

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 448 330

CE 081 106

TITLE Career Development Guide: A Comprehensive Guide for Middle Level Schools from Planning through Implementation of Career Development.

INSTITUTION Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield.; Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools, Champaign.

PUB DATE 2000-11-00

NOTE 64p.; Title on cover is "Career Development Guide for the Middle School Years."

PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Academic Standards; Adolescent Development; Adolescents; Annotated Bibliographies; Career Awareness; *Career Counseling; *Career Development; *Career Education; Case Studies; Classroom Techniques; Community Involvement; Competence; Competency Based Education; Computer Uses in Education; *Counseling Techniques; Definitions; Delivery Systems; Demonstration Programs; Educational Resources; Fused Curriculum; Glossaries; Guidelines; *Integrated Curriculum; Internet; Learning Activities; *Middle School Students; Middle Schools; Parent Participation; Portfolios (Background Materials); Program Development; Program Implementation; Records (Forms); Resource Materials; Services; State Standards; Statewide Planning; Systems Approach; Teacher Improvement; Teacher Role; Teacher Student Relationship; World Wide Web

IDENTIFIERS *Illinois; Job Shadowing

ABSTRACT

This document, which was developed with input from 14 Illinois middle schools, is a comprehensive guide to planning and implementing career development activities in middle schools. The following are among the topics discussed: (1) background information (the rationale for and importance of career development; young adolescents' interests and concerns; and key components of middle school career development programs); (2) transition and implementation (the current status of career development; career development goals and ways of reaching them; common barriers and ways to overcome them; evaluating outcomes; school improvement plans; and three examples of districtwide and schoolwide implementation of career components); (3) suggested activities, ideas, and individual career portfolios; and (4) parent and community involvement (job shadowing for educators and three teachers' job shadowing stories). A glossary is included. The reference list and bibliography list 148 references, videos, World Wide Web sites, and contacts. The following are among the items appended: guidelines for planning a curriculum enhancer; sample letters and sign-up sheets; comprehensive career development systems action plan; lists of career development's characteristics and benefits to stakeholders; career development competencies and indicators; Appendix D to the Illinois Learning Standards; and Illinois Learning Standards and career development competency charts. (MN)

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS



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Career Development Guide

*A Comprehensive Guide for Middle Level Schools
from Planning through Implementation
of Career Development.*

November 2000

Developed through a joint project of the
Illinois State Board of Education and the
Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	2
Rationale	3
Importance	4
Young Adolescent Interests and Their Concern with Self and the Future	5
Key Components of Middle School and Why These Suggestions Make Sense	6
TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION	8
What Are We Doing?	8
Where Do We Go?	9
How Do We Get There?	9
Common Barriers and Ways to Overcome Them	10
Resource Barriers	10
Priority Barriers	11
Teacher Preparation Barriers	12
Teaching Young Adolescent Barriers	13
Evaluating Outcomes	13
School Improvement Plan	14
Examples of District-wide and School-wide Implementation of Career Components	15
Vandalia Middle School	15
Mannheim Middle School's Microworld	15
West Aurora School District 129	16
ACTIVITIES	17
Activities and Ideas	17
Miscellaneous Activities	21
ICP's – Individual Career Portfolios	23
PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	24
Job Shadowing for Educators	25
Teacher Job Shadowing Stories	26
Gail's story, Vandalia, Counselor	26
Barb's Story, Mannheim, Teacher	26
Debbi's Story, Washington, Teacher	27
GLOSSARY	28
REFERENCES	29

BIBLIOGRAPHY	30
Activity Books	30
Reference Materials	31
Games and Simulations	32
Inventories	33
Magazines	33
Publishers	33
Videos	34
Websites	35
Contacts	36
APPENDICES	37
PLANNING A CURRICULUM ENHANCER	38
SAMPLE PARENT LETTER	39
CAREER AWARENESS PARENT AND COMMUNITY SIGN-UP SHEET	40
SAMPLE CAREER DAY SPEAKER LETTER	41
COMPREHENSIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM ACTION PLAN	42
WHAT CAREER DEVELOPMENT IS AND IS NOT	46
BENEFITS CAREER DEVELOPMENT BRINGS TO STAKEHOLDERS.....	47
CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS	48
ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS WORKPLACE SKILLS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES	51
CROSS-REFERENCE CHARTS	52

“We can no longer afford to educate today’s students for tomorrow’s world in yesterday’s schools.”

—ISBE PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Education to Careers (ETC) is a community based educational system to prepare all learners with the knowledge and skills needed to obtain quality careers and further education. Kindergarten through high school students need to be informed so that they may work toward an occupation that utilizes their interests and skills and that they find enjoyable. ETC connects students, schools, parents, and businesses while establishing high educational standards for all students by providing work-based, work-related, and experiential learning opportunities. By experiencing the connection between classroom and work-based activities, students will be prepared to meet occupational skill standards, make informed career decisions, and build relationships with potential employers. The ultimate goal of ETC is to increase the number of high school graduates and those with post-secondary training. Students examine and explore a myriad of careers so that their teachers, counselors, and parents are able to help guide them toward a career that shares their interests and talents.

Career development is a component of ETC which is comprehensive in nature and designed to give every student the opportunity and exposure to careers. This includes all ages, all ability levels, and all programs such as special needs and gifted/talented.

- ◆ *Elementary* students begin career development by heightening their awareness of career opportunities.
- ◆ The focus at the *middle school* level is exposure to and exploration of careers.
- ◆ In *high school*, students investigate and prepare for their future careers through experience based work opportunities.

While career development spans K-12, the focus of this document is the middle level, grades 6-8.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This guide comes from a group of fourteen schools who, through the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools (AIMS), are actively involved in implementing career development in their schools. ISBE and AIMS provided these Illinois Middle Grade Network schools training in career development, as well as some funding for the purchase of materials. As a part of the initiative, schools implemented school-based learning, exploration, and connecting activities between schools and communities to enhance the achievement of student educational outcomes.

Career development is a worthwhile program that can be implemented with planning and determination. To assist other schools, this document shares what is known about career development from the teacher and student point of views. This guide promotes the planning and implementation of career development with “tried and true” suggestions. The schools involved in the career development initiative had previously been through the middle school reform process through AIMS. Through their affiliation with the network, they were offered a chance to extend their middle grades reform to include career development. The teachers in these schools embraced the opportunity seeing it as a natural extension of real life learning that middle school students desire and as a compliment to the emerging Illinois Learning Standards. We would like to express our thanks to these AIMS Network schools for their willingness to share ideas and activities that are included in this packet and for participating in both focus group and survey data collection.

Career development integrates easily into present middle level curriculum. It is not another program to add to the current curriculum, rather it is an expansion designed for students to explore careers, occupations and the skills needed to be successful. It is not likely to be eliminated with budget cuts because it is not a separate program. It is not a new structure or system but is embedded into what already exists. The great thing about career development is that it adapts to the school’s interests and student’s needs.

In order to figure out where career development fits in to your school’s curriculum, evaluate your current curriculum and learning standards. Find out who is already incorporating career competencies and workplace skills into their classes. You will be surprised at how much you may already be doing. Look comprehensively and critically at how you can improve what is already being done, for example bringing more workplace skills into the classroom. Plan a schedule and be sure to involve



“Emphasize to someone that’s beginning a program, that teachers already are doing a lot of things, so that they don’t seem to feel like they’re overwhelmed and they need to do a lot of research, because they’re already doing a lot.”

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

all teachers in the planning process. Remember that career development is for *all* students. For a quick guide to what career development is and isn't, see Appendix F.

Rationale

The purposes for career development at the middle level include:

- ◆ personal awareness,
- ◆ exposure to careers,
- ◆ skill development,
- ◆ spark interest, and
- ◆ make wise choices for high school courses and future career opportunities/training.

Students need to be encouraged to explore their career opportunities so they can make an informed decision regarding their future. By finding their interests and strengths, they can focus their academic and extracurricular time on meaningful courses, programs, and activities.



When entry level employees lack good job skills there is a higher rate of employee turnover. Vacancies prevent companies from operating at full capacity, retraining costs rise, recruiting is constant, productivity lowers, and a lower quality of goods and services are provided to customers.

—ISBE ETC POWER POINT PRESENTATION

Changes in the workplace require educators to look at preparing our students for the workforce they will enter.

- ◆ Students we are preparing for the workforce need to have skills and personal qualities to be successful.
- ◆ Most jobs in the U.S. require some postsecondary training.
- ◆ Many employers in the United States cannot find qualified employees for entry-level positions.

Employers consistently rate student's skills significantly lower than students or parents as reported in a special briefing for corporate executives hosted by FORTUNE Magazine in April 1994. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that over the next 10 years, the fastest growing jobs will be computer based (computer engineers, computer support specialists, systems analysts, etc.) with approximately a 100% growth. The occupations adding the most jobs, again are led by computer based jobs, followed by home health care and personal care aides with a change of 58%. For more information and current statistics, visit <http://www.bls.gov/emphome.htm> or www.ides.state.il.us.

Importance



At one school in the Focus Group study, the teachers felt that the Career Development activities have provided an opportunity to showcase students who are not usually academically successful. As a result, they believe that some students had an increase in self-esteem.

Forces Driving Our Schools

- ◆ School Improvement Plans
- ◆ Standards

AIMS and ISBE started the career development initiative based on the career competencies adopted by Illinois (see Appendix H). Appendix D to the Illinois Learning Standards is a crosswalk that shows the relationship of the Learning Standards to the Career Development Competencies. It can be found in the full version of the Illinois Learning Standards document. An example of how Learning Standards are addressed through career development follows.

The student will be able to demonstrate his/her understanding of communicating on the job by completing the following assignment:

The PTA has donated \$10,000 to our middle school to be used to buy equipment or supplies. You are a member of a committee in charge of deciding how this money should be distributed and what will be purchased. You must choose a minimum of three areas as you allocate this money. You will present your decision to the PTA.

Each student will work on this assignment individually and then in small groups. Students will need to communicate with each other to agree upon the three or more areas on which the money will be spent. They will also need to decide how they will present their decisions to the class and PTA.

Learning Standards covered through this activity:

- ◆ Illinois Workplace Skill #4 – Communicating on the Job
- ◆ Reading/Language Arts – State Goal #4
Learning Standard - #4a, #4A3c, #4A3d
- ◆ Mathematics – State Goal #10
Learning Standard - #10B
- ◆ Science – State Goal #11
Learning Standard - #11A, #11A3d
- ◆ Social Sciences – State Goal #16
Learning Standard - #16C, #16C3b
- ◆ Physical Development and Health – State Goal #24
Learning Standard - #24A, #24A3b
- ◆ Foreign Language – State Goal #28
Learning Standard - #28A1a, #28A1b

Career development ties into the school's existing school improvement plan (SIP) through the basic SIP areas that are already in place: teaching and learning, student progress and achievement, and learning community. The Career Development section below lists some things you are already doing. It is important that the staff, administration, and school board see the relevance between career development and SIP to help strengthen buy-in since SIPs are mandated by schools. The reason for learning in school is so students can apply what they have learned in the real world. Career development activities go hand-in-hand with current curriculum and standards.

SIP

Teaching and learning

Student Progress and Achievement

Learning Community

Career Development

Integrating curriculum and instruction
 Instruction that supports individual learning styles
 Rigid standards
 Career awareness and development
 Experiential learning

Student evaluation
 Authentic Assessment

Community as partners
 Community based learning
 Community resources

When teachers bring career development activities into the classroom, students are more involved because they began to see the answer to their age-old question, "When are we going to use this?" The impact on teaching and learning is an increased enthusiasm, participation, and engagement of students, which in turn results in achievement of curricular standards, competencies and educational and career planning skills. As students become increasingly focused on the options the future holds, they become more aware of their personal interests, abilities and upcoming decisions related to their career. Through participation in career development they come into contact with people and situations that are related to the career(s) in which they show an interest.

The responsibility we try to teach students is getting through! Results from the Focus Group study in our schools included student comments about the importance of work-related skills like working with others, being responsible, and being on time. Several students also indicated the value of working hard at a job "even when you don't feel like it." Students saw the direct relationship between responsibilities of work and tasks in school.

Young Adolescent Interests: Concern with Self and the Future

Early adolescence is a discovery time; an adolescent's search for identity, beliefs and values, and life goals and expectations. "During this time in their lives, adolescents begin intellectual changes, which make it possible for them to think about who they are in functional ways." (Van Hoose, p. 20)



"I liked the research paper the best because it let you know, what you needed to focus on in school, in high school."

—STUDENT, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Middle level students are naturally curious and often wonder about who they are and what they will become. This makes career development a natural fit for this age group. Through career development they are able to satisfy their natural curiosity about various careers and discover more about themselves.

