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ABSTRACT

The curriculum report describes the Experience-Based Career Education project (EBCE) that is attempting to foster productive relationships between school and community and to meet the personal and occupational needs of high school students. The four project centers are: Far West School (Oakland, California), the Academy for Career Education (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Appalachia Educational Laboratory (Charleston, West Virginia), and Community Experiences for Career Education (Tigard, Oregon). The programs at the project centers are characterized by: individualized, alternate plans of full-time high school training; reliance on community involvement; work experience for the students; the provision of career information; and the development of entry-level skills. Each program is operated and monitored by Regional Educational Laboratory. Demographic statistics on each site are presented. Although broad guidelines have been developed, each program is free to develop diverse approaches, activities, and local resources. Descriptions of each program cover: the learning resources; curriculum organization (projects); and the specific goals of each. Evaluation focuses on such questions as: the efficacy of orientation sessions; the role of employers; objectives; and student achievement and competencies. (JB)

Research
Ideas
Practice

CURRICULUM **Report**

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EBCE: A Design for Career Education

A Different Look

If you were a 12th grader in Tigard, Ore., and enrolled in an alternative study plan called Community Experiences for Career Education--abbreviated $(CE)_2$--these are the graduation requirements you would be working to satisfy in order to qualify for a Tigard High School diploma:

- Life Skills: Each student must complete two projects per program year in each of the Life Skills areas with the exception of the competencies.
- Competencies: All seniors must complete at least seven of the 13 competencies. Students who enter as juniors must complete all of the competencies by the end of two years.
- Basic Skills: All student projects must include fundamental and applied skill activities in reading, mathematics, communication.
- Employer Learning Sites: Each student must complete at least five exploration-level placements per program year. In addition, each student must spend two-thirds of a program year on learning-level placements.

The required "competencies" deserve special notice. Each of the 13 deals with a need or activity with which every adult must be able to cope effectively if he or she is to function adequately in everyday living. There are two other noteworthy features of these competencies: (1) all students have to reach a standard level of performance on each, with that level defined by a very specific set of skills, and (2) the achievement of that performance level is checked out by a community specialist in that activity.

To illustrate, here are three of the 13 together with the certifying "authority" in each instance.

- ✓ Maintain a checking account in good order. . . . . (Local bank official)
- ✓ Respond appropriately to fire, police, and physical health emergencies . . . . . (Fire, police officers)
- ✓ File state and federal income taxes. . . . . .(Tax office employees)

A typical school day for $(CE)_2$ students at Tigard High looks like this:

8:30 Arrive at learning center

8:35 Begin Life Skills project on drug dependence. Start rough draft of opinion survey on drug use among teenagers

10:15 Seminar with seven other students on the competency, "Transact business on a credit basis"

11:00 Write in journal

11:30 Work on math skills, using computer terminal for drill

12:15 Sack lunch and (Wednesday) weekly student meeting at learning center

12:45 Take $(CE)_2$ van to employer site

1:15 Complete exploration-level package at Georgia-Pacific

4:30 Take van back to Tigard High School

4:45 Take THS activity bus home

A Four-Program Project

$(CE)_2$ is one of four programs which together make up the Experience-Based Career Education project (EBCE), a research/demonstration undertaking sponsored by the Career Education unit of the National Institute of Education as part of its continuing search for ways by which the worlds of education and work can be brought closer together.

True, there are several time-tested school programs--cooperative education, for instance--which continue to provide productive and constructive relationships between school and community. Even so, there is no denying that the full potential of such collaboration has yet to be realized and, of greater consequence, that the personal and occupational needs of a majority of young people remain substantially untouched by these established patterns of school/community cooperation.

EBCE is endeavoring to create and validate means whereby these two worrisome deficiencies in the current educational scene may be reduced, if not entirely eliminated.

In comparison with most other national R & D operations, EBCE is rather small in terms of the number of people involved and the number of demonstration sites. Furthermore, the project is now in only its third operational year with a comprehensive evaluation of its outcomes still to be completed. Nonetheless, the results already at hand justify alerting teachers and administrators to this different approach to career education now rather than waiting another year or so until the last sigma has been computed and double checked.

