

# ENGAGE. CONNECT.

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

March 6, 2020

## Greetings!

When I do workshops on building industry partnerships, one of the first things I do is share a model definition so that everyone is on the same page. That definition is as follows:

***Business-Education Partnerships:*** Educators and businesspeople working together toward a shared goal designed to benefit students while at the same time, achieving goals unique to each partner.

It's not an official definition - I've never actually found a formal definition in use - but I think it pushes all the right buttons. It highlights the fact that partnerships should focus first and foremost on the students and that educators and businesspeople are equals, with each contributing and each getting benefits of their own.

Assumed, but not stated explicitly, is that you have some way to measure outcomes. If we're doing this to benefit students, how specifically will they benefit, and how can we prove that they did? If partners are achieving their own goals, what specifically are those goals, and how can we prove that we met them?

I'm an ardent believer in the value of partnerships, and [there's some great data out there](#) showing what they can do. But I also have to admit that, in the real world, evaluation is the exception rather than the rule. This failure to measure is the Achilles Heel of partnerships; it's also one of the most common reasons that partners leave (i.e., no provable value) and why educators don't see the value in investing their valuable time in order to make them happen.

If you want to see partnerships thrive in your school, district, or state, take the time needed to identify outcomes for all parties and figure out how you'll measure your impact. More than anything else you can do, evaluating your partnership work has the potential to revolutionize your efforts, benefiting you, your partners, and most importantly your students.

Best,

Brett

## The CCL In.Sight Blog

Have you read the latest posts from [The CCL In.Sight Blog](#)? Hans and Brett share thoughts and information on Career Connected Learning. Read a recent blog post:

### [What's Up \(or Down\) with Labor Force Participation?](#)

In this country, we measure employment according to two very different sets of numbers: The Unemployment Rate and the Labor Market Participation Rate. They may sound the same, but they're actually completely different.

The official "unemployment rate" measures the percent of people who are actively looking for work but can't find it. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national average unemployment rate was just 3.6 percent in January. Based on that, most people would believe that the economy is in great shape: Almost everyone is working. But that's hardly the case.



The key phrase is "actively looking for work." Because while the active workforce in the U.S. is almost 260 million people, there are about 95 million individuals who are "not in the labor force." That's almost 37% of all potential workers, leaving us with a Labor Market Participation Rate of just 63% (data also from the BLS).

[Read the full post here.](#)

And remember, if you want to receive these blog posts as they're published, just [subscribe to the blog](#) and we'll do the rest!

## Announcing the Release of CareerSmart Classrooms!

Later this month, NC3T will officially release **CareerSmart Classrooms**, a new set of resources to help educators across the school incorporate career content and workplace skills into the classroom!

With CareerSmart Classrooms, your staff can access an exciting set of new resources designed to help all teachers embrace career readiness while still effectively delivering their core content.

New Career Readiness requirements are asking classroom teachers to integrate career readiness into their classrooms. However, many who teach the "core academic subjects," along with teachers of academic electives like the arts and social sciences, might not have any practical steps they can take.

The CareerSmart Classrooms system from the National Center for College and Career Transitions (NC3T), offers a solution to this challenge. The CareerSmart Classrooms system provides a comprehensive set of resources, including career information sheets, lesson plans and activity plans; subscriptions will be available for individual educators, schools, and multi-school systems.

Stay tuned for our official rollout!



## FYI - Information You Can Use

### [Children's career ambitions are lagging behind the new world of work](#)

A major new international study highlights the mismatch between young people's career aspirations and jobs, and the impact this will have on the world economy. The OECD study Dream Jobs? Teenagers' Career Aspirations and the Future of Work is based on the latest PISA survey of 500,000 15-year-olds from 41 countries. While the world of work has undergone huge changes since the first PISA survey was carried out in 2000, the results show that the career expectations of young people have shifted little over this period. Surprisingly, they have actually narrowed. Now, more young people than before appear to be picking their dream job from among the most popular, traditional occupations, like teachers, lawyers or doctors. And their choices are heavily influenced by gender and social background. "Too many teenagers are ignoring or are unaware of new types of jobs that are emerging. The analysis suggests that, in many countries, young people's career aspirations increasingly bear little relation to actual labour market demand," says Andreas Schleicher, OECD's Director of Education and Skills.