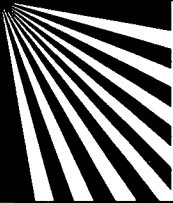
Several teachers indicated that their students were improving academically as the result of making the connection between their success in school and potential college and future career opportunities.

Key Components of Middle School and Why These Suggestions Make Sense

“It is often assumed that young adolescents know how to do basic things such as answer the telephone, introduce one friend to others, or order from a menu in a restaurant. Experience suggests that they need and appreciate guidance or instruction in these and other social settings. In addition to social behaviors, they need to be guided in understanding the importance of proper hygiene, in how to dress, in what make-up to wear and how much, and in what to do with their hair.” (Van Hoose p. 31-32)

We focused our time and instructional efforts on class discussions, research, and hands-on activities. In our experience, we found those strategies more engaging than “pencil and paper” activities. Research has documented that as a result of career development, students realize the importance of academic skills to their future careers. (Evaluation Results)

“Physical, social, intellectual, and personal changes create a kaleidoscopic situation in which they try to determine who they are and how they relate to the “adult world.”” (Van Hoose, p. 36) As they try to determine who they are they naturally become very interested in themselves. This infatuation with themselves, makes career development a natural fit for students ages 10-14. Middle-level students are typically concrete learners; they deal in the here and now. These characteristics naturally fit with career development in that students focus on their interests and how they will fit into the workforce.



“Any time they can put in a little bit of themselves, they’ve been more interested in doing it.”

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Career development principles go hand-in-hand with middle school practices and can be infused into a middle level program effectively. High performing middle level schools organize their structure and instruction for maximum gains. Interdisciplinary teaching teams of 2-4 teachers are instructionally responsible for a set of students. The teachers adapt time, modify instructional techniques, and address student learning needs in daily team meetings. Personalization is increased through forms of advisement and parental contact. Curriculum is connected across disciplines and engaged learning with time for expanded exploration and service learning provided.

The defining characteristics of middle level education (interdisciplinary teaching teams with planning time, advisement, and integrated curriculum) have been found to have a marked effect on student outcomes (Kappan, 1997). Schools which strive for strong implementation of these practices

- ◆ Show gains in reading and mathematics,
- ◆ Have students who say teachers expect more from them,
- ◆ Have students who exhibit fewer behavioral problems and are less stressed and anxious, and
- ◆ Have teachers who say they work harder, but enjoy teaching more.

The comprehensive infusion of career development principles into middle level schools organized around the middle school practices makes terrific sense. In our work across the fourteen middle level schools, teachers and principals found countless ways to capitalize on the “natural fit” between young adolescent needs, curriculum expectations, and school programs.

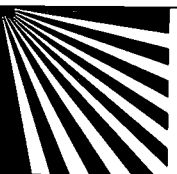


“Discipline problems are reduced because the students enjoy the activities and take ownership in them.”

—TEACHER, BARRIER WALK

As a result of the focus groups, students agree that:

- ◆ They learned skills to be successful at the job,
- ◆ Teachers have taught them and they have learned about many jobs/careers,
- ◆ Teachers help them relate school work to the real world,
- ◆ Classes are important to the job they want, and
- ◆ They will get the job they want.



Characteristics of a Middle-level school include interdisciplinary team organization, advisement, and integrated curriculum.

TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION



“Don’t try to do too much at once. Just pick out the things you think your teachers can teach, deal with, and do. Use the ones you feel comfortable with and can fit it into your schedule.”

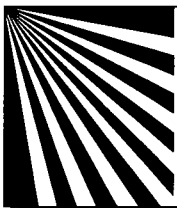
—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

What Are We Doing?

The first step in transitioning to career development is to determine what is already happening in your building. Give a copy of the Comprehensive Career Development System Action Plan (Appendix E) to each team. Encourage each team to look at what they already do and where the career competencies happen naturally. Identification of current practices and alignment with career competencies will begin as faculty and staff become more aware of the entire area of career development.

Next, as a school, you need to determine where the holes and gaps exist that you need to fill. This includes determining what inservices and training staff need, and discussing and planning how programs can be made more comprehensive. For example, the competency of “understanding the process of career planning” is not covered by any teacher or unit currently in the school (Competency XII). In particular, students do not create an individual career plan. Staff members then consider where and how to weave this element into their school program.

Finally, get into planning the transition into a comprehensive career development strand that is integrated into classes by defining your strengths and weaknesses and staff comfort level. Team and subject level articulation is needed to align curriculum and define how career development practices will work in the school plan, i.e. social studies – economy, mathematics – stock market/personal finance. It is most beneficial when there is a school-wide focus so teachers, staff, and administration can find opportunities to relate everything to career awareness from academics to behaviors. This helps students realize that being a student is their current job on the road to a future job.



“Textbooks are incorporating career ideas that make it easy to plug them in to existing curriculum.”

—TEACHER, BARRIER WALK

Where Do We Go?

To decide what you want career development to look like in your school you need to consider scheduling, staff buy in, and available resources. There are three ways that schools typically choose to implement career development, with some schools creating a unique combination that is functional for their school: in the classroom, on the team, and as a school.

A classroom focus impacts students with content specific jobs or skills and being evaluated on these jobs or skills through authentic assessments. For example, in a mathematics class students learn about budgeting and checking. Given a set amount of money, students are assessed based on their spending and the accuracy of their bookkeeping. Advisory time is another avenue many teachers utilize to address job and life skills. Curriculum enhancement takes a typical lesson and infuses it with a career competency(ies) or skill(s). (see Appendix A).

To get teams involved in the career development process, a representative of the career development team goes to each team to facilitate discussion of team-based reinforcement. Interdisciplinary units and curriculum can be enhanced to incorporate career development language, philosophy, and terminology. When the entire team is using career development language and terminology in their classes, students will pick up on the continuity.



“Teachers became interested in trying to incorporate careers into their classes and as a result bulletin boards on careers popped up all over.”

—TEACHER, BARRIER WALK

In schools that focus on career development as a whole school, students may participate in a careers class, schoolwide extended units, school micro society, or advisory. It is important to stress that the more places students are hearing about, seeing, or participating in career development, the greater impact it will have on them.

How Do We Get There?

Staff development is essential for effective career development implementation. Of course, time for staff development is needed but is a precious commodity. One way to get teachers talking about how to bring career development strategies into the classroom is to have them job shadow. From this experience teachers meet contacts for speakers, gain ideas for class projects, and become aware of how careers fit into particular subjects. After several teachers have job shadowed, discussion and brainstorming sessions will produce many ideas. Other activities such as staff field trips to local businesses, agencies, and/or organizations have similar benefits.

Essential to implementing anything, staff development workshops or conferences are a necessity. While all staff need not attend, it is critical that the implementation team has time to talk with other schools and gather information and materials about career development. Inservices have been deemed invaluable with some materials, such as *The Real Game*. Workshops, conferences, and inservices provide the chance for teachers to gather and share ideas from other teachers and

schools. Building level development must be ongoing. Teachers should continuously seek opportunities to bring information into their classes through the newspaper, personal shopping, business contacts, etc.

Common Barriers and Ways to Overcome Them

The career development initiative is to be an integrated aspect of the total middle school program. It is supposed to be a “seamless” system and not be a program that is one more thing to do during the school day. Before it becomes a natural part of the middle school day, the integration of the career development competencies into regular instruction goes through an implementation phase that lasts from one to three years. The career development schools in the network experienced barriers to initial implementation and integration. In each of our training experiences over several years, we devoted time to identifying, addressing, and problem solving around barriers.



TYPICAL BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

- ◆ Lack of time to plan, develop, and do activities
- ◆ Multiple responsibilities in addition to career development responsibilities
- ◆ Logistics of planning activities across subject, teachers, teams, and grade levels and then integrating
- ◆ Creating buy-in from other teachers
- ◆ Lack of funding to get resources
- ◆ Finding community partners
- ◆ Difficulty in preparing students for jobs that do not currently exist
- ◆ Viewed as another add-on course
- ◆ Meeting the needs of college bound and non-college bound students
- ◆ Time and funding for staff development

Resource Barriers

Teachers readily identified numerous obstacles associated with resources such as the lack of time and lack of funding for materials, substitutes, and teacher training. Lack of time was perceived as detrimental to planning the program initially and finding the time to adequately prepare fellow staff members to incorporate the objectives of career development into their classroom strategies was also problematic. The questions universally were:

“When is this supposed to be done?”

“When are teachers able to get together to plan?”

If they were able to find the time, the next questions was:

“How do we know what is quality material and how do we access those materials given tight budgets?”

Teachers wondered how they could create meaningful lessons and curriculum enhancements without having to start from scratch.

Ways to overcome:

- ◆ Form local partnerships with colleges and universities
- ◆ Look for grants
- ◆ Determine what you need for funding
- ◆ Use the internet as a resource and tool
- ◆ Develop business partnerships
- ◆ Encourage parent donations (volunteering time, donating materials, etc.)
- ◆ Conduct a school fundraiser
- ◆ Make sure catalogs and materials get delivered to the right person/people
- ◆ Use staff development time to share resources within your school, with other schools in the network
- ◆ Utilize advisory time
- ◆ Determine what is already in place
- ◆ Use team time and faculty meetings to address time constraints
- ◆ Provide release time from job to visit other schools
- ◆ Share resources between and among schools

It is reassuring to note that teachers report that the longer they are involved in career development, the more time they spend implementing the program. This suggests that the time barrier is lessened as teachers gain experience in career development.



The ability to integrate career development activities was influenced by the organizational structures and staff commitment to act.

Priority Barriers

Teachers expressed concerns and frustrations over how to fit everything into the school day given the demands of district and state priorities. There is a general acceptance that career development is valid, however the pressures of learning standards and testing leave little room for infusing more into the school's curriculum. Teachers feel nearly "topped out" on what they can successfully work into their range of classroom priorities. Getting the career objectives to be a priority across all segments of a building at times seemed daunting. Even with an initial school commitment to career development, teachers were concerned with how the priorities would work into the school and how schedule adjustments could be accommodated without sacrificing other important aspects of their middle school program.

Ways to overcome:

- ◆ Acknowledge staff for what they are already doing
- ◆ See how it fits into what you are already doing, don't search for new ideas
- ◆ Build into existing programs and curriculum
- ◆ Work it into your School Improvement Plan, do the analysis using the Comprehensive Career Development Action Plan in Appendix E

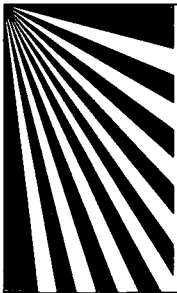
- ◆ Provide teachers with quality training
- ◆ Show how it fits with the state goals
- ◆ Gain administrative, school board, and community support
- ◆ Have a district career development plan

Teacher Preparation Barriers

Each building involved in the career development initiative had experienced a major change process when each school transformed itself around the middle school practices and principles. Therefore, the teachers in our career development effort keenly understood the necessity and value of teacher preparation so teacher attitudes, skills, motivation and participation could be affected. They were unsure of how to get other teachers and teams “on board” and where they would find time to inservice teachers in order to increase their knowledge of career concepts and curriculum integration. The obstacle of time resurfaced even though the teachers all had dual common planning time on their teaching teams. Teachers were worried about how much time it would take to get the elements in place. Their main concerns were: where they would find the time for training, how they could use their team time effectively to incorporate the ideas, and how they could get enough time to develop all the ideas they were interested in implementing.

Ways to overcome:

- ◆ Just do it!
- ◆ Have team presentations on what they are doing
- ◆ Have a flexible schedule and promote flexibility of staff members
- ◆ Start small—use teachers who volunteer to participate
- ◆ Mandate for stragglers
- ◆ Inservices
- ◆ Staff meetings
- ◆ Staff development
- ◆ Make activities easily accessible across the community
- ◆ Recognize staff members who “buy in” and work hard to implement
- ◆ Integrate into advisory



“We’ve also found that once we really sat down and looked at what we were doing in our classrooms, we were doing a lot of career things. We’re just getting people to focus on that and realize that that’s what they’re really doing.”

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Teaching Young Adolescent Barriers

Teachers wondered how they could adequately anticipate and prepare students for jobs that would be created in the future. Since students deal in the “here and now,” they worried if students would find the curriculum relevant. Many of the projects and lessons teachers were envisioning meant students would be interacting with the community more frequently. They hoped community members would be open to working with young adolescents.

