It's really interesting, working with the machines," he said. On one hand, it was a cool field trip on Tuesday for students from Monessen City School District and Lawrence County Career & Technology Center touring the Western Pennsylvania Operating Engineers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Center. The 33,000-square-foot facility is on 240 remote acres of mostly wooded land near New Alexandria in Westmoreland County. But the larger picture involves a construction industry reaching deeper into schools to confront a regional workforce challenge as projects pick up at a pace unseen in recent years.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/>



### [Girls Draw Even With Boys in High School STEM Classes, but Still Lag in College and Careers](#)

High school engineering classrooms look a lot different than they did a few decades ago, and it's not just because of computers. Those classes now have girls. Lots of girls. Thanks to long-standing efforts by teachers, administrators and nonprofits, girls now make up about half the enrollment in high-school science and math classes. They are scoring almost identically to their male classmates on standardized tests, according to data compiled by the National Girls Collaborative Project, a nonprofit funded in part by the National Science Foundation that aims to increase girls' participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). But progress lags beyond the walls of high schools.

<https://edsources.org/>



### [Forget Immigrants. Technology is Killing Jobs](#)

The elevator attendant asking you what floor you want. The gas station service attendant wanting to know whether you would like your oil checked. The switchboard operator inquiring who you would like to call. These are sounds you do not hear anymore. Add to that the whirring sound of the seamstress, and soon, the voice of the non-kiosk cashier asking you for your fast food order, and the taxi driver in his not-yet driverless car asking for your destination. My local Lowe's store just got rid of most of its cashiers when it installed self-checkout stations. Whoever delivered our



daily paper was just put out of a job because they now sit in the regular mail. And now, on the grander scale, retail stores are beginning to close because of online shopping, a phenomenon some are calling, ominously, the "retail bubble." It is a trend for which there is no end in sight. While everyone is talking about how immigrants are taking our jobs, no one is talking about the real job-killer: technology.

<http://www.intellectuالتakeout.org/>

### **Measuring Career Readiness in State Accountability Systems: Where to Start**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) affords states the chance to strengthen their accountability systems by adopting multiple measures of school success rather than relying on an antiquated test-based system. Buoyed by this flexibility, state agencies across the country are exploring strategies to integrate career readiness indicators into their accountability systems.



While some states have made considerable progress in this arena, others are left wondering where do we start? To help states navigate this new territory, Education Strategy Group and the Council of Chief State School Officers convened a workgroup of accountability experts and tasked them with identifying and recommending robust metrics to measure career readiness. Their recommendations, released earlier this month in a brief titled Destination Known: Valuing College AND Career Readiness in State Accountability Systems, detail four possible measures of student career readiness.

<http://blog.careertech.org/>

### **Training Students to Outpace Automation**

Three young men in the back of a classroom at Henry Ford College stare intently at a machine that helps move panels along a conveyor belt. To the untrained eye, there doesn't appear to be much going on, at least initially. But after several moments of careful inspection, the students exchange a few ideas, make a couple of swift adjustments to the machine, and earn a nod of approval from an instructor standing nearby. The group has correctly identified an issue with a sensor that the teacher intentionally created to test the students' problem-solving prowess. Such scenes are becoming increasingly common at community colleges and technical schools here and across the country. As more jobs become automated, companies are looking for employees who can essentially manage the machines doing the work. Where an employee used to be responsible for, say, feeding a panel onto a conveyor belt, now that employee is increasingly expected to work with coworkers to solve any problems that arise when the machine doing the job malfunctions. That requires good communication, critical-thinking, and time-management skills, and schools that used to focus strictly on technical instruction like welding now find themselves adapting curriculum to include more of these so-called "soft skills."

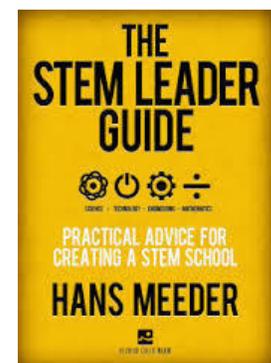


<https://www.theatlantic.com/>

## **Featured March Publication**

### **The STEM Leader Guide: Practical Advice For Creating a STEM School**

Although policy makers, foundations, and business sponsors all have a legitimate concern about STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education, the local education leader is the one who must set a course of action. The STEM Leader Guide, authored by Hans Meeder - a nationally recognized expert on STEM education and career technical education - provides a clear analysis of nine middle and high schools that utilize Project Lead The Way programs in engineering, technology, and biomedical science. The guide also offers practical, step-by-step guidance on how leaders can implement high quality STEM programs in their schools and build a transforming STEM culture.