The programs at the four project centers are by no means alike in all respects, as will be shown later. However, the four are tied together by a common set of purposes and hypotheses. They can be readily inferred from a general characterization of the project, which states:

- EBCE is a comprehensive, individualized, alternate plan of full-time learning for high school youth;
- It relies on the active participation of the community to provide students with direct, non-paid learning experiences in real-life settings as preparation for careers and life in the broadest sense;

→ It takes the subjects students customarily study along with many new ingredients--about people, jobs, self, the way communities function, to name a few--and sends students out into the community to master these through first-hand contacts rather than in the more usual in-school context; and

→ Each of the four EBCE programs has been designed to offer something worthwhile and attractive to a wide range of students--for example,

those who have only a vague notion of available career options and want to do some exploring through direct experience,

college-bound young people who want to test out some tentative career choices,

others who want some entry-level skills either for moving directly into full-time employment or as a basis for specialized training.

One other characteristic common to the four programs helps to explain both the similarities and the differences among the four: The program at each site has been designed and now is being operated and monitored by a Regional Educational Laboratory, though in each instance the local school system is a responsible partner in the venture. Here are a few basic statistics about the four sites, starting with names and addresses of the labs and of the EBCE project directors.

★ (AEL) Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Harold Henderson, director
Box 1348, Charleston, W.Va. 25325

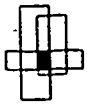
★ (RBS) Research for Better Schools, Inc., Louis Maguire, director
1700 Market St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

★ (FWL) Far West Laboratory for Educational R & D, Robert Peterson, director
1855 Folsom St., San Francisco, Calif. 94103 (EBCE program in Oakland)

★ (NWREL) Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Rex Hagans, director
710 S.W. Second Ave., Portland, Ore. 97204 (EBCE program in Tigard)

	Laboratory Site			
	AEL	FWL	NWREL	RBS
Number of students (approx.)	120	110	60	275
Grade levels	11-12	10-12	11-12	9-12
No. of employers (approx.)	100	140	125	100
Graduates, '73 & '74	130	32	24	72
Geographic location	urban/rural	urban	suburban	inner city
Student characteristics	predominantly white	ethnically mixed	all white	predominantly black

Nearly 260 students have completed EBCE programs with high school diplomas. Of the 1973 graduates, about 50 percent are enrolled in college, 15 percent are going to college and working part-time, and the remaining 35 percent are working full-time. The career plans of the 1974 graduates are similar to the actual experiences of the first-year graduates.



Not Identical Quadruplets

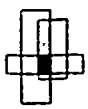
While the four laboratories were given the same set of guidelines for developing their programs, they were left otherwise free to build educational enterprises that seemed most appropriate to local resources and the characteristics of local young people. Consequently, some significant differences in approach have emerged.

(a) In one program, students continue as essentially regular members of their original high schools, while students at the three other EBCE programs operate out of external learning centers.

(b) Instruction in basic skills ranges from the use of a programed sequence of learning materials to informal on-the-job processes, sometimes supplemented by tutorial assistance; and

(c) Counseling in two cases has been provided as a separate service, while at the other two sites counseling has been made an integral element of the instructional program.

To generalize, while the four programs in overall configuration and carriage obviously belong to the same family, they are sufficiently distinctive in design and operation to be independently valuable for research purposes; also to provide several options for schools and communities that may wish to provide EBCE-type opportunities for their young people.



Sampling the Action

It's obviously not possible in these few pages to describe fully the working of any one of the four EBCE pilot programs. But the selected-bits-and-pieces approach can at least give the reader some sense of what is being attempted. To this end, several excerpts--sometimes abridged or paraphrased--from the descriptive materials prepared by each of the programs have been assembled for presentation here.

(FWL) FAR WEST SCHOOL, Oakland, Calif.

Learning Resources. There are three kinds of primary learning resources available to students in the Far West curriculum and a fourth kind that is made use of when and if needed.