Ways to overcome:

- ◆ Keep students active with hands-on activities
- ◆ Brainstorm about the future
- ◆ Have speakers from corporations and businesses in to address skills needed for projected future jobs
- ◆ Have a diverse group of speakers (age, job, skills, race, gender, disability, etc.)
- ◆ Avoid pencil and paper activities
- ◆ Solve job-related problems (use Problem-Based Learning) in the classroom
- ◆ Have it make sense to them by choosing high interest activities

It is encouraging to note that teachers involved in the career development initiative reported a decrease in the mentioned barriers the longer they are involved with none of the barriers being thought of as more than a minor problem. Active sharing, creative brainstorming, and resounding support can overcome barriers encountered to implementing career development.

Evaluating for Outcomes

While much of what is known about career development is anecdotal in nature, students and adults alike have gained skills from the implementation of career development. The practices and skills taught impact our community in numerous ways including an increased awareness of workplace skills and opportunities. There have been some large scale efforts to assess the effectiveness of career development through School & Main Institute that included:

- ◆ Surveying teacher, students, and parents regarding the effectiveness of career development;
- ◆ Having a knowledgeable evaluator visit districts to study the effect of career development curriculum;
- ◆ Recording dialogue from many stakeholders within a community; and
- ◆ Conducting a thorough review and assessment process during and after career development was implemented.

From School & Main Institute’s information, it was documented that more than 20,000 young people, from the ages of 12 to 22 have benefited from career initiatives. This included higher graduation rates and higher college/post-secondary enrollment.

In addition to the work School & Main has done, the Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools and the Center for Prevention Research and Development have documented teacher change in the types and frequencies of activities, school-wide focus on career development, cooperative resource and material sharing, and techniques used for implementation. Student awareness of job and career skills, as well as educational aspirations and expectations were also documented. Overall, the data suggests that teachers and students recognize and value career development practices.

Many teachers report that students develop a greater awareness of the relationship between academics and their future. As a result of this awareness, academic performance improves.

Career development works when administration supports it, all students participate at some level, and teachers incorporate career development into their classrooms. It is valuable because it is preparing students to make appropriate choices about their lives. Some teachers have noted that students have better attendance, less tardiness, and are more prepared for class. These teachers attribute this to the fact that students have made the connection between work-related skills and school.

Through career development, work skills are acquired which improves future employability. It provides students who are not usually successful in their academic studies an opportunity to be successful. Students who have participated in some type of career development recognize the importance of work related skills such as responsibility, cooperation, and respect.

An important part of any evaluation is looking at the original goals and modifying them to meet current needs. This is also true with career development. Be sure to take the time to go back to your school's action plan (Appendix E) and reassess needs and future actions on a yearly basis. Make sure that what is being done is applicable in the real world and students are acquiring the skills they will need in the workforce. The evaluation should address:

- ◆ Assessment for the real world
- ◆ Assessing changes in student outcomes
- ◆ Benchmarking results of school interviews
- ◆ Forms of Classroom Assessment
 - Self-reflection Interest Inventories
 - Guest speaker evaluation
 - Share speaker activity results
 - Research and classroom assignments—student developed RUBRICs and accountability for accuracy (banking)
 - Conversation and discussions
 - Record Keeping
 - Student-Led Conferencing
 - Performance based assessments

School Improvement Plan

A School Improvement Plan (SIP) is incorporated into each school building with the following components: a mission statement, a section for each core subject's curriculum, and a section for each encore's curriculum. Included in each curriculum section are the Illinois State Learning Standards, each District's method of meeting the learning standards, and specific classroom activities and procedures that ensure that the individual components of each learning standard are met. The SIP is an ever-changing document whose methodology varies, as new technologies become available. Resources are a factor in determining the assignments and projects that occur year to year. Each subject area needs to meet annually to examine the curriculum and ensure that standards are being met. Workplace Skills and Career Development Competencies also need to be double-checked to make sure that they are being met within the school's curriculum. At this point in time, all thirteen Workplace Skills and the eight Career Development Competencies and Indicators are met within the Illinois Learning Standards. As schools annually revisit and revise their SIP, they will reevaluate career development within their school.



EXAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT (Mannheim Middle School):

The Mannheim Middle School community is dedicated to providing a comprehensive educational program for our students that creates literate life-long learners, focusing on the social, physical, emotional, and educational needs of the young adolescent. This will be accomplished through exceptional educational experiences, which will enable students to develop into responsible citizens as well as the many professional development opportunities provided for teachers and staff. A sense of community will be fostered where parents, students, and teachers are all committed to providing a safe environment that ensures success for all students.

Examples of District-wide and School-wide Implementation of Career Components

Vandalia Middle School

The counselor teaches four careers lessons each year with follow-up activities in core classes on the teams.

6th Grade – “Looking at Myself” encompasses identifying personal interests and skills in self-esteem, speaking, listening, decision making, goal setting, and career awareness. During the 6th grade year the Individual Career Portfolio (ICP) is started with materials related to career planning. Students work in small groups to list at least 3 careers that coincide with their personal characteristics. Videos related to career clusters are viewed and discussed.

7th Grade – Seventh graders use “Countdown 9, 8, 7,” a computer interest inventory program. They also participate in a career fair composed of local community speakers. Prior to the fair students develop a list of questions to ask the guest speakers.

8th Grade – The “Real Game” exposes students to career and life skills and runs throughout the school year. Students complete a job explorer, which serves as a precursor to scheduling freshman classes.

In addition to the activities listed, core teachers infuse career awareness into classroom lessons as appropriate and use advisory for updating ICP’s throughout their middle school years. Each year students take one career-related field trip.

Mannheim Middle School’s Microworld

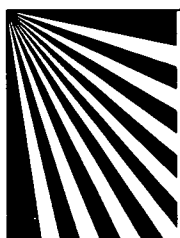
The Microworld project at Mannheim Middle School was designed to combine academic instruction with hands-on experiences (drawn from common life experiences) which demonstrate the connection between school and real-life situations. Microworld provides students with experiences that allow them to have a better understanding of how a democratic society functions and empowers them to make responsible educational and life choices.

Students participate by completing job applications, job interviews, resumes, maintaining a bank account, and working at a business (already existing or self-created). They experience social respon-

sibility through interactions with senior citizens within the community, tutoring elementary school students, or raising funds for animal rights and environmental issues. Each business is required to have a business plan that includes mechanisms for tracking accounts and techniques for determining appropriate times to put in or take currency off the market to help maintain market value.

The program also includes a major emphasis in career education and a close connection to members of the community through the utilization of the computer program, Countdown 9, 8, 7, The Real Game, and guest lectures from members of the community. People from all walks of life visit the school and share their experiences with the students. Throughout the year, students are responsible for keeping a career folder which allows them to track their experiences, coursework, and grades.

The students participate each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for 35 minutes each day. Students use their “doogles”, the school’s currency, to purchase products and attend athletic and school functions.



“Students begin to realize the importance of budgeting, as well as the ins and outs of running a business.”

—TEACHER, BARRIER WALK

West Aurora School District 129

6th Grade – Sixth grade students rotate through a four-and-one-half week Career Awareness Class that emphasizes the need to gain self-knowledge, to increase interpersonal skills, and to be aware of career clusters.

7th Grade – Seventh graders have a choice in their exploratory classes, one of which is a Career Exploration class. It emphasizes the importance of having a job and developing appropriate workplace ethics, habits, and attitudes. Students have the opportunity to do voluntary job shadowing. In addition, students analyze and predict the jobs of the future. The culminating event is an oral presentation of the research completed by each student. Some students present using Powerpoint or Hyperstudio.

8th Grade – All eighth grade students receive career information through their advisory class. The Real Game is the major component of the coursework. An emphasis is placed on writing a resume and cover letter, completing a job application, and participating in a mock interview.

Special Needs Students – The Cookie Factory is a school-based company operated by special needs students. Any student or teacher can order a cookie on Monday or Tuesday of each week. (This includes some orders from other buildings in the district.) The student employees make the cookies on Wednesday and Thursday and deliver them on Friday.

On a school wide basis, careers are addressed in Advisory in addition to a career day that is held in each building for all students on a half-day. The speakers are arranged by job families and students choose to hear five different families during the morning. For students in the middle schools for all three years, this means they will have learned information concerning fifteen different job families.

ACTIVITIES

Career activities, such as those listed, serve the purpose of schooling in that they are relevant to real-life situations. Resumes and letters, balancing a checkbook and paying bills, physical fitness, relationships, and problem solving are required in the workforce. These essential skills are based upon the very foundation of our education system. The core curricular areas and exploratory classes are offered to assist students to become educated and productive citizens.

These are activities to be done as a school, on a team, or in the classroom that many schools have incorporated. There is overlap: just because an activity is listed as a school activity does not mean it can't be made into a team or classroom activity. Activities were selected from teachers who actively participated in the career development initiative through our network.



“I do something with all of my classes where I ask them what they think a good wage is. And usually they say \$10.00 is real good. And I take them through the whole equation about, ‘Hey, you make \$10.00 an hour. How many hours do you work a day? So how many hours – how much money do you make a day? How much do you make a week? How much do you make a month? Then we talk about how much is taken out in taxes. How much do you have to pay for rent or a mortgage? How much are your utilities and your food and your car?’ And it usually comes out that they have a negative number at the end of the month. And they are all shocked...”

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Activities and Ideas

◆ Posters

A simple way to bring career awareness into a school is to have posters, either purchased or homemade, on a variety of careers displayed throughout the school.

◆ Guest speakers

Speakers from the community can talk on a variety of career topics and career opportunities. Prior to a speaker's presentation have students jot down the speaker's name, position, company, and type of job or business, and two questions to ask the speaker. After the presentation have them write about the aspects of the job they found most interesting and what other careers they are interested in learning about.

◆ **Career fairs**

Teachers can survey student interests or plan jobs based on career interest areas. Some schools allow students to sign up while others develop a schedule where students go speaker to speaker, visit booths, or move as a group. After the career fair discussion questions might include: what were the most and least interesting careers you learned about today and why; did you learn anything that surprised you; and what other careers would you like to explore?

◆ **Career/Leisure Day Speakers**

The following information can be requested to be part of the presentation: training and education needed, interests important to career or activity, mental and physical skills needed, cost for leisure activities, salary range for careers, interesting stories, information, or hands-on activities pertaining to the career or activity.

◆ **Career mentorship** – pairing specific adults in professional fields with students

◆ **Advisory components** – life and work skills...decision making, problem solving strategies, collaboration, teamwork, communication skills, scheduling, planning, meeting deadlines

◆ **Simulation activities** – The Real Game, Microworld, Stock Market Game

Students who participate in these types of activities consistently indicate a high level of enjoyment and learning. They are also able to transfer the skills and lessons they learned into everyday situations. As a result, students are “more aware of the importance of doing well in school, living within a budget, identifying personal strengths and challenges, and striving to achieve success.” (Executive Summary)

◆ **Developing career portfolios** – writing resumes, learning interview skills

◆ **Career interest inventories**

◆ **Career software programs**, search internet for career information

◆ **Career specific videos**

◆ **Mock Interview**

A mock interview allows students to experience first hand the types of questions asked during an interview. A mock interview also gives students the opportunity to practice asking questions about the job, such as inquiring about the positive and negative aspects of the job, salary, and hours.

An interviewer might ask the following questions:

Where did you get your education and training?

Why are you applying for this job?

What special skills and/or qualities do you have that would be of value to this job?

Describe your strengths and weaknesses.

What new ideas can you bring to the company?

Why should we hire you and not someone else?

Describe your previous work experience.

◆ **Curriculum Enhancement/Incorporating career areas into core subjects**

Ideas might include budgeting in math, creating a newsletter or children’s books in language arts, create and keep an aquarium in science, write and produce a play based on legends or native customs in social studies/performing arts, develop a health fair in PE, etc.

See the Curriculum Enhancement Planning Guide (Appendix A) for further information.

◆ **Community Involvement**

There are many ways to get local community members and businesses involved in education with a focus on career development. Some ideas include: mapping the school for a landscaping project, developing a video with help from the local cable company, planning an ad campaign with local business partners, planning cafeteria food with school officials and cafeteria staff, designing a dream home with architectural specifications, having a pharmacist in to share the

importance of accurate measurements, organizing a community blood drive while learning about blood cells and diseases, etc.

◆ **Job Shadow**

Have students list the shadow site, shadow sponsor, and type of business/organization. To reflect on the experience students should write a description of the shadow site, the type of work they saw, and important skills needed by and responsibilities of the person they shadowed. Other reflections might include: what they liked most and least about their experience, what surprised them most, qualifications needed for the job, and whether or not they would like to do this kind of work. Some schools require the date, signature of the adult, occupation, job site address and phone number, and the number of hours spent observing on the Job Shadow form. Students need to be aware that school rules apply during their experience, and as with any off campus trip a parent consent form should be obtained.