[Full article: https://www.weforum.org/](https://www.weforum.org/)

### [How the skills gap is changing the degree path](#)

Pressed to respond to students' concerns about the rising cost of higher education and their sometimes-foggy understanding of how their learning translates into jobs, some colleges are reshaping the degree pathway. Their motivation for doing so is not only internal. Nontraditional education providers are proving to be stiff competition. Bootcamps prepare information technology and web-development workers in months, not years. And multinational firms now produce their own certificates that promise to be gateways to meaningful entry-level work. "While colleges don't need to become vocational programs, they will need to find new ways to meet the needs of students and the economy or they risk losing out on that huge future market for lifelong learning," David Soo, chief of staff at Jobs for the Future, a nonprofit that advocates for better links between education and the workforce, told Education Dive in an email. It partnered with Google to offer its IT certificate at 100 community colleges. Colleges are approaching this challenge in a variety of ways. Some are strengthening transfer pathways between two- and four-year schools, while others are bringing industry-recognized credentials into the curriculum sooner than they have in the past. In some cases, they are putting more weight on training experiences.



[Full article: https://www.educationdive.com/](https://www.educationdive.com/)

### [New Survey Highlights a Persistent Skills Gap: What Can States Do to Strengthen the Talent Pool?](#)

As the economy continues to change with digitalization and automation, the needs of the labor market will continue to change too. In 2019 the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation commissioned a study surveying 500 human resource (HR) professionals with hiring decision authority in their organizations. An overwhelming 74 percent of respondents said that a "skills gap" persists in the current U.S. labor and hiring economy. These employers cite three major challenges they face when hiring: candidates lacking the appropriate or necessary skills, candidates lacking previous relevant work experience and not having enough applicants. According to these HR professionals, addressing the skills gap and truly transforming the talent marketplace would require: 1) Greater upskilling initiatives within companies for existing employees. 2) More educational/Career Technical Education (CTE) programs to build talent pipelines. 3) Improving alignment between skills and competencies taught in educational/CTE programs and in-demand skills and competencies needed in the workforce. A study by JFF further highlights the skills gap and the challenges to solving the problem. The report, Making College Work for Students and the Economy, follows JFF's comprehensive policy agenda for addressing states' skilled workforce and talent development needs. The report examines a representative sample of 15 states to determine their progress toward adopting 15 policy recommendations.



**[Full article: http://blog.careertech.org/](http://blog.careertech.org/)**

### **A Superintendent's Commitment to Getting Students 'Future Ready'**

If Bryan Johnson wanted to illustrate quickly why he built a new system of career pathways in his school district, he could just point to Walkkia Clay. Walkkia is a 10th grade student in the health sciences "Future Ready Institute" at The Howard School in Chattanooga, Tenn., one of 28 career-oriented "school-within-a-school" programs that the Hamilton County district launched in high schools nearly two years ago. She studies core subjects through a healthcare lens, and gets real-world opportunities to practice what she's learning. She's already mastered CPR and learned how to apply tourniquets. And she recently got a taste of trauma care that's rare for a teenager: She played the role of a car-crash victim at a local hospital in a simulation for doctors working toward certification in advanced trauma care. Lying on a stretcher and made up with bloody gashes, Walkkia got to see emergency treatment procedures up close. "In 8th grade, my thinking [about a career] was all over the place," said Walkkia, who wants to be a forensic scientist. "Coming here gave me a clear vision, a straight shot, of what I wanted to do."



**[Full article: https://leaders.edweek.org/](https://leaders.edweek.org/)**

## **Everything You Need to Build Pathways Programs of Study**

If you're interested in developing individual Pathway Programs or integrated Pathways Systems across your school, district, or region, the Pathways System Design Suite is an indispensable resource for you.



Written by Hans Meeder, President of NC3T, this suite of resources includes:

- **The Pathways System Decision Guide** - This is a step-by-step guide to help your leadership team make the key decisions that lead to a world-class Career Pathways System. The Pathways System Decision Guide gives you the confidence that you and your team address all of the important design decisions that need to be made in creating a career pathways system, scaled to fit your needs.
- **The Pathway Program Design Guide** - This is a simple-to-follow guide for designing a Pathways Program or upgrading an existing CTE program into a Pathway Program. The Design Guide is built around 10 elements of high-quality careers and each element is directly linked to guidance from the Perkins Act.
- **The Pathways System Resource Kit** - The Pathways System Resource Kit is a collection of forms, templates, talking points, and fact sheets that your leadership team can draw upon as you work through the Decision Guide to design, develop, and promote your pathways initiative.

**[Visit the NC3T bookstore](#)** to order one or all of these essential tools!

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### ***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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