

Council for Educational Change

Career Awareness Leadership Forum

Date:

Problem

Business has jobs (employment opportunities) for which there is an insufficient talent supply.

There is a jobs/skills mismatch: employers have job openings they cannot fill; students are not graduating with the skills to take advantage of these existing jobs. Students, teachers, and principals need an awareness of the job skills and career opportunities for current and future employment.

“Automation has transformed the American factory, rendering millions of low-skilled jobs redundant. Fast-spreading technologies like robotics and 3D printing will exacerbate this trend,” Mireya Solís, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute.

New skills required to secure employment, have not yet been incorporated into the education curriculum, we need to:

- > identify current skills and develop industry specific content
- > explore the current workplace and simulate it in schools
- > prepare students for new employment configurations and the 21st century workplace

Business and industry undergo continuous improvements and changes throughout the year. New concepts and technologies are created and implemented, while others fade and are discarded. We need to address how we prepare our students to be ready to enter the evolving workplace when they graduate from high school. To do this, educators must interface with business.

Business entities must communicate employment needs to the educational community, to the schools in their counties. They need an effective vehicle to enable ongoing communications.

Business leaders need to build relationships with school principals, who are the instructional leaders in their schools. School leaders must become aware of, and informed about, job-related opportunities and the skills needed to meet specific industry/corporate employment.

- > **Principals** need to ensure that teachers incorporate appropriate work-related content into their subject instruction to better prepare their students
- > **Teachers** need to provide this content and provide realistic projects-based/work related activities for their students
- > **Students** need to become knowledgeable about career opportunities and have practical workforce experiences

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Rationale

The Council for Educational Change has effectively established more than 600 business-education partnerships throughout Florida. Most recently school leaders and a group of teachers from Dillard High School in Broward County visited neighboring businesses to understand the skills needed to fill employment opportunities. Another group of teachers from a school in Miami-Dade had a similar experience.

The externship experience was a reality check. A participant commented, "It gives a different perspective regarding careers and the pursuit of a career... not everyone is going to college." Most importantly it's a holistic approach, ALL the educational staff shared the experience. Understanding what future employers are looking for is instrumental in order to provide the students with skills to become employable.

Opportunity for Solutions

Based on the Council's 17 year history of working with business/education partnerships, we have developed a model that will build a bridge between the business and education communities, the Career Leadership Forum. Activities of the Forum will:

- a. Create a platform where the business community can communicate at a larger and closer scale with the educational community. It will allow a representative from an industry (or industries) to meet with a group of school leaders to discuss employment issues, develop ideas and strategies, and work together to better prepare students to be career ready.
- b. Engage the business/industry representative to engage in school specific activities with principals, teachers and students (e.g. presentations; externships for teachers; field experiences for students; internships, apprenticeships)
- c. Provide opportunities for teachers to align job skills with the Florida Standards
- d. Communicate opportunities for parents to participate in activities, to serve as liaison/support school efforts
- e. Utilize local partnerships to sponsor (above) activities
- f. Create career fairs

Funding Opportunities

\$30,000 will allow for the participation of four - five member teams comprised of a principal, guidance counselor and/or teacher, and two students (sophomore and junior), from a dozen schools, in the Career Awareness Leadership Forum. This has an impact on an estimated 25-30 school leaders, 1,800 faculty, and 12,000 students.

Results

This model would be replicable for school districts statewide, and can address one of several industries. It can also create ongoing Executive Partnerships, such as the Council's PASS[®]-Partnership to Advance School Success and Executive PASS programs.

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Career Leadership Forum Format

Graduates Prepared for the Workforce Close the Gap – Jobs/Skills Mismatch

two days (4 half day sessions)

Session I

Location: (TBD) Saturday or Workday

Objectives: Meet the Business(es) - Presentation/Team Objective

- Keynote presenter (needs)
- Opportunities (variety of careers-use match model)
- Panel (what works)
- Draft a plan
- Career awareness/activity/engagement at individual school

Session II

Location: At School Site

Objectives: Business goes to school

Implement Activities

- Externships for Teachers
- Revamp curriculum

Business Presentations/Projects

- Workplace challenge
- Entrepreneurial challenge
- Build a business plan

Session III

Location: At the Workplace

Objectives: Prospective Employees go to Work

- Conduct field experience/create internship
- Shadow a business/employee (schedule)

Session IV

Location: (TBD) Saturday or Workday

Objectives: Reconvene/Reflect/Results – ROI

- Schools report on their outcomes/Network/Share – Capture Data
- Evaluate outcome/compare activities to individual plans
- Develop model activities for replication – Produce highlights from each team
- Consider formal Executive Partnerships to benefit schools – Perspective outcome