◆ **Research project on specific career**

◆ **Interdisciplinary Units** on career situations; for example, as part of a unit on change look at how technology has changed various careers.

◆ **Field trips: Tour or Site Visit**

Prior to the trip, have each student record the company's or organization's name, the type of business, and two things he/she expects to see or learn. After the visit have them write about what they liked most about the visit, the skills needed by employees, and whether any of the jobs or careers interested them.

◆ **Career course** that meets daily perhaps as part of the unified arts/encore program.

◆ **Stock Market Game** (It is available through The *Chicago Tribune* at a minimal cost. The *Chicago Tribune* also offers training for teachers to implement in their classrooms.)

◆ **Self Exploration**

Have each person write three things they like about the student in the appropriate box. Discuss qualities that people wrote down. Use this information for journal reflection or a goal setting activity.

Myself	A Parent or Guardian	A Brother or Sister
An Adult	STUDENT _____ (Name)	A Teacher
A Neighbor	A Male Friend	A Female Friend

◆ **Values**

Create a list of things people might value and have students identify which three are most and least important to them. Values might include things such as: helping others, job security, flexible hours, opportunity to learn new things, working with people, becoming famous, being creative, working outdoors/indoors, finding adventure, etc.

Adapted from School & Main Institute's **IN SEARCH OF IDEAS:**
75+ Topics for Career Development Activities

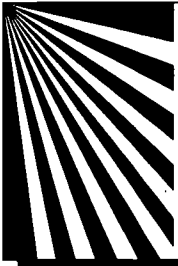
Anticipating Change
Assertiveness Training
Balancing Work and Life
Being an Entrepreneur
Beyond Eighth Grade/Middle School
Budgeting and Money Management
Campus Pressures
Career and College Research
Career Interest Survey
Careers in...(Health, Law, Non-Profits, etc.)
Careers in Your Community
Choosing the Right High School Courses
Choosing the Right College
Choosing the Right Job
College Applications
College Life
Computer Crash Course
Computers in Our Lives
Conflict Resolution
Cover Letters
Creating a Portfolio
Creating a Resource File
Critical Thinking Skills
Cultural Diversity and the Workplace
Dealing With Distractions
Decision-Making
Employer Expectations
Filling Out Tax Forms
Finding a Mentor
Finding What I'm Good At/Like
Getting Along With Others
Goal Setting
Harassment and the Workplace
Healthy Relationships
High School Life/Pressures
How to Access Scholarships
How to Find and Keep a Job
How to Write a College Essay
Identify Strengths/Challenges
Independent Living Skills
Interview Preparation
Job Applications
Job Pressures
Jobs vs. Careers
Leadership Skills
Knowing Your Personal Rights
Leadership Skills
Learning From Life Experiences
Learning Styles
Legal Aspects of Turning 18
Listening Skills
Networking
Personality Assessments
Predicting Outcomes
Preparing for School or Work
Preparing the Financial Aid Application
Problem Solving: Workplace Case Studies
Public Speaking
Research Skills
Resume Writing
Self Awareness
Setting Academic Goals
Sizing Up Your Environment
Stereotypes
Stress Management Skills
Study Skills
Test Taking Strategies
The Ideal Summer Job
The Job Search Process
The Real World
Time Management
Understanding Nonverbal Communication
Values Clarification
Work Etiquette
Working in Teams
Workplace Pressures
Writing and Math Skills

Miscellaneous Activities

The Bibliography has numerous other resources listed in detail. The selection below includes some of our tried and true favorites.

- ◆ 20 Occupations – Think of all the people you know. You should include relatives, neighbors, parents of your friends, and high school students. List at least twenty jobs and careers that you can think of. (The list should NOT include a teacher, doctor, veterinarian, professional athlete, lawyer, or nurse.)
- ◆ Lunch Bunch Speakers – Students are able to hear from and ask questions to a number of speakers during their lunch period.
- ◆ Composition Activity – Students are given the following ten traits employers want in their employees: dependability, integrity and independence, teamwork, listening skills, math skills, communication skills, problem-solving ability, computer literacy, lifetime learning, and goal-setting skills. After discussion to clarify meanings, students select any three traits and explain how they use these skills in their daily lives. Students are expected to use good mechanics and follow writing guidelines. This activity not only encourages students to think about their good traits, but how to improve on others. Selections made by students promote excellent class discussion and this activity can result in a writing grade as well.
- ◆ Candy Bar Activity – Pass out a snack size Snickers candy bar. Have students create a list of all occupations that are involved in creating the candy bar. When they are done, create a class list and enjoy the candy bars.
- ◆ Career Cluster Collage (Adapted from Dream Catchers) – Day 1: Introduce career clusters and brainstorm a few possible careers within each cluster. Divide class into groups and assign each group a cluster. Days 2-4: Students work in groups and brainstorm a list of careers in their cluster, cut pictures from magazines relating to these careers, and mount on posterboard to create poster. Day 5: Groups present their collage to the class by each member selecting five pictures and describing how each relates to careers in their cluster.
- ◆ ABC Book of Careers – Students brainstorm by writing the alphabet down the side of a paper and finding a career that begins with each letter. Each letter becomes a page and is illustrated. Students enjoy sharing their favorite (and usually most unique) three entries to the class.
- ◆ Jobs of the Future – It is the year 2050. Students brainstorm in groups to come up with inventions and jobs that will exist in that year. Each group draws or makes a prototype of one of their inventions and shares it with the class.
- ◆ Checking Account – Give students a photocopy of an altered checkbook register, checks, and deposit tickets. Have them go on a shopping spree using newspaper ads for prices. Don't forget to have them calculate sales tax.
- ◆ Write letters: business, cover, inquiry, complaint, appreciation, etc.
- ◆ Fill out a loan application – Most banks are happy to provide a blank copy for your use. Do alter it before distributing it to students.

- ◆ Plan a budget and lifestyle and determine whether a given career can support it.



“I think we should learn about the taxes and stuff because, you’re thinking, ‘Well, I’m getting so much money.’ But then, you take taxes out and you have, like, no money left.”

—STUDENT, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

- ◆ Encourage all students to meet their potential...examine loans and scholarships

- ◆ Dream Job/Nightmare Job

Pink Card

Dream job
No restrictions on money

Green Card

Reality Job
Can afford/scholarship

Yellow Card

Nightmare job
NEVER want

Write each category on a colored piece of paper or card. Have students write their dream, reality, and nightmare job on the designated card. As a class sort and discuss jobs students wrote down. Students enjoy trying to guess who wrote down what job in each category. Assess dream, reality, and nightmare jobs as a class.



Use your imagination to link current classroom activities and skills to the careers in which they are used.

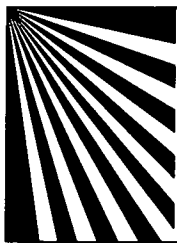
ICP's – Individual Career Portfolios

The purpose of an ICP is to provide parents, students, and teachers with a sample of student interest inventories and activities completed. Some schools add a sample piece of work from academic classes along with other typical portfolio items.

Sample items include:

- ◆ Table of Contents
- ◆ Transcripts
- ◆ Test scores
- ◆ Academic information by grade level
- ◆ Attendance records
- ◆ Household duties
- ◆ Volunteer/Service learning experience
- ◆ Awards received
- ◆ Activities (community, extracurricular, student organizations, clubs, hobbies)
- ◆ Resume/Personal information
- ◆ List of references
- ◆ Career information material
- ◆ Letters of recommendation
- ◆ Thank you letters
- ◆ Interest and learning style inventories
- ◆ Pathways explored
- ◆ Work and work-based learning experiences
- ◆ Summary of career speakers
- ◆ Samples of classroom products
- ◆ High School course selection

Most ICP's are managed through the advisory teachers or the team. At the end of the school year, the guidance office collects and stores them until they dispense them the following year to the teachers. When ICP's are managed through the advisory teacher or team, students have a greater opportunity to update and organize them than if they were stored in the office.

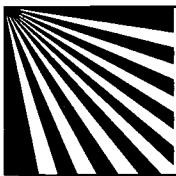


"I could see in here a lot of [students] using what they had learned throughout the year about different careers. 'Well, if I wanna be a nurse or something, I need to take a lot of science in high school.'"

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Many Individualized Education Plans include a work component. The opportunity exists for this to be documented and monitored through the use of a Career Portfolio.

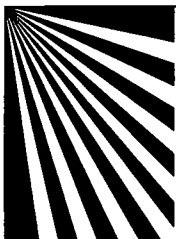
PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Career development brings the workplace into the classroom and transforms the workplace into a place of learning.

In a survey of high school seniors, 43% felt that their mothers influenced their career choice a great deal and 36% felt their fathers did (Clinton Rosette Middle School brochure). These percentages far outweighed those of guidance counselors, teachers, friends, and relatives. With this in mind it is important to note the critical role parents play in career development. The role can be as simple as assigning and rotating chores at home, taking their child to work with them, encouraging children to pursue hobbies and interests, discussing the level of education, skills, and aptitudes needed in various careers, or encouraging part time or summer work.

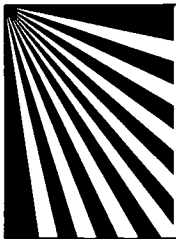
It is important for parents, teachers, and community members to remember that a college degree is not required for a successful career. There are many options available to our students, and it is important we make the effort to expose them to as many choices as possible. Many types of training are available including the military, on-the-job-training, adult education, vocational centers, community colleges, and apprenticeship programs, as well as four-year institutions.



“Sometimes it’s not really what the job is that makes you interested because it depends on how the speaker or the person explains it to you that makes you wanna be interested in it.”

—STUDENT, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

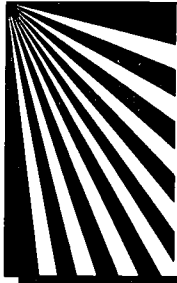
There are many ways for parents to be involved in a school’s career development initiative. Some schools mail home a monthly newsletter that contains a career-related article, parent stories of their careers, or a career fact of the month. Parents can volunteer to come and be a guest speaker or assist with information about their career interest area (see Appendix B).



“If you ask them and they get real excited about it. So we’ve had two or three parents come in and give presentations about their careers. And they said they would come back.”

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

From a public relations aspect, career development makes the community aware of the positive current practices and programs in schools. Gaining support through the PTA/PTO by explaining why you are doing it could mean more parent volunteers, more community contacts, and positive PR for the school. A sample sign-up sheet for community and parent volunteers is located in Appendix C.



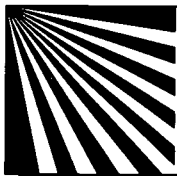
“Some of these kids don’t even understand what their parents do for a living. Some do very well, and others have no clue, and they will job shadow their parents, many of them, and just say, ‘I didn’t know, Dad, that you did that!’ It’s a real eye-opening experience...”

—TEACHER, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Career development affects the community by:

- ◆ Increasing interaction between students and local businesses,
- ◆ Receiving positive media exposure,
- ◆ Getting parents involved in career activities such as the career fair,
- ◆ Providing job shadowing opportunities,
- ◆ Getting speakers into the classrooms and interacting with students,
- ◆ Conveying a positive image of students,
- ◆ Increasing funding through donations for career activities,
- ◆ Gaining the support of community organizations to host field trips.

Local partnerships have been set up for every region of the state of Illinois. Partnerships were formed to include business leaders, educators, and parents. They are a great source of information and can be accessed through <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/etc>. This site also includes more activities for career development.



“The community was very willing to get involved.”

– TEACHER, BARRIER WALK

Job Shadowing for Educators

Job shadowing for teachers, arranged through the Regional Office of Education, EFE regional vocational system or Education-to-Careers Partnership, provide teachers the opportunity to gain exposure to different fields and get in to community businesses. There are two types of job shadowing for teachers. A Vocational Instruction Practicum (VIP) is designed for encore, unified arts, and exploratory teachers. Core teachers participate in an Academic Instruction Practicum (AIP). VIPs and AIPs are state-funded programs, which expose educators to current practices and technologies in today’s workforce. These programs provide hands-on experiences for continuing education. Based on these experiences, teachers improve the quality of career education within their classrooms.

In a formal teacher job shadowing experience, it is recommended that participants create a lesson plan that demonstrates how information from the experience will be used. Competencies and career skills are then tied to the lesson plan. This benefits the teacher by broadening his or her personal experiences. It brings a real-life situation into the classroom. Students see how this skill is applicable to their futures. The contact person at the job site also can serve as a contact person for finding speakers and career day volunteers. Business and industry visits have also played a key role in helping some schools develop meaningful business partnerships. Not only are the teachers going to the businesses, but employees come to the school and interact with the students. This also gives students the opportunity to see that there is a future in their community if they desire to stay.