Resource Persons (RPs): Volunteer adults in various work settings, willing to share their knowledge, skills, and experience with an interested student in a one-to-one relationship. The relationship as to scope, objectives, and duration is negotiable. The learning opportunities occur primarily at the RP's place of employment. They offer specialized and in-depth career exploration.

Resource Organizations (ROs): Organizations that offer small-group activities at employer locations, activities usually consisting of preplanned sequences of orientation briefings, observation, study of operations, and hands-on experience.

Community Resources (CRs): Resources available to the Oakland public, which offer opportunities for individual and small-group exploration and study. Activities at such locations are designed to supplement a student's learning experiences with ROs and RPs and to broaden his perspective of the community beyond those that can be called economic in the strictest sense.

Supplementary Resources: Experience-based resources need to be supplemented from time to time to enable students to obtain subject-matter or instructional assistance not readily available to them in the community. These extensions may consist of such activities as working with a tutor on basic skills, taking a specific course required for college entrance, or taking work at a community college.

Curriculum Organization. These resources are organized and used through two interrelated mechanisms: the package and the project.

The Packages: A package brings together the RPs, the ROs, and the CRs that provide learning activities serving a particular set of student outcomes related to a "subject area" and the careers associated with it. The focus of a package may be a specific career area--for example, commerce or communications--or it may be a more general competence or subject field (the natural sciences, for instance). We have found that while students are curious about what adults actually do in their daily lives, many students do not find career exploration in itself the stuff of which vital learning programs are made.

Student Projects: The project is the school's mechanism for individualization. Except for workshops or tutorials or courses taken in Oakland public schools, each student's learning program is planned, focused, and carried out in terms of projects.

Students work on projects they plan with one of the school's three Learning Coordinators. They serve in combination instructor/counselor roles and, with students, decide what type and amount of credit can be obtained through the successful completion of the project. Students usually complete at least four projects each semester. Project activity takes place at three levels:

(1) Orientation--The student becomes initially acquainted with the resource person and/or organization to find out what can be learned from these sources and whether or not he wants to go ahead with the contact. Usually, one to three half-days are used in this way.

(2) Exploration--The purpose is to provide the student with sufficient experience in an employer organization or career/subject area to analyze it in relation to his own interests, abilities, and values. Five to 10 half-days, on the average, will be used for exploration.

(3) Investigation--The student, through personal on-site involvement in performing productive tasks (may be for pay) and numerous other activities, can obtain sufficient experience in an organization or career-subject area to develop generally useful knowledge and competences. Work at this level will take 20 or more half-days.

Credit is given on a pass/fail basis; no letter grades are assigned except in special cases where colleges insist.

(RBS) The ACADEMY for CAREER EDUCATION, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Academy for Career Education has three major operating centers or programs: the Career Development Program, the Career Guidance Program, and the Academic Resource Center. The three are, of course, closely interrelated and interdependent.

Career Development Program. This is the heart of the Academy. All the learning a student does in this part of the Academy goes on outside the school in association with individuals and organizations in the community. The overall purpose of this part of the academy's operation is to facilitate the emergence within each student of a rational, reality-tested career plan. It has two primary components: Career Exploration, and Career Specialization.

Career Exploration is composed of a number of courses based on inclusive occupational areas or clusters, such as communications and health. During the Exploration cycle, a student ordinarily will be enrolled in one of these courses, which meets an entire day each week.

Performance objectives students are expected to achieve in this component of the Academy's curriculum include items like:

(1) To list those careers or job families of interest in the cluster being explored, the qualifications for each, and the skills or aptitudes necessary for successful job maintenance;

(2) To understand for those careers of interest in the cluster the rights and the responsibilities of employees; and

(3) To identify work-related academic skills, basic job-acquisition skills, and basic job-maintenance skills.

Career Specialization gives students a way of further testing their interests in a particular area and a way to begin to acquire the special competences needed for success in that area. Each Specialization is set by the student in consultation with a community participant and, consequently, individual Specializations vary from student to student.

Among the expected outcomes of student Specialization experiences are,

(1) The student defines and develops his program of activities, the objectives of the specialization, and criteria for evaluating his performance;

(2) The student analyzes and reports on the implications of the specialization experience for his own career planning.

