



Introduction

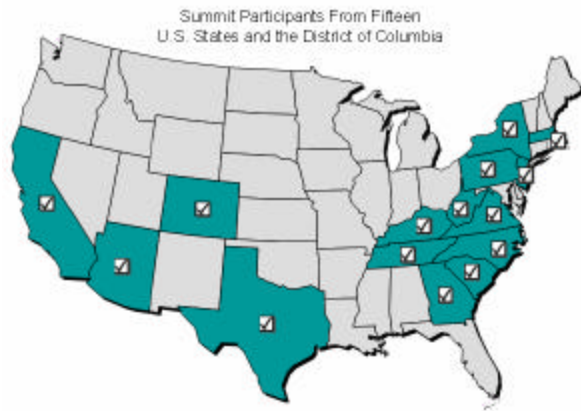
The *High Schools & Careers: The New Value Proposition* Summit's goal was to make career ambition and career knowledge a core part of the high school experience and an essential component of high school reform by forming a system that prepares students for a lifetime of successful employment.

The Summit, hosted by Health Careers Futures (a non-profit supporting organization of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation), assembled national thought leaders from business, education and human services sectors for a rare opportunity to share collective wisdom and to develop a common reform platform.

This Summit fostered dialogue, debate, idea sharing and frontier thinking. It included four dynamic work sessions focused on designing an ideal career education system for students, each session approaching the task from a different framework.

Event Attendance

109 invitees participated in the oversubscribed one-day Summit. Sixty (55%) of attendees were from the Pittsburgh metro area, while 49 (45%) represented other regional and national interests. Representatives were present from 15 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.



Participants were distributed among the following organizational types:

Participant Organization Type	Number of Participants
K-12 Education/School	20
Social or Youth Services Agency	15
Higher Education	12
Healthcare Organization	12
Foundation	10
National Association or Council	10
Research Institution (Think Tank)	8
Workforce Agency/Workforce Development	7
High School Student	7
Government	5
Economic Development Organization	2

OPENING DISCUSSIONS

Keynote Speaker and Panelists

The morning was dedicated to presentations by the keynote speaker, Willard Daggett, EdD, President of International Center for Leadership in Education (Albany, NY), and three panelists who outlined key issues and opportunities pertaining to high schools and career relevance. In the afternoon, the participants divided into four work sessions to discuss issues and opportunities in career-oriented education from multiple perspectives.

Panelists

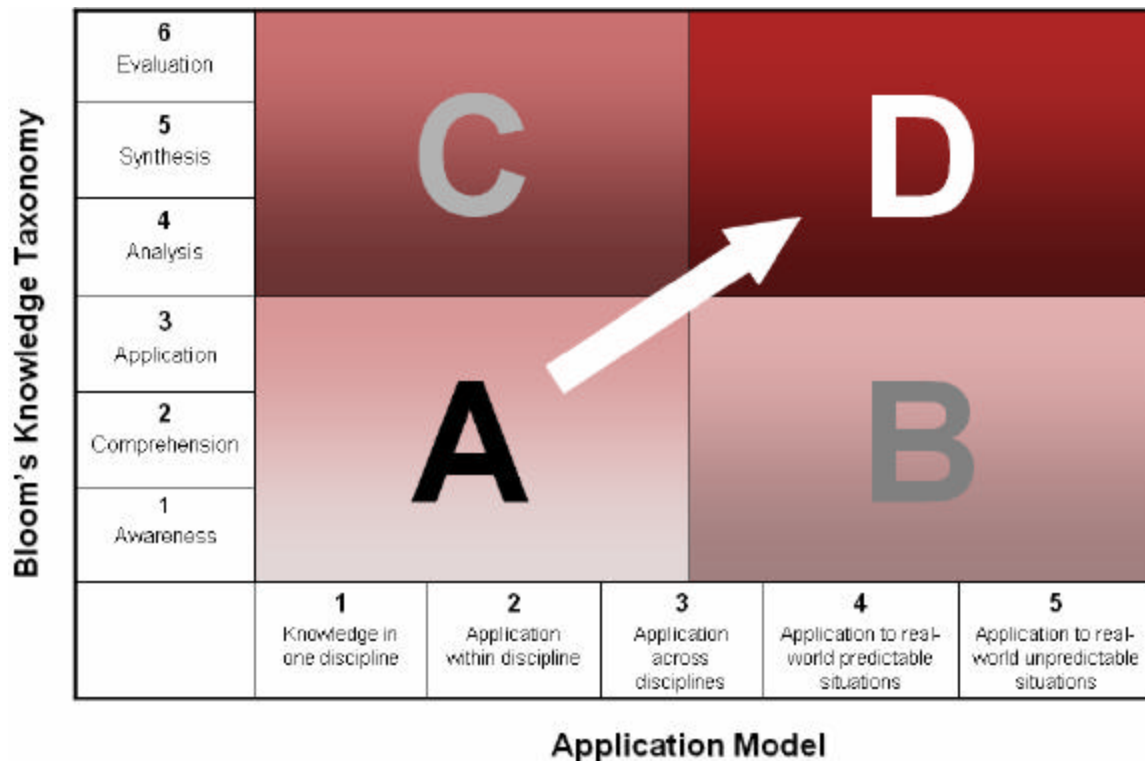
Candace Burns, MS, Director of Workforce Development
 Dana Farber Cancer Institute (Boston, MA)