Teacher Job Shadowing Stories

Gail's Story, Vandalia, Counselor

During the summer of 1999, I had the opportunity to observe and work at Forsheda Engineered Seals, a major local industry in my hometown. I was able to accomplish two goals through my experience. I was able to acquire basic knowledge of the careers at this company while experiencing them first hand so I can connect them to my teaching in the classroom. Second, I established excellent business-school contacts that enable me to use them as a resource when planning activities at school. This experience affirmed to me that I was genuinely in the field of careers that makes me happy. I plan on applying for VIP's in the future to provide myself with personal professional growth.

Barb's Story, Mannheim, Teacher

Mannheim Middle School is a member of the Des Plaines Valley Regional Education to Careers Partnership. This past year our school participated in a series of meetings discussing available career development resources. Magazines, videos, and pamphlets were shared with us plus we were able to share ideas with the other participating elementary and middle schools. Our culminating event was a series of field trips to various businesses and companies in the Chicagoland area. The purpose was to gain insight into the career opportunities available within each site visited. Contacts were also made for future field trips with students or adults to come in to our school on upcoming career days. The field trips we took were to: Chicago Options Exchange, Chicago Board of Trade, Culinary and Hospitality Institute of Chicago, AKZO Nobel Chemical Company, Cook County Hospital Satellite, and the Chicago Fire Academy. We also had speakers from two regions come into our meeting place and present their ETC programs. They were the Discoverer Program from Morton Regional ETC Partnership and the Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

It was an interesting opportunity to see other sites plus share what's going on in our school with the other teachers present from different schools. We are currently participating in putting together a class to be offered during the summer ROE West 40 offerings.

Debbi's Story, Washington, Teacher

I participated in the AIP through the Valley Education to Careers Partnership during the summer of 1999. I went to Caterpillar in Montgomery, IL, for four days during my summer break. My objective was to learn about the various hiring needs of this large manufacturing company. I spent my time, not building tractors, but talking to various people within the organization about hiring procedures and types of workers the company would hire. I, then, developed lesson plans tied into the State of Illinois Learning Standards Appendix D. Within my classroom during the 1999-2000 school year, I am using these lesson plans to help my students understand what one employer wants in employees.

GLOSSARY

Career Competencies – recommended outcomes and indicators organized around self knowledge, educational and occupational exploration and career planning. They can be used to help plan quality career development services for all students no matter their age, sex, race, ethnic group or disability.

Career Development – a lifelong process through which individuals come to understand themselves as they relate to the world of work. It occurs through participation in a continuum of developmental activities available through both formal and informal experiences inside and outside of institutions and agencies.

Career Guidance – an intervention and refers to a systematic program of counselor-coordinated information and experiences (Herr & Cramer, 1992). The ultimate goal(s) of a career guidance program is to provide individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to develop realistic career plans and make the appropriate decisions to carry out these plans.

Career Interest Areas (CIAs) – large groupings of occupations that have like industry backgrounds and functions. The CIAs help educators to make students aware of the wide spectrum of occupations in the labor market through experiential, interdisciplinary activities that reinforce the fundamental learning areas. They include: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Arts and Communication, Business and Administrative Services, Health Care, Human and Family Services, and Engineering and Industrial Technology. They may be referred to as career clusters, job families, and career pathways.

Connecting Activities – coordinate the involvement of business, labor, schools and students; match students and work-based learning opportunities; and train teachers, mentors and counselors.

Education to Careers (ETC) – a community-based educational system to prepare all learners with the knowledge and skills needed to obtain quality careers and further education.

Job Shadowing – an experience for students and/or teachers that might encompass hours or days of being on a worksite observing and/or participating (depending on the situation) in actual activities specific to that job.

Mentoring – community people who serve in quasi-parental roles as advisors and role models sharing career information through student contact time. Any adult can be a mentor and it can be done on a formal or an informal basis.

School-based Learning – provides career exploration; career counseling; and instruction that links academic, career and work-based learning, and typically involves at least one year of post secondary education.

Tech Prep Program – a program of study which begins in high school, continues at a post secondary institution and culminates in an associate or applied science degree, two-year certificate, or two-year apprenticeship in one of the Career Interest Areas and leads to related meaningful employment.

Work-based Learning – provides instruction and experiences in the workplace linked with school-based learning.

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Clinton Rosette Middle School. Choosing a Career: How Parents Can Help. DeKalb, IL.

Van Hoose, John and David Strahan (1988). Young Adolescent Development and School Practices: Promoting Harmony. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association, p. 19.

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Your school librarian, district office, or local bookstore can order materials from the ISBN listed in the Bibliography. We have included an ISBN, phone number (in parentheses), or address to make ordering these materials more convenient. All of the materials have been used by teachers and counselors in our Career Development Network Initiative. These are our favorites!

Activity Books

Developmental Guidance. Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse, Horrabin Hall 46, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390. (800-322-3905)

Provides teacher/counselor with classroom or group guidance activities correlated to the National Career Development Guidelines.

ETC Learning Resource Guide. Ohio & Wabash Valley Regional Vocational System, 800 S. Division, P.O. Box 287, Norris City, IL 62869-0287. (618-378-2274)

Hundreds of modules and lesson plans, developed by teachers in southeastern Illinois, are included in resource guides aimed at various levels.

Guide 1 – elementary

Guide 2 – middle school

Guide 3 – high school

Exploring Careers. Glencoe McGraw-Hill. (800-334-7344)

Textbook and supporting materials in which students examine career clusters to better understand the opportunities that exist in the global workplace. Students are guided to see that the skills they learn at school will help them prepare for success in the uncharted new industries of the future.

How to . . . Career Activities for Every Classroom. Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse, Horrabin Hall 46, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390. (800-322-3905)

Lesson plans and activities that are designed to help integrate career development into middle school curricula. This book will be crosswalked with Illinois Learning Standards in the near future.

LaRocco, Christine and James Coughlin. The Art of Work: An Anthology of Workplace Literature. Cincinnati, OH: South-Western Educational Publishing. ISBN 0-538-63651-3

This collection of poetry, short stories, essays, and drama focuses on workers and their lives. Through the study of literature with workplace themes, students can reflect on their lives as workers and participants in a society where most days are spent working. The fictional and non-fictional characters in this anthology seek meaning in their lives which transcends the time clock and paycheck.

Lindsey, Norene. Dream Catchers, 2nd edition. 1998.

ISBN 1-56370-514-1

\$4.95

Student Workbook

ISBN 1-56370-520-6

Teacher's Guide

ISBN 1-56370-515-X

Activities

Includes lesson plans and activity sheets designed to help students explore their skills and dreams, as well as career awareness.

Pathfinder: Exploring Career & Educational Paths. 1994. Package of 10 is \$59.95.

ISBN 1-56370-524-9

Student Workbook

ISBN 1-56370-525-7

Teacher's Guide

This high interest workbook is written specifically to help students plan their career and educational paths through high school and into post-secondary training.

Writers INC. School to Work. Wilmington, MA: Great Source Education Group. Soft cover \$12.50; Hard cover \$15.50 ISBN 0-669-40873-5 (1-800-235-3565)

Blends academic writing basics with the nuts and bolts of business communication. Along with common forms of school writing, students find strategies and samples of work-related communication such as: resumes and cover letters, memos and meeting minutes, instructions and proposals, media releases and speeches, tips for communicating with groups, as well as work ethics, work habits and work etiquette.

Reference Materials

Career Discovery Encyclopedia. Six volume set. 1997. \$129.95 ISBN 0-89434-184-7

Content is written at the upper elementary level and includes 509 job articles.

Career Skills Library. Chicago, IL: Ferguson Publishing Co., 1998. (800-306-2592) Eight volume set. \$119.00

Titles in the series include Communication, Self Development, Problem Solving, Information Management, Teamwork, Leadership, Organization, and Learning the Ropes.

Careers without College Series. Princeton, NJ: Peterson's. 1992. (609-243-9111) Fourteen books. \$103.35

Fourteen very attractive, easy to read books designed for those who don't have, or plan on getting, a four-year college degree. Each book features five jobs in a particular industry or career area. The books are titled: Building, Cars, Computers, Emergencies, Entertainment, Fashion, Fitness, Healthcare, Kids, Money, Music, Office, Sports, Travel.

Department of Defense. America's Top Military Careers, revised edition. \$19.95.

ISBN 1-56370-706-3

Covers 197 enlisted and officer occupations, including ASVAB test scores required for each, and covers training and education available, working conditions, physical demands, projected openings, advancement opportunities, duty locations, pay and benefits and many other details.

Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance. Four volume set. 1998. \$149.95 ISBN 0-89434-274-6

Includes 698 articles covering more than 1,500 occupations. Also lists 1,400 professional associations to contact for more information. There is expanded coverage of internships, apprenticeships, and training programs.

Farr, J. Michael. America's Fastest Growing Jobs. \$16.95. ISBN 1-56370-489-7

Provides descriptions for all the major jobs with average or higher growth rates plus the jobs that are projected to create the largest number of openings.

Farr, J. Michael. America's Top Jobs for College Graduates, 3rd edition. \$16.95

ISBN 1-56370-493-5

This edition has been expanded to include detailed information on more than 100 jobs and trends for college grads and those considering a college education.

Farr, J. Michael. America's Top Jobs for People Without a Four-Year Degree, 4th edition. \$16.95. ISBN 1-56370-490-0

This book helps people find jobs that do not require a four-year degree. There are 165 job descriptions included.

Farr, J. Michael. American's Top Medical, Education & Human Services Jobs, 4th edition. \$16.95. ISBN 1-56370-492-7

Provides information about the best-paying, fastest growing jobs in the medical field.

Occupations Digest. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Career Information Systems. Updated annually in August. \$37.00. (608-263-2725)

A good alternative for lower reading level populations that describes more than 600 occupations.

Reeves, Diane Lindsey. Career Ideas for Kids Series. New York: Checkmark Books. 1998.

Set of six. \$77.70. (800-322-8755)

A new series that suggests careers based on kids' current interests. Titles include: Kids who like Art, Kids who like Science, Kids who like Talking, Kids who like Computers, Kids who like Sports, and Kids who like Writing.

Rowe, Fred A. The Career Connection for College Education, A Guide to College Education & Related Career Opportunities. \$16.95. ISBN 156370-142-1

Information on more than 100 college majors and 1,000 related careers.

Rowe, Fred A. The Career Connection for Technical Education. \$14.95. ISBN 1-56370-143-X

Information on more than 60 technical majors and 400 careers to which ty can lead.

U. S. Department of Labor. America's Top 300 Jobs, 6th edition. \$18.95. ISBN 1-56370-466-8

This is the bookstore version of the Occupational Outlook Handbook.

U. S. Department of Labor. Occupational Outlook Handbook. Softcover \$17.95

ISBN 1-56370-464-1; Hardcover ISBN 1-56370-475-7.

Over 300 jobs, the very jobs held by 86% of the American work force, are grouped into 19 occupational clusters and described in detail.

Young Persons Occupational Handbook. \$19.95 ISBN 1-56370-201-0

Descriptions of America's top 250 jobs for career exploration.

Games and Simulations

Career Caper Adventure Game. Center on Education and Work. Publications Unit, 964 Educational Science Building, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53706-1796.

(800-466-0399) Single Game \$49.00; Set of Five \$169.00

This board game is both fun and exciting while offering students the opportunity to explore and learn about different careers.

The Real Game. NOICC Training Support Center. Highline Community College, P. O. Box 98000, Des Moines, WA 98198-9800. \$195.00 (888-700-8940)

The Real Game allows students to experience, in play-acting situations, the issues and aspects of life that they will face in the future. This simulation explores work as well as one's total life. The lesson plans can be used as an interdisciplinary unit, a class curriculum, or as career activities integrated into the present curriculum.

Inventories

Career Targets: A Career Exploration and Educational Planning Guide. Durgin, PhD., Rod W. COIN Educational Products, 3361 Executive Parkway, Suite, 302, Toledo, OH 43606. (800-274-8515)

Countdown 9.8.7. Illinois Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. 217 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62706 www.ioicc.state.il.us/etc.htm Click on Internet CIS Enter ID: iletc Enter password: etc99

Discover. ACT. 2201 North Dodge St., P. O. Box 168, Iowa City, IA 52243-0168 (319)337-1000

Personality Mosaic. Home Economics/Life Management Modules, Arizona Department of Education, September 1993, Employability (Exploring Career Choices), pp. 5-8, 42-46. (800)352-4558 www.ade.state.us/
Based on Holland's theory.