Price: \$19.95 plus \$3 shipping / options to pay via check or PO

Purchase your copy today through our [new NC3T Bookstore](#).

## **Pathway-Related News and Events**



NC3T is happy to partner with Fritzwire, a daily newsletter publication of Public Private Action. We are all regular subscribers of the newsletter and would like to offer articles and notifications from Fritzwire that may be of interest

to our readers. For more information about Fritzwire please click the following link.  
<http://www.publicprivateaction.com/fritzwire>

From Fritzwire:

FRITZWIRE POSTS:

### **The collapse of academic standards**

by Chester E. Finn, Jr.

While ersatz "credit recovery" and grade inflation devalue the high school diploma by boosting graduation rates even as NAEP, PISA, PARCC, SAT, and sundry other measures show that no true gains are being made in student achievement, forces are at work to do essentially the same thing to the college diploma.

Observe the **new move** by CalState to do away with "remediation" upon entry to its institutions and instead to confer degree credit for what used to be the kinds of high-school-level content and skills that one had to master before gaining access to "credit-bearing" college courses.

The new term for these bridge classes for entering college students is "corequisite" and **California isn't the only place that's using them**. One study at CUNY-dealing with community colleges, not four-year institutions-says greater success was achieved when ill-prepared students were placed in "regular" college classes but given "extra support" than when they were shunted into "remediation." Perhaps so. Perhaps placement tests aren't the best way to determine who is actually prepared to succeed in "college level" work. But that's not the same as saying-as CalState seems to be saying-that anyone emerging from high school, regardless of what they did or didn't learn there, deserves entry into "regular" college classes....

<https://edexcellence.net/>

### **How to Prepare Your Students for College and Career**

by Marc Tucker

We say we want our high school students to be ready for college and work. But what does that mean? Do we mean that we want our high school graduates to be ready for the first year of the typical American college—which in global terms is really high school for many—or do we mean that we want them to be ready for what the top-performing countries mean by college, which is far more demanding?

And what about work? If by 'being ready for work' we mean being ready to enter the workforce after leaving high school, do we mean being ready for work that can be done by young people who have not mastered 8th grade algebra, cannot read text set to a 12th grade level of literacy and have a lot of trouble writing a literate, grammatically correct paragraph of any sort? Or are we talking about the skills possessed by graduates of the typical vocational high school in Singapore or Switzerland, young people whose vocational skills are built on reading, writing and mathematical skills far above those of most of our kids who are just entering the work force? .....

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/>

### **Promising Leadership Practices for Rapid School Improvement That Lasts**

By Dallas Hambrick Hitt & Coby V. Meyers, University of Virginia, Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education

This new report from the Center on School Turnaround presents promising practices for how to sustain the advances made in schools that have demonstrated rapid improvement. The practices presented here are derived from a comprehensive review of relevant literature, and from the experience of five school principals who not only facilitated school turnaround but also sustained considerable ongoing growth in student achievement for at least four years following their school's initial turnaround.

Achieving rapid school improvement - most commonly referred to as "school turnaround" - is a complex undertaking. Equally challenging is the work of sustaining and even expanding on a school's initial improvements so that the school can more fully become a vibrant learning organization.

There is much to learn from schools that demonstrate sustained improvement and those who lead them. But because there has not been a broad effort to identify and highlight such schools, their successes have heretofore yielded little practice-based guidance for other leaders who aspire to the same outcomes for the schools they lead. There is also much to learn from other fields, such as business, where research has focused on organizational turnaround.

This report, conceived to help fill a knowledge gap, presents promising practices for how to sustain the advances made in schools that have demonstrated rapid improvement. The promising practices presented here are derived from a comprehensive review of relevant literature, both within and beyond the field of education, and from the experience of five school principals who not only facilitated school turnaround but also catalyzed considerable ongoing growth in student

achievement for at least four years following their school's initial turnaround. The continued growth at these schools contrasts with the achievement plateaus or regressions that more commonly follow a school's turnaround.....

