

Making the Connection between Education and the Labor Market: A Case for Work-Based Learning for High School Students

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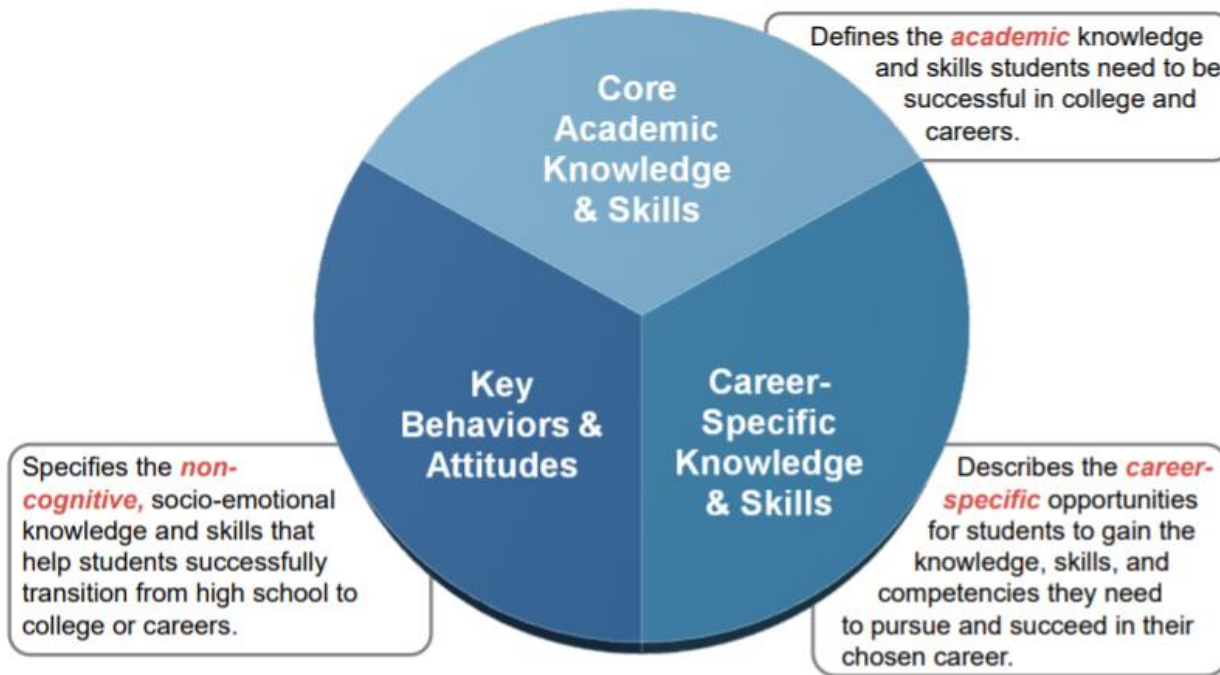
UED 71110: New York City Education after De Blasio

Professor David C. Bloomfield

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What are the problems?

- 1) **Nonintegrated definitions of College and Career Readiness reinforce a dichotomy of academic and non-academic pathways for students.**



College readiness = 75 on ELA Regents, and 80 on any Math Regents

To be college and career ready means to have the “skills to enroll in and pass credit bearing courses in 1st semester and/or embark on careers.”

Source: King Jr., J.B. (2013). College & career readiness [PowerPoint]., Retrieved 5, Dec 2021, from <http://usny.nysed.gov/docs/reform-agenda-hearing-testimony-nyc.pdf>

What are the problems? (cont.)

1) Nonintegrated definitions of College and Career Readiness reinforce a dichotomy of academic and non-academic pathways for students.

“The standards define the knowledge and skills students should gain throughout their K-12 education in order to graduate high school prepared to succeed in entry-level careers, introductory academic college courses, and workforce training programs” (**Core Standards**).

“A college education is more important than ever before. The Department of Education of New York City is here to ensure all students graduate from high school ready for college and the 21st-century workforce” (**NYC DOE**).

“Today, about a third of American students require remedial education when they enter college, and current college attainment rates are not keeping pace with our country's projected workforce needs” (**U.S. Education Department**).

What are the problems? (cont.)

1) **Nonintegrated definitions of College and Career Readiness reinforce a dichotomy of academic and non-academic pathways for students.**

HEAVY EMPHASIS on college readiness. Being college ready does not even imply college retention and graduation.

Career readiness is perceived as the non-academic route = **STIGMA**

Definitions MATTER.



What are the problems? (cont.)

2) High school students do not see the connection between school and work.

What is Work-Based Learning (WBL)?

“Authentic learning experiences that allow students to explore their career goals, abilities and interests while applying their academic and technical knowledge and skills in a real-world context” and is “planned and supervised by instructional staff in collaboration with business, industry, or community partners” (NYSED WBL Manual).

The purpose of WBL is not to foment division between non-college bound and college bound students. ALL high school students can benefit from WBL.

What should be done?

1) The New York State Education Department and New York City Department of Education must clearly articulate a unified and integrated definition of College and Career Readiness.

A model, but not THE model:

“To be college and career ready, all students in NY should have preparation in the three major skill areas of core academic skills, employability skills, and technical skills, which will allow them to transition seamlessly into a career and/or a postsecondary credentialing program (e.g., industry training, apprenticeship, licensure, community or four-year college). In order to make this happen, students should: develop a college and career plan with academic core requirements and course choices appropriate to the plans, explore and understand the academic and technical skill requirements for one of the 16 career clusters, possess the specific academic skills appropriate for and foundational to the career cluster be able to apply academic skills in situations aligned to an increasingly sophisticated workplace and society”

(CTE Technical Assistance Center of New York, 2012).

What should be done? (cont.)