Personal Style Inventory. Randleman, Laura. Personality Types and Differences Level I, Home Economics/Life Management Curriculum Resources, Arizona Department of Education, 1992, pp.47-51. www.ade.state.us/

Temperament Sort. Randleman, Laura. Personality Types of Differences Level I, Home Economics/Life Management Curriculum Resources, Arizona Department of Education, 1992, pp.21-41. www.ade.state.us/

Magazines

American Careers Planner. Career Communications, Inc., 6701 W. 64th St., Overland Park, KS 66202 (913)362-7788 www.carcom.com
Published annually.

Career World. Weekly Reader Corporation, 3001 Cindel Drive, Delran, NJ 08075 (800)466-3355
ISSN-0774-1002
Published six times during the school year beginning in September and ending in May.

Publishers

Capstone Press, 151 Good Counsel Drive, P. O. Box 669, Mankato, MN 56002-0669, (800)747-4992

Jist, 720 North Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202-3490, Phone:800-648-5478;
Fax (980)547-8329

Videos

Careers in Math. HRM Video. 175 Tompkins Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570, (800) 431-2050
Catalog number: NG-125-VSD

Careers in the Real World Series. 22 videos, 1 teacher's guide. \$1499.00 Nimco, Inc., P.O. Box 9,
Calhoun, KY 42327 (800) 962-6662)

Chef	16 minutes	\$89.00
Computer Programmer	14 minutes	\$89.00
Entrepreneur	25 minutes	\$89.00
Guidance Counselor	15 minutes	\$89.00
Introduction to Real World Careers	60 minutes	\$109.00
Job Search Skills	17 minutes	\$89.00
Medical Home Health Care	18 minutes	\$89.00
Medical Secretary/Assistant	16 minutes	\$89.00
Military Transition	18 minutes	\$89.00
Nursing	20 minutes	\$89.00
Occupational Therapist	16 minutes	\$89.00
Office Machine Service Technician	21 minutes	\$89.00
Paralegal	20 minutes	\$89.00
Pharmacist & Pharmacy Assistant	18 minutes	\$89.00
Physician's Assistant	18 minutes	\$89.00
Physical Therapist	19 minutes	\$89.00
Respiratory Therapist	24 minutes	\$89.00
Sales and Marketing	15 minutes	\$89.00
Social Worker	20 minutes	\$89.00
Systems Analyst	14 minutes	\$89.00
Teacher	20 minutes	\$89.00
X-Ray Technologist	14 minutes	\$89.00

Enter Here Video Series. (800) 577-2271 100 videos, series print material, student guides,
teacher guides, SCANS correlation charts, classroom poster, 15 career interest inventory crosswalks.
\$1,555.00

The videos show the relationship between school and work and support career pathway choices.
Each film is approximately 10 minutes in length and gives your students a lot of information with-
out overwhelming them.

Walkabout Series (800) 577-2271

These videos are uniquely targeted for classroom use in grades 6-8 where students are not little kids
anymore-but not quite adults, either. These videos show students that they can approach and solve
real-life problems based on what they are learning in school. Sophisticated on-screen graphics tie
math, science, and language arts skills and concepts to the job site. Pre-algebra, ecosystems, synthe-
sizing ideas, and developing viewpoints are shown as part of the featured jobs in these 12-15 minute
videos.

Walkabout Language Arts	\$50.00
Walkabout Math	\$50.00
Walkabout Science	\$50.00

What's School Got To Do With It? HRM Video. 175 Tompkins Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570
(800) 431-2050
Catalog number NG-126-VSD

Websites

ADA Information Center
ADA/Rehab. Act
American Counseling Association (ACA)
American School Directory
America's Career InfoNet
America's Job Bank
Association for Career and Technical Education
Association for Illinois Middle Schools
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Career City
Career Magazine
Career Mosaic
Career Path
Career Questionnaire

Careers Front Page
Careers Resource Center
Center for Occupational Research and Development
Center of Education for the Young Adolescent (CEYA)
Classroom Connect
Council on Foundations
Department of Labor Employment & Training
Employment Listings
ERIC Assessment and Evaluation
ERIC Community Colleges
ERIC Entrepreneurship Education
ERIC Service Learning
ERIC Urban Education
ERIC, The Educational Resources Network
E-Spans Interactive Employment Network
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NOICC
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On-Line Sports

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<http://www.icdi.wvu.edu/ena-file.htm>
<http://www.counseling.org/>
<http://www.asd.com>
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<http://www.acteonline.org>
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<http://www.uwplatt.edu/~ceya>
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 School-To-Work Internet Gateway
 Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)
 Smithsonian Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
 Teachers Helping Teachers
 Teachers' Net
 The Center for Career Development in Early Childhood Education
 U.S. Census Bureau
 U.S. Department of Education
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 U.S. Department of Labor
 Vocational Industrial Clubs of America
 Web 66
 Westech's Virtual Job Fair
 Where Am I going? Career Occupation Information
 Where Am I going? Career Research

<http://www.pj.org>
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<http://www.tier.net/schools/tcenters/scans.htm>
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<http://www.earlychildhood.org>
<http://www.census.gov>
<http://www.ed.gov>
<http://www.dhhs.gov>
<http://www.dol.gov>
<http://www.vica.org>
<http://web66.coled.umn.edu>
<http://www.vjf.com>
www.go.com/Center/Careers
<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocacs/CRC/manual-home.html>

Contacts

School & Main Institute
 225 Friend Street, 7th Floor, Box 11
 Boston, MA 02114
 617.277.2100 phone
 617.227.2107 fax

School & Main offers business, educators, and community organizations and government advanced strategies and management systems to create the local capacity to improve education and workforce development.

Regional Offices of Education throughout Illinois

Partnerships – contact your local ROE or check the ISBE website

State resources

Workforce Preparation Partnerships Division
 217.782.4620

Our Career Development Phase I Schools – AIMS Illinois Middle Grades Network Schools

Carl Sandburg Middle School	Freeport, IL	815.232.0340
Central A & M District 21	Assumption, IL	217.226.4241
Francisco Madero Middle School	Chicago, IL	773.535.4466
Jefferson Middle School	Aurora, IL	630.844.4535
Lincoln Middle School	Peoria, IL	309.672.6542
Litchfield Middle School	Litchfield, IL	217.324.4668
Mannheim Middle School	Melrose Park, IL	847.455.5020
Murphysboro Middle School	Murphysboro, IL	618.683.3041

APPENDICES

- A. Planning a Curriculum Enhancer
- B. Sample Parent Letter
- C. Career Awareness Parent and Community Sign Up Sheet
- D. Sample Career Day Letter
- E. Comprehensive Career Development System Action Plan
- F. What Career Development Is and Isn't
- G. Benefits Career Development Brings to Stakeholders
- H. Career Development Competencies and Indicators
- I. Appendix D to the Illinois Learning Standards
- J. Illinois Learning Standards and Career Development Competency Charts

APPENDIX A

PLANNING A CURRICULUM ENHANCER

School & Main Institute, 1998

SPARKING AN IDEA

- Pick a curriculum objective, goal, or lesson that you or someone in your group currently teaches.
- Do any careers or “real world” applications come to mind when you think about your objective or lesson? Brainstorm a list of 5-10 ideas.
- Take one of those ideas and work with your group to develop a full-fledged “enhancer” activity and plan for carrying it out. Use the Planning Worksheet to guide you in developing your plan.

Curriculum Objective + Career Skills = Enhancer

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT PLANNING WORKSHEET

School & Main Institute, 1998

What curriculum objectives are you trying to support?

What activity or activities did you come up with? Where will it take place?

What skill(s) will students learn?

What specific career(s) are connected to the skills that students will learn during this activity?

What will students actually do during this activity?

Who will be involved in the process and how (i.e., planning, implementation, etc.)?

<input type="checkbox"/> students	<input type="checkbox"/> parents	<input type="checkbox"/> other teachers
<input type="checkbox"/> counselors	<input type="checkbox"/> administrators	<input type="checkbox"/> community members
<input type="checkbox"/> others		

How will “guests” – people invited into the classroom to lead or assist with your activity, or anyone who will interact with the students outside the classroom – be prepared?

What help will you need and when will you need it? Materials and other resources? Where might you get them?

Who will assess this activity and how will it be assessed?

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER

August 6, 2000

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This coming school year, ABC Middle School teachers will involve students in career awareness activities. The purpose of these activities is to expose students to a broad range of career opportunities available in today's world of work. Through these activities, we hope students will see connections between what they are learning in school and tasks performed on the job. For example, we anticipate that students will learn how reading, writing, and math skills are used on a daily basis in the workforce.

To help implement this, we are seeking your help. We are forming a pool of parent and community members to serve as a resource to classroom teachers. These resource volunteers may be asked to speak to students about their careers and explain how they apply such skills as reading, math, science, communications, etc. in their job tasks. These volunteers may also be asked to speak about their leisure activities.

If you would like to volunteer your time, please complete the attached form and return it to the school office. Your name will be placed in the database. Once the database is completed, the list of volunteers will be distributed to teachers in the school who will coordinate all classroom visits with the volunteers.

If visiting the classroom is not workable for you, but communicating through the Internet is, please complete the Internet portion of the form. Students and teachers will send questions to you via e-mail for your response. If your business is available for students to visit, please indicate the level of participation on the response form as well.

Thank you for considering participating in our career development. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Sally Smith
Career Curriculum Coordinator

APPENDIX C

CAREER AWARENESS PARENT AND COMMUNITY SIGN-UP SHEET

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our schools' Career Awareness Program. Please complete the following information and return it to (name of school). Please print.

Name _____

Business Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Work Phone _____ Home Phone _____

I can best participate through the Internet _____

E-mail Address _____

Type of Business _____

Career(s) to be discussed _____

Leisure Activity that could be discussed _____

Availability

Days of Week (Circle all that apply):

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Time of Day: ___ Morning 8:00-11:30 ___ Afternoon 11:30-3:00

Speaking Situation Desired:

___ Career Day/Fair ___ Individual Classroom ___ Conduct Mock Interviews

Workplace Visitation

Field Trip (students would come to your business for a tour)

___ yes ___ maybe, given more information ___ no

If yes, how many students can you accommodate at one time? _____

Job Shadowing (a student would spend time, a day or less, at your business with you)

___ yes ___ maybe, given more information ___ no

Grade Level Preference

___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8

Please write any additional comments or suggestions on the back of this form. Thank you.

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE CAREER DAY SPEAKER LETTER

February 20, 2000

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of *Putting the Pieces Together: Career Day* to be held at ABC Middle School, on Thursday, March 16. The students are waiting to learn about the careers of all of our speakers. There are approximately 750 students enrolled at the school. The students range in age from 12 to 15 years old.

Each session will contain a manageable number of students and a teacher. Enclosed is a copy of the schedule for the morning, your room assignment, and the teacher responsible for your room. Upon your arrival at the school please park in the areas indicated on the map on the back of this letter. Students will be available to help you bring materials into the school.

You are representing a specific job cluster. During your presentation, please take a few moments to discuss how your job is similar to and different from these other jobs. I have included a list of careers in your cluster. I have also included in this mailing some "tips" on speaking to students that I received at a workshop this summer. Perhaps that information will be helpful to you.

In preparing for your day, please include the following information in your presentation (each presentation is 25 minutes in length):

1. What you do in your position? A "typical" day
2. What skills are needed to be employed in your job? (mental, physical, interpersonal, etc.)
3. What type of education and/or training is needed for your position? Is there continuous learning in your job?
4. If you are in a position to hire employees, what qualities and/or skills do you look for in an individual?
5. Interesting stories or other information that would appeal to the students.
6. Please allow some time for the students to ask questions about your career.

If you need special equipment, please let me know as soon as possible. I am looking forward to meeting you on March 16; however, if you should have any questions or concerns please contact me at 123-4567.

Sincerely,

Sally Smith
Career Curriculum Coordinator

APPENDIX E

**COMPREHENSIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT
SYSTEM ACTION PLAN**

Middle School Level

School Name

Team Members:

Date

Current Status

Current Status within 2 years

How will you achieve these goals within 2 years?

What is the status of the career development program in your school?	Current Status			Current Status within 2 years			How will you achieve these goals within 2 years?
	Yes	Somewhat	No	In Place	In Progress	In Planning	
1. Career development is addressed at all grade levels.							What needs to be done & what new knowledge, information, or skills do counselors, teachers, & others need to do it?
2. A variety of career and labor market information resources are available.							
3. Career and labor market information is used in instruction.							
4. Teachers, librarians, parents, counselors, other school staff, and business/industry representatives are involved in the career development program.							
5. Counselors and teachers understand career clusters as they relate to curriculum.							
6. Counselors and teachers understand the relationship of the new basic skills such as reading, writing, mathematics, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork.							
7. Counselors support teaching staff with career development resources such as career development curricula, information, and community resource personnel.							
8. Non-traditional careers and high wage opportunities are explained to all students and parents.							
9. Team-teaching opportunities occur to integrate career							
10. School personnel are aware of and involved in partnerships between education and business, industry, and labor.							
11. Staff development activities are actively sought to organize career development activities.							
12. Middle school programs have a formal link with the career counseling programs at the secondary institutions where the students frequently attend.							
13. All middle school students are prepared to complete an Individualized Career Portfolio.							