<http://centeronschoolturnaround.org/>

### **No, Congress Didn't Vote to Scrap ESSA: Answers to Your FAQs**

By Alyson Klein

Congress has **voted to get rid of the Obama administration's accountability regulations** for the Every Student Succeeds Act. And that's opened a bunch of questions about the state of play for the new education law.

We have answers-both to your wonky questions and the ones you were too embarrassed to ask.  
Is ESSA still on the books?

Yes. Lawmakers did NOT repeal the Every Student Succeeds Act, they just voted to repeal a particular set of regulations issued under that law, which is actually the latest version of a much older law, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

To repeat:...

<http://blogs.edweek.org/>

### **Revisiting the Path Forward: The State of School Counseling**

**The National Consortium for School Counseling and Postsecondary Success (NCSCPS)** has released a new report, **Revisiting The Path Forward: The State of School Counseling**, at the Reach Higher Convening in Tempe, Arizona. The report confirms that a national focus on college attainment combined with an emphasis on career pathways has affirmed the critical role of school counselors to assist in navigating the college and career process.

In response to the need for increasing school counseling support for college and career readiness, the Kresge Foundation charged the NCSCPS to survey the field and review existing scholarship to document a blueprint for the future of school counseling. The purpose of **Revisiting the Path Forward: The State of School Counseling** is to advance college and career counseling strategies that improve equitable outcomes and achievement for all students.

The report, which draws from research from the field as well as existing work, seeks to bring further understanding and recommendations to the ways school counselors can make an impact in young people's lives. With the growing recognition that the school counselor is central in achieving educational outcomes, school counselors still operate under severe constraints, juggle multiple roles, and are hampered by large student caseloads. Ideally, a repositioning of the counselor role as a college and career readiness leader must also be accompanied by attention to freeing counselors from unnecessary administrative work and other duties that detract from their core mission of designing and implementing student achievement interventions.

The recommendations serve as a guide to the field for improvements in school counselor preparation, credentialing, and professional development. The report recommends new areas for research, as well as ways to more effectively engage community-based providers, parents, and families,

### **On career readiness, put our measures where our mouth is**

by Matt Gandal and Ryan Reyna

"College and career readiness" has become a ubiquitous phrase in education policy circles. From state houses to school houses, everyone uses it. It's what we want for our students, regardless of zip code. Congress even used it as a key point of emphasis when it reauthorized ESEA.

But when it comes to the measures and metrics we use to judge school performance, reality doesn't match our rhetoric. State high school accountability systems have primarily been based on proficiency on state tests and high school graduation rates, rather than a more robust set of indicators. This is due, in part, to outdated federal requirements.

Where we have seen progress, it's been out of balance. Though we mention "college" and "career" readiness in the same breath, the latter is rarely measured very well, if at all. Only a third of states have any measure of career readiness in their high school rating system, and the quality of those measures varies widely. It's a little like the magicians Penn and Teller-both are important, but one is silent.

States have a real shot to get this right under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Not only does the law encourage states to include more robust measures of student success, it is becoming abundantly clear that the U.S. Department of Education is going to give states wide latitude in designing their accountability systems. This should embolden states to aim high, and put their measures where their mouths are.....

### ***About the National Center for College and Career Transitions (NC3T)***

K-12 education and the adult workforce are inextricably linked; and, as even the most casual observer understands, we currently face real challenges on both fronts. **NC3T** was created to help educators, policymakers and community leaders design integrated college and career pathway systems that provide students with purpose and direction, and provide them the knowledge and skills they'll need to secure their futures and the futures of the communities in which they live.

If you're interested in connecting students to the workforce in some way, including through out-of-school initiatives, targeted in-school channels (CTE, academy models), or developing a comprehensive community-wide or regional strategy that all partners can get behind, please contact Hans Meeder ([hans@NC3T.com](mailto:hans@NC3T.com)) or Brett Pawlowski ([brett@NC3T.com](mailto:brett@NC3T.com)) to talk further.

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