Charlesetta Deason, EdD, Principal
 DeBakey High School for Health Careers (Houston, TX)

Peter Stansbie, ACIS, DMS, FHSM, Director of Organizational Development
 Skills for Health (Bristol, UK)

Dr. Daggett highlighted the rigor and relevance framework, giving Summit participants a mandate to create a student-centric system that aimed at moving students from quadrant A to quadrant D, incorporating the best of academic and career learning (see below). The panelists discussed their areas of focus and associated success, challenges, improvements, and required element for sustained change.

Dr. Daggett introduced the quadrants in the “Rigor/Relevance Framework” diagram below.



WORK SESSIONS

Each of four work sessions was charged with designing an “ideal” career education system for students and approached its task from a different perspective. Each session was given a prospective “diagram” of their system to generate conversation and debate. All sessions agreed that the diagrams did not fit their vision of an “ideal” system and some represented what was “wrong” with current systems. However, each session presented multiple solutions to an ideal system (see below).

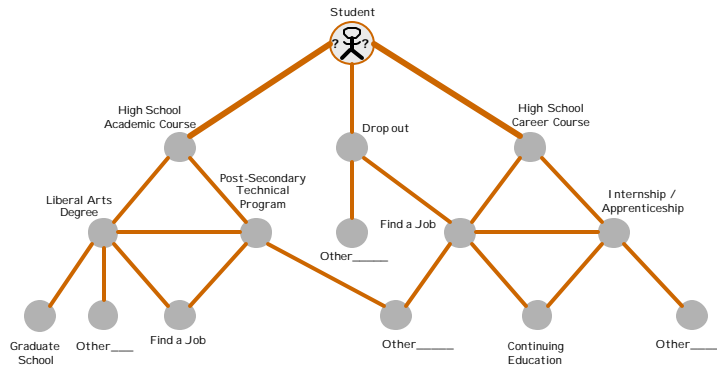
Details of each of the working groups’ deliberations and recommendations will be summarized in a forthcoming detailed Summit proceedings paper – part of the Jewish Healthcare Foundations *Roots* series of advanced issues papers.

Pathways

The “pathways” session’s goal was to highlight the points at which students make decisions that could shape their career pathways. The group worked to outline a career education system that both prepares students for these decisions and also supports them in the decision-making process along the path to goal achievement.