How will this be accomplished?	Who can help?	Cost?	How will you know if it works?

APPENDIX F

WHAT CAREER DEVELOPMENT IS AND IS NOT

—taken from ISBE powerpoint presentation, <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/etc>

Career Development is:

- ◆ An integrated system of education
- ◆ For everyone who will work
- ◆ Preparation for all career options
- ◆ Extension of good education
- ◆ Well-rounded schooling
- ◆ Locally driven
- ◆ Systemic improvement
- ◆ Expanding opportunities for all students
- ◆ A philosophy of education

- ◆ Spans kindergarten through senior year
- ◆ High, real world standards
- ◆ An evolution

Career Development is NOT:

- ◆ A class or curriculum
- ◆ Just for the non-college bound
- ◆ Vocational education
- ◆ The latest educational fad
- ◆ A program or add-on
- ◆ Federally or state controlled
- ◆ Job training
- ◆ Tracking students
- ◆ Replacing academics or dumbing down school
- ◆ Focused just on the upper grades
- ◆ Isolated activities
- ◆ A revolution

APPENDIX G

BENEFITS CAREER DEVELOPMENT BRINGS TO STAKEHOLDERS

Students

- ◆ Discovering relevance of school subjects to jobs
- ◆ Increasing the number of role models for different occupations
- ◆ Making contacts with people involved in occupations
- ◆ Broadening appreciation of various occupations
- ◆ Learning about realities of full time work
- ◆ Learning advantages and disadvantages of numerous occupations
- ◆ Exploring the local and global job market
- ◆ Learning appropriate attitudes and behavior for job success and survival
- ◆ Improving written and oral communication skills



“I think hands-on experiences are always fun because if you just go, like, in encyclopedias and look in books, it’s really not that fun. But if you go to places and you get to see actually what they do and everything, that’s— that’s interesting.”

—STUDENT, FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Educators/Schools

- ◆ Verifying the relevance of school subjects
- ◆ Providing additional resources
- ◆ Gaining a variety of teaching methods
- ◆ Obtaining occupational information to enhance curriculum development
- ◆ Publicizing educator/school activities
- ◆ Learning about new and emerging occupations
- ◆ Offering additional perspectives to the teaching profession

Community

- ◆ Providing awareness of company existence and its functions
- ◆ Making contacts with potentially qualified employees
- ◆ Giving companies opportunities to provide direction for students in identifying school subjects that are required for certain occupations
- ◆ Providing companies with opportunities to represent work environment and attitudes necessary for employment
- ◆ Disseminating up-to-date occupational information
- ◆ Observing how young people are currently educated related to job preparation

APPENDIX H

CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS

Illinois has adopted the following competencies and indicators for the middle school level:

Self-knowledge

COMPETENCY I: Knowledge of the influence of a positive self-concept.

- ◆ Describe personal likes and dislikes.
- ◆ Describe individual skills required to fulfill different life roles.
- ◆ Describe how one's behavior influences the feelings and actions of others.
- ◆ Identify environmental influences on attitudes, behaviors, and aptitudes.

COMPETENCY II: Skills to interact with others.

- ◆ Demonstrate respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.
- ◆ Demonstrate an appreciation for the similarities and differences among people.
- ◆ Demonstrate tolerance and flexibility in interpersonal and group situations.
- ◆ Demonstrate skills in responding to criticism.
- ◆ Demonstrate effective group membership skills.
- ◆ Demonstrate effective social skills.
- ◆ Demonstrate understanding of different cultures, lifestyles, attitudes, and abilities.

COMPETENCY III: Knowledge of the importance of growth and change.

- ◆ Identify feelings associated with significant experiences.
- ◆ Identify internal and external sources of stress.
- ◆ Demonstrate ways of responding to others when under stress.
- ◆ Describe changes that occur in the physical, psychological, social, and emotional development of an individual.
- ◆ Describe the physiological and psychological factors and they relate to career development.
- ◆ Describe the importance of career, family, and leisure activities to mental, emotional, physical, and economic well-being.

Educational and Occupation Exploration

COMPETENCY IV: Knowledge of the benefits of educational achievement to career opportunities.

- ◆ Describe the importance of academic and occupational skills in the world of work.
- ◆ Identify how the skills taught in school subjects are used in various occupations.
- ◆ Describe individual strengths and weaknesses in school subjects.
- ◆ Describe a plan of action for increasing basic educational skills.
- ◆ Describe the skills needed to adjust to changing occupational requirements.
- ◆ Describe how continued learning enhances the ability to achieve goals.
- ◆ Describe how skills relate to the selection of high school courses of study.
- ◆ Describe how aptitudes and abilities relate to broad occupational groups.

COMPETENCY V: Understanding the relationship between work and learning.

- ◆ Demonstrate effective learning habits and skills.
- ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of personal skills and attitudes to job success.
- ◆ Describe the relationship of personal attitudes, beliefs, abilities, and skills to occupations.

COMPETENCY VI: Skills to locate, understand, and use career information.

- ◆ Identify various ways that occupations can be classified.
- ◆ Identify a number of occupational groups for exploration.
- ◆ Demonstrate skills in using school and community resources to learn about occupational groups.
- ◆ Identify sources to obtain information about occupational groups including self-employment.
- ◆ Identify skills that are transferable from one occupation to another.
- ◆ Identify sources of employment in the community.

COMPETENCY VII: Knowledge of skills necessary to seek and obtain jobs.

- ◆ Demonstrate personal qualities (e.g. dependability, punctuality, getting along with others) that are needed to get and keep jobs.
- ◆ Describe terms and concepts used in describing employment opportunities and conditions.
- ◆ Demonstrate skills to complete a job application.
- ◆ Demonstrate skills and attitudes essential for a job interview.

COMPETENCY VIII: Understanding of how work relates to the needs and functions of the economy and society.

- ◆ Describe the importance of work to society.
- ◆ Describe the relationship between work and economic and societal needs.
- ◆ Describe the economic contributions workers make to society.
- ◆ Describe the effects that societal, economic, and technological change have on occupations.

Career Planning

COMPETENCY IX: Skills to make decisions.

- ◆ Describe personal beliefs and attitudes.
- ◆ Describe how career development is a continuous process with series of choices.
- ◆ Identify possible outcomes of decisions.
- ◆ Describe school courses related to personal, educational, and occupational interests.
- ◆ Describe how the expectations of others affect career planning.
- ◆ Identify ways in which decisions about education and work relate to other major life decisions.
- ◆ Identify advantages and disadvantages of various secondary and post-secondary programs for the attainment of career goals.
- ◆ Identify requirements for secondary and post-secondary programs.

COMPETENCY X: Knowledge of the inter-relationship of life roles.

- ◆ Identify how different work and family patterns require varying kinds and amounts of energy, participation, motivation, and talent.
- ◆ Identify how work roles at home satisfy needs of the family.
- ◆ Identify personal goals that may be satisfied through a combination of work community, social, and family roles.
- ◆ Identify personal leisure choices in relation to lifestyle and the attainment of future goals.
- ◆ Describe advantages and disadvantages of various life role options.
- ◆ Describe the inter-relationships between family, occupational, and leisure decisions.

COMPETENCY XI: Knowledge of different occupations and changing male/female roles.

- ◆ Describe advantages and problems of entering non-traditional occupations.
- ◆ Describe the advantages of taking courses related to personal interest, even if members of the opposite gender most often take them.
- ◆ Describe stereotypes, biases, and discriminatory behaviors that may limit opportunities for women and men in certain occupations.

COMPETENCY XII: Understanding the process of career planning.

- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of exploratory processes and programs.
- ◆ Identify school choices that meet tentative career goals.
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of academic and vocational programs offered at the high school level.
- ◆ Describe skills needed in a variety of occupations, including self-employment.
- ◆ Identify strategies for managing personal resources (e.g., talents, time, money) to achieve tentative career goals.
- ◆ Develop an individual career plan, updating information from the elementary-level plan and including tentative decisions to be implemented in high school.

APPENDIX I

ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS WORKPLACE SKILLS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES

(These are contained in the Illinois Learning Standards Document under Appendix D)

Workplace Skills

1. Develop an employment plan
2. Seeking and applying for employment opportunities
3. Accepting employment
4. Communicating on the job
5. Interpreting the economics of work
6. Maintaining professionalism
7. Adapting to and coping with change
8. Solving problems and thinking critically
9. Maintaining a safe and healthy work environment
10. Demonstrating work ethics and behavior
11. Demonstrating technological literacy
12. Maintaining interpersonal relationships
13. Demonstrating teamwork

Career Development Competencies

1. Understand the relationship between work and learning
2. Understand how work relates to the needs and functions of the economy and society
3. Understand how to make decisions
4. Be able to locate, understand and use career information
5. Understand how societal needs and functions influence the nature and structure of work
6. Know the importance of growth and change
7. Understand developmental changes and transitions
8. Be aware of the career planning process

APPENDIX J

CROSS-REFERENCE CHARTS

In Appendix D of the Illinois Learning Standards the workplace skills and general competencies are cross-referenced to where they fit with the Illinois Learning Standards. As listed in Appendix I, each content area has 13 workplace skills and 8 career development competencies. These charts simplify this for a quick overview of where the workplace skills and career development competencies are integrated into academics.

Workplace Skills, Appendix D of the Illinois Learning Standards

Learning Standard	English & Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies	Physical Development & Health	Fine Arts	Foreign Language
1					X		
2							
3	X				X		X
4	X	X	X	X	X		X
5	X		X	X	X		X
6	X	X		X	X		X
7				X			
8	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
9			X		X		
10	X			X	X		
11			X	X	X	X	
12	X			X	X	X	X
13	X	X		X	X		

Career Development Competencies, Appendix D Illinois Learning Standards

Competencies	English & Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies	Physical Development & Health	Fine Arts	Foreign Language
1		X		X	X	X	X
2				X	X		X
3	X	X		X	X		
4	X				X		X
5			X	X	X	X	X
6					X		
7					X		X
8		X	X		X	X	X

SPECIAL THANKS

Organizations and individuals involved in the development of this Career Development Guide:

- ◆ The Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools
- ◆ Debbi Ahlden, Washington Middle School, Aurora, IL
- ◆ Gail DePaolo, Vandalia Middle School, Vandalia, IL
- ◆ Nancy Harris, Illinois State Board of Education
- ◆ Illinois State Board of Education, Division of Workforce and Community Partnerships
- ◆ Dr. Deborah Kasak, Executive Director of AIMS
- ◆ Barb Rezabek, Mannheim Middle School, Melrose Park, IL
- ◆ Elaine Stone, Consultant for AIMS/ISBE project

Teachers, Administration, and School Boards of the following schools participated in data collection and/or contributed materials used in this Career Development Guide:

- ◆ Carl Sandburg Middle School, Freeport, IL
- ◆ Carmi-White County Middle School, Carmi, IL
- ◆ Central A&M District 21, Assumption, IL
- ◆ Clinton Rosette Middle School, DeKalb, IL
- ◆ Francisco Madero Middle School, Chicago, IL
- ◆ Jefferson Middle School, Aurora, IL
- ◆ Jefferson Middle School, Champaign, IL
- ◆ Lincoln Middle School, Peoria, IL
- ◆ Litchfield Middle School, Litchfield, IL
- ◆ Mannheim Middle School, Melrose Park, IL
- ◆ Murphysboro Middle School, Murphysboro, IL
- ◆ Thurgood Marshall Middle School, Chicago, IL
- ◆ Vandalia Middle School, Vandalia, IL
- ◆ West Chicago Middle School, Chicago, IL

MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER DEVELOPMENT MAKING IMPACT ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Illinois middle schools involved in a career development initiative are making headway in incorporating the elements of comprehensive career development into their schools. Evaluations conducted in 1999 showed that schools involved in this Career Development Initiative made progress in four primary areas:

- ◆ At a school, classroom and advisory level, teachers and students report a wide variety of experiences with a career development focus.
- ◆ The longer teachers are involved in career development, the more time they spend incorporating career development ideas and activities into their lessons.
- ◆ Students realize the importance of academic skills to their future careers.
- ◆ Barriers are present but not insurmountable

GOOD FIT FOR EARLY ADOLESCENTS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

In 1996, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools (AIMS) identified a set of middle schools from the AIMS Illinois Middle Grades Network in order to demonstrate and disseminate information on how to comprehensively implement career development across a cohort of connected schools. The schools received professional development, materials and financial support through the network project. Teams of teachers from the fourteen middle schools planned and implemented career-focused activities, programs and curricula. They served as mentors to others.

