

HB 15-1170 PWR COORDINATOR UPDATE

Established under **HB 15-1170**, the Education Consultant role is shared between the Colorado Workforce Development Council and the Colorado Department of Education. The Education Consultant is responsible for supporting local school districts with aligning their education programs with the needs of the labor market to improve postsecondary outcomes of students. A new Education Consultant, Kelly Mitchell, was hired in September 2019.

Innovative PWR Models

Across the state, school districts are taking a variety of approaches to advancing postsecondary and workforce readiness (PWR) and ensuring that students graduate with the skills necessary to secure meaningful employment. In addition to continuing long-standing programs in Career and Technical Education (CTE) and School to Work Alliance Programs (SWAP), schools and districts are collaborating with businesses to implement new and innovative approaches to PWR. Examples of innovative models include:

- **Career cabs:** A career exploration program that gets students out of the classroom and takes them on visits to local employers to learn more about potential careers.
- **Youth apprenticeships:** A growing number of school districts are implementing earn and learn youth apprenticeship models as a way for students to gain rigorous employment training while receiving compensation and school credit.
- **Expansion of programming leading to Industry-recognized credentials:** During the 2017-2018 school year, 37 school districts and 3 charter schools took advantage of the Career Development Incentive Program to offer career development opportunities to students. Districts and charters reported 4,765 credentials earned by students across industries with high projected growth within the state.
- **CareerX:** A comprehensive career development program including opportunities for job shadowing, internship, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship. While the CareerX model is not limited to a specific population of students, several school districts have found success in using the model to re-engage students who are at risk of dropping out of school.
- **Innovation Centers:** In collaboration with businesses and their local communities, a number of school districts are securing the funding necessary to develop buildings dedicated to intensive career-related training opportunities. Businesses donate state of the art equipment to the innovation centers and in some cases have partnered with the schools to utilize the innovation center to upskill their employees or adult job seekers outside of school hours.
- **Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH):** P-TECH programs and schools showcase innovative collaborations between schools, a community college and at least one high growth employer. Students successfully completing P-TECH programs earn a high school diploma, industry-recognized associates degree and benefit from high quality mentoring and career-relevant skills.
- **Industry-led project-based learning:**

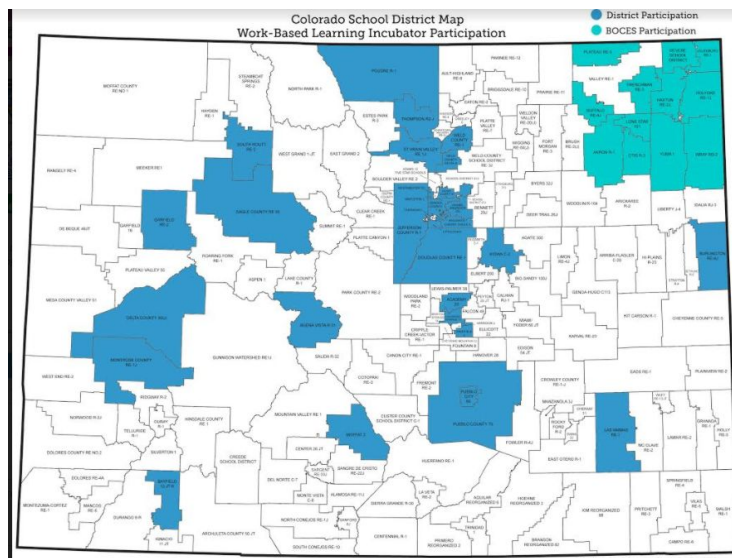
The Graduation Guidelines menu adopted by the State Board of Education in 2013 and Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) requirements are policy tools helping to enable flexibility and innovations for districts interested in testing out new models for PWR. Increasingly, districts are beginning the ICAP process in elementary or middle school to encourage extended self-exploration and career exposure allowing students to make more informed career and academic choices by the time they reach high school.

Education Consultant Activities

The Education Consultant worked to increase education and business collaborations through the following activities:

- Convening industry associations and key stakeholders statewide to update the list of approved programs for the Career Development Incentive Program
- On-going technical assistance for educators working to overcome barriers to developing PWR programming
- Convening a Work-based Learning Incubator to increase understanding and awareness of work-based learning models and strategies. The following provides an overview of the key lessons learned from the WBL Incubator that concluded in September 2018.

WBL Incubator Convened March 2017-September 2018



33 school districts and 2 BOCES participated

What participants wanted to learn:

When participants initially enrolled in the WBL Incubator there were 5 common areas they expressed a desire to learn more about. These categories included:

Resources:	Help accessing and leveraging WBL resources including funding, staffing, and effective models of WBL
Partnerships:	Support in creating and sustaining partnerships with business and local organizations
Tools:	Tools to identify employers; a clearinghouse of opportunities for students (with students with disabilities being highlighted); and a feasibility study
Strategy:	Measuring and assessing quality; Making WBL equitable/accessible for all students; Integrating WBL into career pathways; developing rigorous apprenticeship opportunities; how to address when there is no business nearby; engaging/sustaining student participation
Logistics:	Scheduling, transportation, and Insurance FAQs

What participants expressed were their biggest challenges:

There was a wide variety of challenges expressed by participants. Top challenges included:

- Building buy-in, among the school, parents, and students.
- Supporting student advising and connections to careers, including building awareness about multiple pathways (in different industries *AND* directly into the workforce vs. 4-year university).
- Creating a shared definition between agencies and across partners (industry, schools, higher ed).
- Finding/engaging with employers in multiple industries, including communities with a limited local employer base, and employers willing to engage students with disabilities.
- Limited resources: staff, time (to design, implement, and evaluate), and funding, including transportation.
- Starting a program with no prior knowledge of WBL, or as a new teacher/administrator.
- Sustaining efforts vs. episodic programming.
- Program procedures, alignment with standards and requirements, evaluation and assessment.

Work Products and Tools Developed:

In addition to the core purposes of raising awareness, sharing information, learning from each other, and developing an informal community of practice, tangible tools emerged from the Incubator:

- Webinar recordings are posted on the [CDE website](#).
- An [Incubator Collaboration tool](#) was developed to share resources, including a link to participant contact information and a [WBL Resource Library](#)
- Multiple districts and organizations reached out via email for questions, invited Incubator team members to join meetings, and scheduled technical assistance consulting visits.
- Educators learned about statewide opportunities including the following: WBL Continuum; Sectors Summit, including tools developed for the Summit (i.e. community

readiness framework, definition of terms, participant workbook); Thriving WBL
Community funding opportunity

Goals for 2019-2020:

- Increase the number of school districts providing career development programming and access to high-quality non-degree credentials through the Career Development Incentive Program (CDIP)
- Coordinate the efforts of secondary and postsecondary partners working to build and refine industry-led career pathway systems in Education and Behavioral Health.
- Support the launch of sector partnerships in energy and integrate K-12 educators in partnerships to align industry, economic and workforce in response to the needs of these industries.
- Conduct a regional scan of work-based learning.