



Maximizing the Impact on ECAPs and Career Literacy Through Building Employer Partnerships

V. Scott Solberg, PhD
School of Education
Boston University



National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth

This Presentation Will:

- ▶ Introduce how work-based learning supports career literacy and employability skills
- ▶ Describe how work-based learning is connected to ECAPs.
- ▶ Describe the spectrum of work-based learning activities.
- ▶ Describe strategies for engaging employers to provide quality work-based learning activities.

2

Who We Are

Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)'s Center for Workforce Development

- ▶ National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth, a national technical assistance center
- ▶ Focus on needs of ALL youth, including youth with disabilities and other disconnected youth
 - Improve state and local policy
 - Strengthen workforce development service delivery
 - Improve competencies of youth service professionals
 - Engage youth and families
- ▶ Supported by Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor



3

Career Literacy

- ▶ Context – evolved from think tank of professionals from business, education, federal,
- ▶ Goal – est. shared national vision
- ▶ Definition – 3 skills:
 - Self-exploration
 - Career exploration and
 - Career planning



4

Skills Related to Career Literacy

- **Self Exploration** – Can you describe your Exploring their personal interests, skills, values and the ways in which they apply to the world of work?
- **Career Exploration** – Can you describe both the nature of your personal career opportunities and goals, the labor market outlook, and the education pathways needed to pursue them?
- **Career Planning** – Can you describe the range of academic and non-cognitive/soft/resiliency/etc skills you need to develop, your short-term goals for developing those skills and ***the work-based learning opportunities you are pursuing to further explore your career interests?***



5

What is an ECAP?

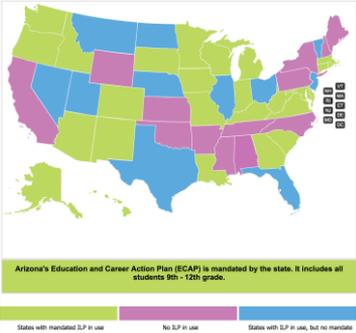
- ▶ States use different names – Student Success Plan in CT, Individual Career & Academic Plan in CO, many more
- ▶ 37 states and DC require or encourage ECAPs
- ▶ ECAPs typically begin in middle school
- ▶ Purposes:
 - To personalize learning
 - To develop college and career readiness
 - To prepare early to meet graduation requirements
- ▶ Long history of individualized plans in Special Education
- ▶ Not the same as an Individualized Education Program (IEP)



6

Which states require or encourage using ILPs?

ILP Policy Map: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/ilp/map/>



7

What is a Quality ECAP?

Quality ILP Activities

- ▶ A **document** consisting of:
 - (a) course taking and post-secondary plans aligned to career goals; and
 - (b) documentation of the range of college and career readiness skills that the student has developed.



- ▶ A **process** that enhances the relevance of school and out-of-school learning opportunities, and provides the student access to career development opportunities that involve building skills in self exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management.

8

Evidence Indicators of Becoming Career Literate

- Identify one or more careers of interest
- **Clearly describe plans to pursue the careers of interest**
- **Connect career plans to personal interests, skills & values**
- Identify how current courses relate to career plan
- **Articulate skill & entry requirements for careers**
- **Engage in additional learning opportunities**
- Describe their needed skills & future development plan

Solberg et al., (2013).

9

Workplace Skills (Sample)

- ▶ collecting and organizing information | computer technology | critical thinking | equipment operation | interacting with children | interacting with customers and clients | leadership | mathematics and numeric analysis |
- ▶ problem solving | project management |
- ▶ research and analysis | teaching and instructing | time management |
- ▶ understanding all aspects of the industry |



13

MA WBL Plan in Action

- ▶ Fillable form
- ▶ Reviewed and signed off with Supervisor 2 X per year



14

2 **Section 2: Specific Workplace and Career Skills**
Instructions: List specific Workplace and Career Skills, concentrating on skills that are most relevant to this work experience. You may include a mixture of broad, higher order "21st Century" career skills such as those listed below, occupation-specific skills, and skills related to career exploration and learning. Select from the list or write in additional skills. For each of the skills you select, please briefly describe related job tasks and performance goals. These skills, along with the Foundation Skills in Section 1, will be used in the Performance Evaluation in Section 3.

Examples of Career Skills Collecting and Organizing Information Computer Technology Creativity Critical Thinking Customer Service Equipment Operation Interacting with Customers or Clients Leadership	Mathematics and Numeric Analysis Problem Solving Project Management Reading Research and Analysis Teaching and Instructing Time Management Writing	You may include skills related to career exploration and learning such as: Active Learning Career Awareness Journal Writing Understanding All Aspects of the Industry Environmental Awareness Media Literacy And More	You may include OCCUPATION SPECIFIC SKILLS such as: Accounting Skills Animal Care Blueprint Reading Editing Food Safety Landscaping Photography And More
---	---	--	--

*** OR IDENTIFY YOUR OWN SPECIFIC WORKPLACE SKILLS**

Specific Workplace and Career Skills	Description of the Skill and Related Tasks
Skill #1: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
Skill #2: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	



15

Engaging Employers

- ▶ Federal government increasing employment opportunities of individuals with disabilities
- ▶ Est. Community discourse
 - Communication materials
 - Enlist Boundary Spanner/Champions
- ▶ Engaging Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Using technology opportunities
 - Online career information systems
 - Boston system



19

CIS-Connection is a web-based tool that connects schools to businesses and businesses to schools. It links business information and employment opportunities to students and job seekers using the CIS for Internet website. It also provides a database for volunteers from local businesses who are interested in supporting educational activities and career-related learning.

- Benefits of CIS-Connection**
- Educates students and job seekers about the scope of jobs available.
 - Generates interest in local industries.
 - Provides the appropriate links to businesses and their websites while one engages in career planning.
 - Assists students and job seekers in the development of career plans within the context of actual employer expectations.
 - Provides an easy mechanism to link business people that are willing to volunteer with teachers/school personnel that are seeking volunteers.
 - Helps organize and track all business-related, school-to-career activities in a local area.



20



Contact Us

V. Scott Solberg
ssolberg@bu.edu



Curtis Richards
richardsc@iel.org



Mindy Larson
 Ph. 202.822.8405 Ext. 169
LarsonM@iel.org

NCWD/Youth: www.ncwd-youth.info
 Funded by ODEP, U.S. DOL: www.dol.gov/odep