Career Guidance Program. This unit within the Academy has as its primary goals assisting students (a) to develop self-appraisal skills, (b) to develop decision-making skills, and (c) to become more responsible for their own actions.

Academic Resource Center (ARC). This has been planned to complement and supplement student experiences at employer sites, especially with respect to the mastery of academic skills in English and mathematics. The supplementing can range from tutorial help for students who e progress in, say, language arts is lagging seriously to those who are ready for advanced work related to their career or educational plans.

Students spend from two to seven hours a week at the Center, depending on their needs and rates of progress on the study sequences.

The Academy for Career Education is not a separate school, as is the case with the three other pilot programs. Students take a special series of courses and activities, but they retain their membership in their home high school student community and are eligible to participate in all student activities there.

(AEL) APPALACHIA EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, Charleston, W.Va.

To give some insight into the way the AEL program works with young people, parts of a case study of one girl who, it appears, was "saved" by the program are reproduced here.

Because of some intimate personal problems, Beth had left school in Charleston at the end of her sophomore year, and lived with relatives in Kentucky for a year, where her school experiences were pretty dismal. She came back to Charleston to start her senior year, but with little hope that the schooling would be worthwhile and considered dropping out, but did not.

She applied for admission to the EBCE program and was accepted, but the start was shaky; as far as she was concerned, EBCE would have to prove itself.

Diagnostic tests revealed an interest in working with children, and her first placement was in the pediatric ward of a local hospital, where she worked for three weeks. Friction developed between Beth and the RN who was her resource person, largely because Beth wanted to do more to help the sick children than her training (lack of) allowed her to. Conferences with her learning coordinator helped to see why she had not been able to participate more actively in the life of the hospital.

Another interest area revealed on Beth's entrance tests had been arts and crafts, so a placement was arranged for her with Mountain Artisans, a cooperative venture of Appalachian craftsmen to sell their work in northern cities. Beth satisfied a math requirement by working with the group's bookkeeper, where she also learned the rudiments of double entry bookkeeping. But what interested Beth most was the relationship she developed with a 76-year old mountain woman, who introduced her to many of her contemporaries and their activities. From the interest this contact stimulated, Beth did research for a report on the role that activities like quilting had traditionally played in the community life of West Virginia.

At the end of Beth's five-week placement with the Artisans, her learning coordinator suggested that together they look for a placement that would combine her interests in children and in arts and crafts, and so she began work at a local art gallery that was displaying works by artists of the region. In her first days at the gallery she discovered a neighboring children's museum called Sunrise, to which she was immediately attracted. At Beth's urging, the museum's director was contacted and arrangements were made for her to have a placement there and for the museum director to be her resource person.

Beth really found herself at home at Sunrise and became involved in all aspects of the museum program. She taught arts and crafts to small children; she scoured the community for examples of children's art; she began working toward

an English credit by writing a report on the similarities of children's art and the traditional folk art of the Appalachian mountaineers. She also worked on a world cultures credit through the museum's "suitcase loan" program, where she was involved in setting up and coordinating displays from various foreign countries.

Her learning coordinator was surprised to discover that she had voluntarily picked up the study of Spanish again, which she had taken in the 9th and 10th grades so she could write letters to a children's museum in El Salvador.

The staff of Sunrise developed a high regard for Beth's ability and asked that she be allowed to accompany them to New York City for a series of seminars on museum programs. She spent her free time there touring the city's museums, and was especially entranced by the junior museum at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where she learned how they set up displays and arranged educational activities for children of that city. The journal she kept on the trip was accepted as partial fulfillment of her communication skills requirement.

The Appalachia Educational Lab had set a maximum of 13 weeks for any one placement, so soon after her return from New York Beth had to go on to other community sites. But she now was really looking forward to graduation because Sunrise had offered her a full-time job beginning in June. She wasn't sure that she would spend the rest of her life in museum work, but she knew she wanted to begin there.

→ (NWREL) COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES FOR CAREER EDUCATION, Tigard, Ore.