2) Destigmatize Career Development Occupational Studies (CDOS) and Work-Based Learning (WBL) through a public media campaign.



Source: NYSED, Multiple Pathways.

When CDOS became an eligible pathway for high school graduation in lieu of a Regents exam through the “4+1 Pathway” option, it was recognized as a “relevant academic program.”

Why do career development and WBL programs have to be viewed as non-academic?

What should be done? (cont.)



3) Adopt Work-Based Learning (WBL) as a graduation requirement to ensure all high school students have exposure to real-world work experience.

Rhetoric is there:

- Mayor-elect Adams: “Birth to Profession” and “Cradle to Career”
- Potential Chancellor David C. Banks:
 - “Corporate and government partners must be leveraged to broaden student exposure opportunities. Our students will be what they see; it is much easier to imagine becoming an investment banker if you have actually met one. With additional resources, we can create model experiences that activate the power of possibility... These are the kinds of opportunities that inspire students by demystifying access to the industries that will shape their future” (New York Daily News, 2021).

Examples exist:

- Learning to Work (Transfer schools and YABCs)
- Transition and College Access Centers (IEPs)

Enrichment ≠ Essential

**ALL students need support
transitioning to life after HS.**

What should be done? (cont.)

3) Adopt Work-Based Learning (WBL) as a graduation requirement to ensure all high school students have exposure to real-world work experience.

What is needed?

- NYC DOE brokers robust partnerships with employers
 - City agencies, CBOs, CUNY, corporate partners

When are students going to do this?

- Student advisory courses, summer, after school, extended school days (Adams)

Budget

Preparing Students to be College- and Career-Ready – \$10M in FY22

As the City recovers from the pandemic, preparing students to graduate college- and career-ready is more important than ever. The Academic Recovery Plan will ensure every student, **whether heading to college or a career, is best prepared for the next step in life.** It makes multiple investments that benefit every high school student, including:

- Free, afterschool, personalized college counseling for every junior and senior.
- Universal College Financial Aid Guidance to help navigate the application process, available in multiple languages.
- 48 new remote AP college-prep courses.
- College Now restoration to serve 22,000 students from all high schools in dual enrollment, college-credit courses across 18 CUNY campuses.
- Immigrant Ambassador Programs across 30 high schools that match immigrant DOE students with college students to foster mentorship and early college awareness.
- Student Success Centers for 34 high schools to ensure post-grad plans for all students, and expanding the Postsecondary Readiness for ELLs Program (PREP), to be facilitated by a select group of school counselors and educators.

(Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Porter Announce Academic Recovery Plan for Pivotal School Year Ahead, July 2021).

Arguments against policy solution

- 1) **Career development programs are not rigorous enough and only track students into 'dead-end' jobs.**

Rigor: New York's extensive learning standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS).

- A lot of people don't know about them!

Tracking: Early signs in 4+CDOS pathway to graduation.

- The "4+1 Pathway" option awards high school students the same Regents diploma as any other student who passed the required 5 Regents examinations.
- Students have two options for how they can earn the CDOS credential to graduate either with an endorsement to their diploma or the "4+CDOS" pathway.
 - **WBL + career planning** OR pass an exam (without the WBL + career planning).

Dead-end jobs: May not be so dead-end.

Arguments against policy solution (cont.)

2) Creating seamless partnerships between the New York City Department of Education and employers is too challenging.

In 2019-2020, there were 71,237 students in 11th grade, and 68,701 students in 12th grade in NYC's public high schools (NYSED).

NYC can do it.

NYC Community Schools

- Fall of 2014, only 45 schools participated.
- Fall of 2021, there are **317 community schools in every school district in the city with more than 70 lead CBOs supporting over 150,000 students.**
- In fiscal year **2022, funding will be increased to expand community schools to a total of 406 schools.**

Arguments against policy solution (cont.)

2) Creating seamless partnerships between the New York City Department of Education and employers is too challenging.

If you can't coerce them, convince them!

Benefits for employers:

- Encourages involvement in the [career] curriculum development process
- Establishes a connection between industry professionals and education providers
- Develops good relationships between worksite mentors and students
- Provides potential skilled and motivated employees
- Offers an opportunity to provide community service

(NYSED WBL Manual).

Comparative lens: Northern and Western Europe

Approval and Implementation Process

- 1) Consistent messaging regarding College and Career Readiness from the New York State Education Department and New York City's Department of Education.**

Approval and Implementation Process (cont.)

2) Changing high school graduation requirements at the state level and/or starting an initiative at the city-level.

State level

- Regional meetings across state
- Blue ribbon commission gives final recommendations to the Board of Regents
- Propose amendments to the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education
 - Probably a phase-in, time-consuming

City-level

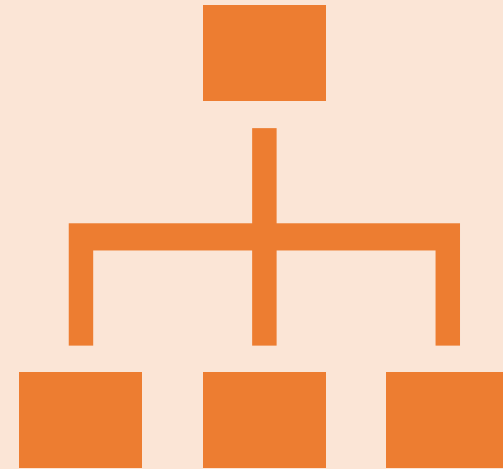
- Can't change graduation requirements for the district, but as the largest school district it has clout.
- Mayor's budget for education: flexibility in Academic Recovery Plan?

Obstacles to Approval and Implementation

1) The scope is too large!

BUT the stakes are high.

Implications: current review of current graduation requirements, pandemic - ripe for change, incoming administration's priorities.





Thank you for listening and
participating.