A few of the questions addressed included:

- Does an effective model exist?
- When should the pathway start? (age?, grade?)
- Can a student switch pathways?
- How can pathways be linked to employers?
- How can pathways provide the framework for broad systems change that benefits students and the larger community?



In a closing plenary session each of the working group’s used one slide to summarize their primary recommendations. Slide content was framed by the following categories: “What to do new”, “What to do differently” and “What *not* to do”. The pathways group’s summary of recommendations was as follows.

What to do new	Multiple choices in a flat framework—No one size fits all
	PreK – 14 (funding for first 2 years of training after high school)
	State policy infrastructure support and technical assistance to promote better student transition rates
	Focus on building modern competencies in “D” (project based, problem solving with employers (apprenticeship), tangible products); incentives (\$\$\$)—can be aided with substantially larger employer engagement
	Demonstration sites in metropolitan locations to provide research evidence of how systems can be changed to promote pathways
	Expand student social (professional) networks
	Mix of comprehensive career counseling, contextual learning, teaching with application for

	all, including academic and career-focused courses
What to do differently	Ensure teachers are knowledgeable & passionate about application based-learning (continual educator training)
	Make the business case (ROI) for community (employers, guardians) in learning process
What not to do	Bifurcated model
	“Silver bullet”
	Let research/best practices languish

The pathways session highlighted the importance of elementary/middle school education (with the role of integrating career awareness and experiential learning) along with the requirements for high school (i.e. academic courses and career technical application in tandem) and faculty preparation (to teach application of content to the work place). Higher system accountability and flexibility to move with latest research and evidence-based practice, along with higher expectations of students’ knowledge and analytical ability was also important.

Building Blocks

This working group strived to identify experiences – such as classroom learning, career exploration, mentorships, internships, or jobs – that are crucial to successful development of career identity. The group then sought to construct a model career education system that includes the best of these experiences, along with appropriate support and outreach systems.

A few of the questions addressed included:

- What are the key building blocks?
- Can these building blocks be weighted in terms of importance?
- Can we align the blocks into a system or series of pathways?
- Which blocks represent the greatest challenges?

First Career Experience	Classroom Learning	2 or 4 year Degrees	Other?
Parents and Family	Other?	Peer Group	After-school Programs
Other?	Soft Skills	Other?	Career/ Guidance Counselor

In the closing plenary session, the building blocks group summarized their recommendations as the following.

What to do new	Provide the funding for each school to hire a community partnership coordinator who will facilitate relationships among the school staff and members of the community to develop the complimentary learning plan for the building
	Create individual education and career action plan for each student, starting in 8th grade
What to do differently	Change the 180 day school calendar and the school day schedule and integrate career exploration and paid apprenticeships
	Rewrite state academic standards to have real world application, changing assessment, professional development, curriculum and materials.
What not to do	Assess competency with “Quadrant A” questions
	Fail to engage higher education, including community colleges, in matters of teacher preparation, professional and curricular development, etc.

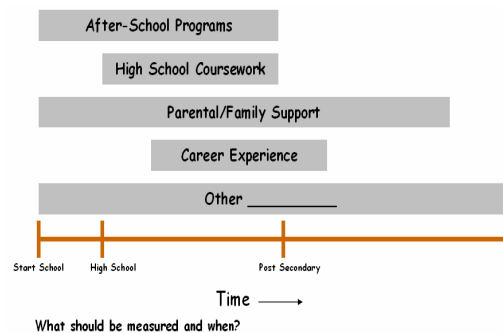
Members of the building blocks session focused on amending the 180-day school calendar, expanding student *and* parental education to promote parental engagement – minimize educational barriers that lead to lack of parental engagement. The importance of social networking (and related socio-economical gaps) was also discussed. In addition, the barriers to employer engagement must be addressed and may include a staff member (for each school) that facilitates relationships. Also, engaging higher education, including community colleges, in matters of teacher preparation and professional and curricular development was seen as an essential component in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real world requirements.