Once $(CE)_2$ students in Tigard have become acclimated to EBCE ways, they are largely responsible for designing their own learning projects. But to introduce boys and girls to the program and to hasten the acclimatizing, a few staff-designed projects are assigned. Here are excerpts from one of these in the science area within the Life Skills division of the curriculum.

"This project is designed," the introduction reads, "to acquaint you with the scientific method of problem-solving. You will look at your personal traits and discover how well they coincide with those traits necessary for scientific investigation."

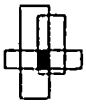
Activity 1: "Define Science" calls on the student to do some reading, to work up his own definition of terms used in science, and to observe the use of the scientific method at two or more employer sites.

Learning Tasks	Products or Outcomes
Activity 2: Learn how to use cause/effect reasoning to explain your point of view on an issue,	
(a) By reading, become familiar with the concept of cause/effect reasoning	(a) Draw lines, make comments, etc. to show the relationships
(b) Identify in two recent articles the use of cause/effect reasoning	(b) Collage/montage illustrating the cause/effect relationship
(c) On two employer sites of your choice identify four examples of cause/effect relationships	(c) Discussion with employer instructor of the identified relationships

Activity 3: Using your employer site, identify "precision," "accuracy," and "self-discipline" as traits basic to scientific methodology and discover in yourself the extent to which these traits exist.

Learning Tasks	Products or Outcomes
Activity 4: Use the scientific method	
(a) Broaden your concept of what topics are legitimate sources of scientific inquiry. Brainstorm 10 areas on the employer site which could be science areas	(a) A creative list of at least ten areas, evaluated on originality by employer instructor and your program learning manager
(b) On the employer site select a problem and apply the scientific method to it. Document your results	(b) A clear statement of the problem selected and the step-by-step process used to solve it. (Punctuation, spelling, grammar, and sentence construction will also be evaluated)
(c) Make a personal evaluation of your efforts to apply the scientific method to your problem-solving	(c) Prepare a list of skills that helped you in the activity, and a list of those you would need to develop if you were to continue this kind of work

Learning Tasks	Products or Outcomes
Activity 5: Become acquainted with a community resource which is (a) an example of advancing science and technology or (b) an agency which deals with environmental and/or ecology issues Select a community site, make arrangements to visit it, and record the issues it deals with or the products it produces and examples of the use of the scientific method	In consultation with your learning manager agree on a format for presenting what you have learned. You may want to use such forms as pictures, video tape, audio tape interview, collage, a paper

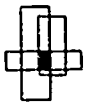


Taking Cost into Account

Since one of the purposes of the EBCE pilot programs is to develop and test out a set of alternative educational patterns for use by secondary schools everywhere, it is reasonable to ask whether it now seems likely that a school will be able to introduce an EBCE-type program at costs comparable to the costs of its regular curriculum, assuming the final evaluation substantiates the present optimistic but tentative judgment of the project's worth.

Because of the research and development costs which are appropriate to the project, current per pupil costs are substantially higher than they would be for the conduct of the same kind of program in the usual school context, where such activities would probably be minimal. There is evidence now at hand to back up this expectation: during the present school year, per pupil costs at three of the EBCE centers range from $2400 to $3400, but at the fourth center, which makes greater use of on-going school resources than the other three do, the projected per pupil cost is only $1300.

It is reasonable to say, then, that cost should not be a barrier to the adoption of EBCE ideas and practices in schools of all kinds and sizes.



But Does It Really Work?

Evaluation has been an integral and influential aspect of EBCE programs since their inception in 1972. Each program's internal evaluation staff is constantly examining the particulars of its operation, asking questions like: (1) Do orientation sessions for new students really provide them with an adequate foundation for making the individual decisions that lie ahead? and (2) Do employers fully understand their roles and responsibilities? Equally important are the questions they raise about the extent to which students are reaching program objectives in career awareness, interpersonal competences, and basic skills.

Results from two years of internal evaluation are promising: Students appear to be reaching their objectives; the enthusiasm and participation of parents, employers, and other community resource people remain at a high level: and the project staff members continue to discover new and effective ways of helping adolescents move toward maturity. The data available permit a few generalizations.

