Teaching for Career Readiness: How (and What) Do We Teach

The following two practices from the REL Southeast infographic, *Preparing a Career-Ready Student*, focus on how educators can help with teaching for career readiness and implementation of career-focused programs. They are aligned with Recommendation 3 from the What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide, *Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools*: Engage students by offering curricula and programs that connect schoolwork with college and career success and that improve students' capacity to manage challenges in and out of school. These practices are also aligned with Area II: Teaching and advising of the REL Southeast *Self-Study Guide for Career Readiness in Secondary Schools*.

Organize classes around career program areas and provide instruction that connects course content to the world of work.

Key elements of career-focused programs	Examples of elements in practice
✓ **Learning materials are chosen and adapted to focus on an industry that is connected to regional workforce needs.**	The school reviews data from the local and state economic- and workforce-development agencies and identifies health science as a high-demand industry in their area. The school then chooses learning materials that focus on careers within the health science industry, such as patient care and community health.
✓ **The career coursework and experiences are aligned with industry standards.**	An engineering program aligns coursework with manufacturing industry standards for entry-level employment. The school establishes an industry advisory board with local employers to identify relevant certification standards.
✓ **The academic curriculum enables students to learn skills related to the industry.**	Students in a medical sciences program learn to calculate medication dosages in their Algebra I class or study biometrics in their statistics class.
✓ **Local community colleges or technical schools advise on the industry-related curriculum and relevant student outcomes.**	A school focused on advanced manufacturing partners with the local technical college to offer a dual-credit course in computer-integrated manufacturing. A representative from the college serves on the school's industry advisory board to advise on the manufacturing training curriculum.
✓ **The career coursework is regularly evaluated against student outcomes and the needs of local industry and partners.**	At the end of every year, a team of school staff examines academic outcomes, such as test scores, and measures of student engagement, such as climate surveys and attendance rates, to evaluate how the program can better meet student needs. Data are shared with the industry advisory board for input on how the program can be more relevant to local employers.

Assist students in formulating individualized learning plans or individual graduation plans.

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✓ **Counselors create an individualized graduation plan for each student based on students' career and education goals.**	Starting in 9th grade, students work with their counselors to complete an individual graduation plan. Plans align students' career goals with their course of study, work, and extracurricular experiences, as well as giving students feedback on how their academic progress relates to their post-high school goals.

Rumberger, R., Addis, H., Allensworth, E., Balfanz, R., Bruch, J., Dillon, E., et al. (2017). Preventing dropout in secondary schools (NCEE 2017-No. 4028). Educator's Practice Guide. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/24.