Milestones

This group was tasked with identifying measurable milestones that students should achieve or experience along the journey towards career identity and preparation. They were asked to consider where the career exploration and relevance journey starts; the intellectual, social and emotional milestones to be reached; the value of certain milestones; and potential ways to measure progress.

Some of the questions addressed included:

- What are the milestones that must be measured (are there primary milestones, secondary milestones)?
- Who tracks and coordinates progress?
- What should be done when progress stalls or measures are not met?



In the closing plenary session, the milestones group summarized their recommendations as the following.

What to do new	Achieve and recognize an individual support network that provides the student with the confidence to try and fail, feel safe, system of rules, recognize that <i>personal resilience</i> lies within
	Develop the right career exposure, exploration, experiences at the right time to inform career path
	Design a deliberate system (schools, employers, community, etc.) to help every student succeed, and adjust to changing needs
What to do differently	Avoid linear model (many paths, many orders)
	Avoid time points (specific age to achieve milestones)
	Avoid traditional definition of family, support structure
What not to do	Public discourse, involvement, declaration of values
	Set goals, timelines, funded mandates (stop giving easy outs!)

Members of the milestones session focused primarily on the achievement and recognition of individual support network and a deliberate (collaborative) system designed with each student as a customer. The group also aimed to move away from the linear model – the assumption that everyone has the same sequence or timing for key milestones – to a more student centric model that meets each student’s needs during their personal trajectory.

Anatomy of a Dream School

The goal of the dream school working group was to identify the numerous effective career-focused schools in the U.S. and the key elements that contribute to their success. The group was asked to mix and match successful components of the most accomplished programs to create a new “dream” model.

A few of the questions addressed included:

- Is there already a “dream” school or a system doing it right?
- What constitutes a “dream system”?
- Where are there visible best practice gaps?
- What key barriers will need to be addressed in order to form a “dream” school and/or system?



In the closing plenary session, the dream school group summarized their recommendations as the following.

What to do new	Establish a professional development system to support a continuous learning process for all staff and stakeholders
	Rethink all aspects of time (time of day, length of school year, instructional and practice schedules)
	Ensure there is a flexible technology structure that is accessible to all and that will help build relationships among stakeholders
	Systems that support preK-12 objectives need to be aligned and fully funded
What to do differently	Ensure that educational planning is collaborative, active, open, deliberate, and owned by the region
	Make students the central focus of our schools and develop individualized whole student learner plans starting in preK-12
	Encourage the development of curriculum and assessments in the “D” quadrant
What not to do	Think conventionally, pessimistically, and negatively about the possibilities and opportunities

MOVING FORWARD

The primary goal for the Summit was to create a constituency for change. Participants currently had a strong stake in the issues, but from multiple perspectives – thus the Summit served to bring a unique group of individuals and organizations together to take a fresh look at issues and opportunities in the high school and workforce connectivity. The key to success will be keeping the dialog open, maintaining contact and disseminating the results of the Summit to keep career education at the forefront of high school reform.

The following products will be developed by July, 2008:

- Creation of a Summit Website containing transcripts from the event, video content, summary documents and lists of participants to facilitate ongoing dialog; and
- Production of the Summit Outcomes Paper, a detailed report of the issues, Summit deliberations, and review of recommended actions for moving forward and engendering change.

For the outcomes paper, Dr. Daggett of the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) made the generous suggestion that the recommended actions from the Summit be cross-referenced with the ICLE's dataset on best-practices in high performance schools and schools that are improving at a rapid pace. This will be done, and the resulting matrix should serve as an important reference tool for identifying sites to visit and programs to learn from or replicate in moving forward.

Ultimately, through a new initiative the Center for Career Learning, Health Careers Futures intends to advance the resulting "best practice system", in collaboration with regional schools and community organizations, to create a high school experience incorporating relevance for health careers. It is hoped that all who participated in the Summit will stay engaged, contributing their skills, advice and interests to one another to bring best practice concepts into reality with their constituencies.