With respect to students:

- Although growth in basic skills is important, it was not an initial goal of EBCE for students to increase basic skills dramatically or to attain greater growth than random samples of local high school students. Data from standardized tests show that in three of the four programs there was statistically significant growth in reading and math subtests.

- Nine out of 10 EBCE students reported that the program has been particularly effective in helping them acquire a heightened awareness of career opportunities.

- About 85 percent of the young people in the four programs felt that EBCE had been especially effective in teaching them to assume responsibility for themselves and to work with others.

- Comparing their EBCE experiences with those they had had in the regular school program, over 90 percent of the students in great numbers felt that in EBCE they were more highly motivated to learn and that the opportunities to learn were greater. Dropout rates in most cases were lower among EBCE students than among other high school students and their attendance patterns were better than they had been the previous year.

With respect to parents:

Parental reactions have been very positive. For instance,

- Ninety percent said they had observed positive changes in their children that they felt resulted from the programs,

- Ninety percent also felt that the program was particularly effective in teaching students to communicate with others in a mature way and to assume responsibility for themselves.

With respect to employers and other community resources:

- Employers and other community resource persons--all of whom contribute time, equipment, and facilities to EBCE free of charge--are also enthusiastic about the program. Most of the resource persons who started with the program have continued, and new resources join each year. Over 90 percent of the employer and community resource persons surveyed say that they would recommend participating in EBCE to others.

Not everything is perfect, however. Employers and resource persons would like more feedback on what happens to students they work with and more information about their own effectiveness as teachers and advisers. But these shortcomings should not be permitted to cast any more than a passing shadow on the project.

To supplement this continuing self-study, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) has been employed by me to make a thorough evaluation, including the development of techniques to measure various cognitive and affective skills which EBCE stresses and for which there currently are few or no satisfactory measurement materials or procedures. This ETS investigation will not only record EBCE outcomes which may be compared with those from other high schools; it will also create some evaluation materials for use by schools that develop their own EBCE-based curricula.

In addition, EBCE was the subject of a recently completed comprehensive review by an NIE-sponsored task force headed by Keith Goldhammer, dean of the College of Education at Michigan State University. Other members of the reviewing team were Charles Bowen, director of education development, IBM Corporation; Claude Brown, research and education director, Teamsters' Local 688; Glenys Unruh, assistant superintendent for curriculum, University City, Mo., public schools; and Richard Graham, director of the Center for Moral Education at Harvard University and formerly director of the Teacher Corps. In writing about the observations of the task force, Dean Goldhammer stated:

> *Can you picture randomly selecting 150 students from any high schools in the country and finding genuine enthusiasm, a feeling of belonging, a feeling that school exists for them, a feeling that they are recognized as human beings and that they can do within the schools what is important for them to do? We did interview approximately 150 EBCE students, and we didn't find one who was disaffected by what he or she was doing.*
>
> *It has its failures; no program will ever by 100 percent successful, and we are all attuned to that. But I think it fair to say that, given an opportunity to study themselves, to develop realistic plans for the future, ...to be accorded the integrity of human beings...these students find their schools meaningful, relevant, exciting, and valuable.*

The reference The foregoing is a quotation from a lecture delivered by Dean Goldhammer last May at The Ohio State University in which he analyzed and illustrated the major characteristics of EBCE and looked a bit into the future. The lecture has been published under the title, "Extending Career Education Beyond the Schoolhouse Walls," and can be obtained from The Center for Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210. $2.

A Few Other References

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To Learn More About EBCE

A 30-page booklet, entitled The Community Is the School, provides additional details about EBCE: Experience-Based Career Education. Copies of this booklet, and additional information, can be obtained without charge from the four NIE-supported educational laboratories named on page 3.

Kudos.....This Curriculum Report is based on materials of many kinds made available by JOHN O'BRIEN, program manager, and BERNARD YABROFF, program associate, for the EBCE project. They also advised on the content and organization of the Report. CHARLES STALFORD, a member of the Career Education Program staff, prepared a summary paper as an editorial resource.

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