During the 1990's these schools had changed from departmentalized junior high schools to schools organized around interdisciplinary teaching teams, advisement and integrated curriculum. They wanted their schools to be responsive to young adolescent learning needs and had experienced positive outcomes as a result of their middle school change efforts. When these schools were offered a chance to extend their middle grades reform effort to include the philosophies of career development, the teachers believed it was a "natural" extension of the "real life kinds of learning" that middle school students so crave and as teachers they were trying to create.

The Illinois Career Development initiative was based upon the National Career Development Competencies and had the following goals:

- Support implementation across all middle schools in all grades for all students of the career competencies and Career Development foci through resource exchanges, materials and meetings
- Gather documentation, evaluation and assessment of the implementation effects of the Career Development principles and practices through participation in both quantitative and qualitative measures
- Be models for others to learn about comprehensive career development

EVALUATIONS CAPTURE FIT

This report of two evaluations conducted in the spring of 1999 by the Center for Prevention Research and Development at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign documents the efforts of this cohort of schools. Undertaken separately, the results of the two evaluations are combined in order to capture the opinions of teachers and students across all the buildings.

SURVEY DETAILS

In May 1999, all teachers in the fourteen schools were asked to complete surveys. Students in six of these schools were also surveyed. Of these six schools, three had joined the initiative in 1996, and three joined in 1998. These schools were surveyed to determine if there were any differences between cohorts of schools by the amount of time that they participated in the initiative.

The survey asked 326 teachers to evaluate the frequency of several career development pursuits in the classroom. Staff members then rated the amount of time and effort they spent on career development in tegration. Finally, the teachers ranked any potential barriers to implementation.

The student sample was 1550 consisting primarily of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Slightly more than half of the respondents were 7th graders (51.5%). The sample was balanced in regard to gender, with 50.4 percent female and 49.6 percent male. The race/ethnic makeup consisted of white (54.7%), Hispanic (29.6%) and African-American (9%) students. Students reported that 35.2 percent were receiving free or reduced-price lunch.

Students were asked to rate their educational self-expectations to their perceptions of their parents and classroom teachers. The students rated the frequency of career development activities within the classroom. They ranked the importance of certain academic and job-related skills and abilities to their future careers and reported on how often they practiced each of these skills at school. Finally, the students assessed their future in the job market and the role the school is playing in preparing them for the career world.

INTERVIEW DETAILS

The fourteen schools also participated in focus group interviews in the Spring of 1999. The sample included a minimum of one group of teachers and students per school. The schools involved included a mix of urban, suburban and rural schools throughout Illinois.

Each school was partnered with another participating school for data collection allowing for the exchange of facilitator teams between schools. At the facilitator training session, teachers defined the greatest areas of importance regarding the Career Development project and the feedback was used to refine the questions for the focus group protocols.

At the focus group sessions, both teachers and students were asked about the types of Career Development activities being conducted in their schools and how these activities were incorporated into the school's schedule.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STUDY

Implementation of Career Development Concepts and Activities

Focus group participants described the following activities as occurring through schoolwide experiences, individual classes or advisory periods:

- ◆ Guest speakers on a variety of career topics and specific career opportunities
- ◆ Career Fairs bringing together a number of speakers and general career information for a specific event
- ◆ Career mentorship programs pairing specific adults in professional fields with students
- ◆ Student advisory periods focusing on life and work skills including decision making, working in teams, scheduling/planning and meeting deadlines
- ◆ Career simulation activities such as the *Real Game*, *Micro World* and *The Stock Market Game*
- ◆ Career portfolios (Individual Career Plans), writing resumes and learning interview skills
- ◆ Career interest inventories
- ◆ Career software programs and searching the Internet for career information
- ◆ Students viewing videos on specific careers and the relationship between academic subjects and careers
- ◆ Student research projects on specific careers
- ◆ Specific interdisciplinary units on career situations such as the Crime Scene
- ◆ Field trips to universities, businesses, and organizations
- ◆ Specific courses focused on career explorations
- ◆ Career areas incorporated into core classes such as budgeting in math and communication skills in English

One type of activity highlighted in several of the participating schools was the use of a "real life" simulation project in which students participated in careers, budgeted their income, planned and embarked on trips and dealt with everyday adult issues. Students who participated in this type of program consistently indicated a high level of enjoyment and learning. Students who participated in simulation activities provided much detail into the specifics of the activity and were able to transfer "lessons learned" into everyday situations. Many of these students commented that as a result of these activities, they were more aware of the importance of doing well in school, living within a budget, identifying personal strengths and challenges, and striving to achieve success.

I think we should learn about the taxes and stuff because, like, you're thinking, 'Well, I'm getting so much money.' But then, you take taxes out and you have, like, no money left.—Student

In comparison, data from staff surveys suggest that the middle grades schools initiated a number of career development-related activities at the classroom level as described above. Teachers reported that the career development concepts have been integrated somewhat into the overall school program focus, everyday classroom practices, advisory program and to some degree in integrated units.

On average in a week, 69% of teachers report spending 30 minutes or less implementing the career development activities. The longer a teacher is involved in the career development initiative, the more time he spends implementing the program. The percentage of teachers spending between 30-60 minutes per week increases from 14% for those teachers with less than 1 year in the initiative to 54% for teachers with three years. In fact, thirty-six percent of teachers in the "3 or more years" category spend *one or more hours*, and 14 percent spend *four or more hours* per week.

The fourteen schools were at different points in the development of their Career Development efforts. The ability to integrate career development activities was influenced by the organizational structures and staff commitment to act. Cohort comparisons do, indeed, reveal a consistent pattern: *It appears that the longer a teacher is involved the more likely he or she is to incorporate career development activities into his or her classes.*

After three years, teachers are maintaining the frequency of activities first initiated with "Career Plans and Portfolios" and "Career-Related Projects" receiving the largest increases in frequency of practice over time. Most often teachers say they are sharing materials and resources with other teachers and developing career-related lesson plans. The survey results indicate that a variety of career activities happen on occasion throughout the school year. Schools are doing many activities, but not repeating many of the activities often in a school year. I. E. Schools report doing career fairs on a yearly basis.

Responses from the student surveys indicate a similar pattern of use with the most highly reported activities including career speakers coming to class, doing research in the media center and working on projects related to jobs and career occurring once or twice a year. Students view academic skills (reading, mathematics) as *very important* to their future careers. These two skills are also *practiced frequently* at school. "Computer skills" rank as both *moderately important* to careers and *practiced sometime* at school. Students seem to rate "be

organized" as *fairly important*, but report that they do not practice it as often as might be expected. Finally, the students rank softer skills, such as public speaking and leadership, lower, whereas "getting along with others" ranks much higher both in importance and in practice at school.

Students' Attitudes, Aspirations, and Expectations

Students report that teachers are teaching (and that they are learning) job- and career-related information. Mostly students agree or strongly agree that:

- ◆ they learned skills to be successful at the job
- ◆ teachers have taught them about many jobs/careers
- ◆ teachers help me relate school work to the real world
- ◆ classes are important to the jobs they want
- ◆ they learned about many different jobs and careers
- ◆ they learned what they are good at doing
- ◆ they will get the job they really want

Furthermore, students generally endorse that they are learning skills essential to job success, and nearly 72 percent of students surveyed believe they will get the job they really want in the future.

Many of the teachers reported during the focus groups that their students were developing a much greater awareness of the relationship between their academic progress, college and career aspirations. Several teachers felt their students were improving academically as the result of making the connection between their success in school, college and career opportunities.

In addition, a number of students in the focus groups commented on the importance of work-related behaviors such as working with others, being responsible, and coming to work on time. Several students expressed the value of working hard at a job "even when you don't feel like it" and the need to problem solve using actual facts and not rumors.

On the survey, students were asked about whether they, their parents or teachers believed they would attend college. Students report that their parents have greater confidence than they do themselves that they will attend college. Comparatively, students report that their teachers have less confidence that the students will attend college.

At one school, the teachers in a focus group felt the Career Development activities have provided an opportunity to showcase students who are not usually academically successful and believe this has led to increasing a sense of competency for some students. The students in the focus groups mirrored those comments through statements concerning their new found connection between their efforts in school and their futures. A number of students indicated they were thinking more about what type of courses they should take in high school and how that selection relates to future college opportunities. Many of the students believed that college was definitely in their future. Students also spoke of the importance of putting effort forth in their school work because they would use the information in high school and college. A number of students indicated they were thinking more about what type of courses they should take in high school and how that selection relates to future college opportunities.

I liked the research paper the best because it let you know, like, what you needed to focus on in school, in high school.
—Student

Effects of Barriers

During the focus groups, teachers were asked to describe any difficulties they had experienced in implementing the Career Development program and the ways in which they dealt with these challenges. These teachers identified several difficulties:

- ◆ lack of time to plan and develop activities
- ◆ challenges involved in handling multiple responsibilities in addition to their Career Development responsibilities
- ◆ logistics of planning activities across subjects, teachers and teams
- ◆ concern from other teachers in the school regarding additional time needed to prepare for Career Development activities

Likewise on the survey, teachers were asked to rate the magnitude of problems and "lack of time necessary for adequate planning and/or implementation" presented the greatest barrier to the career development implementation.

When looking at the barriers over time in the initiative, most teachers surveyed reported a decrease in barriers the longer they are involved in the initiative with no barrier ever being considered much more than a minor problem.

Overall, teachers viewed the difficulties involved in the planning and implementation of the Career Development project as typical to barriers encountered when implementing any new effort and certainly not as difficult as changing their buildings into full-functioning middle schools had been to implement. The teachers who participated in the focus groups felt the Career Development project to be a worthwhile

endeavor and that none of the challenges they faced were insurmountable. The teachers identified and developed ways to address barriers to implementation:

- be ready and willing to make changes where problems arise
- start with a core group of teachers who are interested in implementing career development
 - But I think to do that...you have to have a broad range of staff involved in it to be able to [implement career education]—as opposed to one or two people.—Teacher*
- be selective in choosing a good fit between activity-teacher-student
- accept that the program will not be perfect but will improve over time
- reduce teachers's sense of being overwhelmed by established the program in pieces (not doing everything all at once)
 - Don't try to do too much at once. Just pick out the things you think your teachers can teach and deal with and do and you feel comfortable with and fit it into your schedule.—Teacher*
- build on activities that are already occurring in the school
 - We've also found that once we really sat down and looked at what we were doing in our classrooms, we were doing a lot of career things. We're just getting people to focus on that and realize that's what they're really doing.—Teacher*
- increase teacher buy-in throughout the school through demonstrated successes
 - And being involved with the workshops, too, being able to gather different ideas from the different schools as to what they are doing.—Teacher*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MIDDLE LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION

- ◆ Career Development efforts within a school appear to have significant impact on students' value of future education at both the high school and college level. Schools should help students make connections between their success in school and future educational and employment opportunities. Teachers should strive to develop activities that provide students with active, hands-on experiences while continually bridging the connection between the activities and future career success.
- ◆ Workplace behaviors and skills are important elements to include in any Career Development effort and must be clearly connected to their role in all aspects of career success. Students in the Career Development schools highly valued activities that were participatory and relevant to their lives and futures.
- ◆ Challenges in the development and implementation of the Career Development effort were similar to implementing any new initiative. Lack of time and balancing a variety of tasks were some of the greatest barriers indicated by participating teachers. Implementing a successful Career Development program requires planning supported by school administration and an understanding that the emphasis should be on strategically establishing quality components of the program and progressively building on those components over the course of time. None of the barriers was rated as a major problem.
- ◆ Successfully implementing a Career Development program in a school requires a "critical mass" of teachers, especially in the early stages of the program, who have the opportunity to meet regularly and support each other throughout the initial and sometimes challenging early efforts of the new initiative.
- ◆ Involvement increases and the amount of time devoted to career activities rises, the longer teachers are involved. Teachers in the participating schools believed the support they received through networking with other schools involved in Career Development efforts was instrumental in implementing their own school's program. Conscious connections across teams and schools supports implementation.

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS



Developed through a joint project of the
Illinois State Board of Education and the
Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools

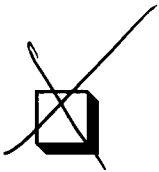


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